



Kosova Women's Network

Serving, Protecting and Promoting the Rights of Women and Girls

March 8, 2006, Prishtina

To: UN Special Envoy for the future status process for Kosovo

Dear Mr. Ahtisaari,

We welcome the recent important steps taken towards the resolution of Kosova's final political status. Resolving Kosova's final status is a vital issue for all Kosovars which will shape the political, economic, and social advancement of our country. As this peace process deals with the future of our country, we demand that women be also included in it.

We consider that Kosova women have the right to fully and actively participate in the final status talks. This legitimate claim is based on the rich legacy of women in peaceful and political activity within the struggle for freedom and independence of Kosova but; it is also legally supported by the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

Women's involvement in peace processes is a basic provision within United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, applicable to Kosova. The resolution "*Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict." It also "*Urges* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes.

Since the beginning of the status talks, we have written many letters on behalf of the women of Kosova, requesting that women be included in this peace process. We have also raised this issue in the meeting with you, Mr. Petersen and the UN Chief negotiator Mr. Ahtisaari. However, the negotiating team established for the status talks of Kosova remains without any woman, so far.

The women of Kosova are *concerned* that their voices have been ignored or marginalized by both national and the UNMIK leadership. It is so, in spite of its remarkable role in past and present. As known, for more than fifteen years women have been and they continue to be important actors in all aspects of Kosova's efforts towards freedom, democracy, and independence. Therefore, women can and should bring their ideas, experience, and energy into this very important process that will shape their future as much as it will shape the future of the rest of the society.

Kosova Women's Network

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In accordance with resolution 1325 and as equal and praiseworthy Kosovar citizens, the Kosova Women's Network, which represents 85 women's organizations of all ethnic groups (Serb, Roma, Ashkali, Turkish, and Bosniak) from throughout Kosova, the Kosova Women's Lobby comprised of 26 woman leaders from all sectors, and supported by following organizations signed below, **demand**:

- **The immediate inclusion of the representative of Kosova women in the negotiating team of Kosova for the final status talks**, conducive to Resolution 1325 and taking into a consideration women's extraordinary contribution for the achieved peace and freedom.

Women must be given an opportunity to take part in this peace process that will design the future of Kosova and the region. If women and their expertise are excluded, the negotiating process as well as the inclusiveness of future democratic processes will undoubtedly suffer. Building sustainable peace by partnership of both genders lays the foundation of bright future.

We thank you in advance for your attention to this letter.

Sincerely,

Igballe Rogova, Executive Director, Kosova Women's Network

Lujeta Vuniqi, representative of Kosova Women's Lobby

Behxhet Shala, Executive Director, Council for Defense of the Human Rights and Freedom

Rreze Duli, Executive Director, Advocacy Training and Resource Center

Bashkim Rrahmani, Executive Director, Foundation for Democratic Initiatives

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Sent also to:

UN Special Representative to the Secretary General Mr. Søren Jessen-Petersen

Fatmir Sejdiu, President of Kosovo,

Lieutenant General Giuseppe Valotto, KFOR Commander

Philip Goldberg, Head of USA Office

Giorgio Mamberto, Head of European Commission in Kosovo

David Blunt, Head of British Office

Eugen Wollfarth, Head of German Office

Thierry Reynard, Head of French Office

Patrick Mura, Chief of Italian Office

and to all the members in the negotiating team

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