



*Republika e Kosovës – Republika Kosova – Republic of Kosovo Qeveria – Vlada – Government
Ministria e Punëve të Jashtme – Ministarstvo Inostranih Poslova – Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Akademia Diplomatike – Diplomatska Akademija – Diplomatic Academy

International Conference

“Celebrating Ten Years of Kosovo Independence: Achievements and Aspirations”

The Challenges of Nation Building

Speech by His Excellency Behgjet Pacolli, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo, and former President of the Republic of Kosovo

Ambassador Dr Beqir Ismaili, Professor Dr Nabil Ayad, Honourable Ministers, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Special warm welcome to our friend Ambassador Ahmed bin Mohamed Aljarwan who has been promoting the plight of Kosovo in international circles and helping to cement and strengthen the cordial relations between Kosovo and the United Arab Emirates. I am pleased to report that the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo is being set up at present in Abu Dhabi. Many thanks Ambassador Aljarwan.

We, in the Republic of Kosovo, are most grateful and indebted to many world leaders including the President of the United Arab Emirates His Highness the late Shaikh Zayed (may God bless his soul) , for their firm, unflinching and generous support in helping us to achieve our independence. In attempting to build and gain support for our nation, we are following two major objectives. The first is to strengthen bilateral cooperation and enhance mutual interaction in various fields with

particular focus given to diplomacy, political issues, the economy as well as investments and security. The second is to strengthen mutual consultation and support on regional and international issues, especially through increased interaction in multilateral initiatives. To achieve these objectives, I have been utilising my dual role as First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo. As part of the action plan for good governance in order to benefit from UN membership, we intend to open more embassies in various countries around the world by gaining official recognition in those countries. In addition, we are working to develop many areas of internal governance including health care, tourism, agriculture, and security. As a point of interest, in the Republic of Kosovo today there are many opportunities for tourism, development of gold mines and other precious metals as well as small industries. Our legal system provides full protection for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

Independence of Kosovo

Kosovo, as a small and newly established state, has not had a smooth path to independence. As a landlocked country and the smallest country in the Balkans, it is one of the newest nations in the world. Under UN supervision and with aid from the United States and the European Union, Kosovo developed the structures of an independent country, and in February 2008, it formally declared independence from Serbia. Its new constitution became effective on June 15, 2008. A ruling by the International Court of Justice in July 2010 supported Kosovo's independence.¹ As of today the Republic of Kosovo has received 115 diplomatic recognitions as an independent state. 112 out of 193 (58%) United Nations (UN) member states, 23 out of 28 (82%) European Union (EU) member states, 25 out of 29 (86%) NATO member states, and 36 out of 57 (63%) Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states have recognised Kosovo.

However, the path to independence has not been uncomplicated. Independence of the people of Kosovo came only after the dissolution of Yugoslavia – and after ethnic cleansing, horrific atrocities, forced expulsions and a civil war that killed more than 10,000 before NATO intervened. Our emerging country is still experiencing difficulties with achieving worldwide acceptance, especially from very prominent international powers such as China and Russia. In addition, it has encountered barriers to recognition within certain international organizations.

Our country was forged under difficult circumstances and has faced and continues to face many hurdles; as a result, the people of Kosovo understand the value of peace and living in harmony with those of various ethnic, religious, and cultural origins. The concept of inclusiveness is symbolized in the flag which has been adopted by Kosovo. The official flag has a blue background, and includes the map of Kosovo and six stars. The stars are officially meant to symbolise Kosovo's six major ethnic groups: Albanians, Serbs, Turks, Gorani, Romani (often grouped with the Ashkali and Egyptians) and Bosniaks.

The Intricacies of Diplomacy

As a society which has suffered so greatly and so recently from discord and fighting, Kosovo is attempting to develop a better path for humanity. As First Deputy Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, I am confronted with the arduous tasks of nation building, development and lobbying other

countries to recognise Kosovo as an independent state. By far the majority of people in all nations desire to live in security, peace, stability and happiness. In today's globalised world, all nations have citizens who are of diverse colour, gender, origin, creed and religion.

Concluding Remarks

We believe that as one of the newest countries in the world, which has experienced many difficulties on the path to statehood, we occupy a unique position. We have known the pain of conflict and the despair of battle; yet, we have been able to forge a nation which is attempting to give equal rights to all regardless of race, religion and ethnic background. Our greatest mission is to build a real and sustainable peace for mankind by promoting a culture of tolerance among peoples and among nations. We invite as many people as possible to join us in this vision.

THANK YOU