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| **The Lansdowne Declaration** |
| September 13, 1999  We, the individuals identified below, gathered at Lansdowne Center in Virginia, September 9-13, 1999, with the facilitation of a team assembled by the United States Institute of Peace, have reached consensus on a framework of basic principles, practices and procedures to help guide Kosova during and after its transition to democratic self-rule. Representing a broad spectrum of Kosovar Albanian leadership from civil society groups, political movements, humanitarian and professional institutions, we commend these results to our people. We appeal to the international community to reflect upon and respect the fruits of our deliberations. And we underscore the sincerity of our stance favoring a plural society which welcomes all Kosovars. We state the determination of the people and political forces of Kosova to achieve:   * the liberation of all those citizens of Kosova detained and imprisoned illegally, as well as those who have been illegally subject to judicial processing, * the liberation of those kept in Serbia as hostages, many of whom are children, * the accounting for all missing persons, * and the prosecution of war crimes.   Protection of those who bear judicial witness to war crimes is of equal importance. We pledge our cooperation with those outside Kosova who share these aims and we demand the full cooperation of relevant international organizations. Finally, we would take this occasion to express our profound thanks to the U.S. Government and people for their support and to the United States Institute of Peace for its professional conduct of the meetings.  The pages below are organized under the headings of [Political Process](http://www.usip.org/events/pre2002/#pol); [Strengthening Civil Society](http://www.usip.org/events/pre2002/#civil); and [Economic Reconstruction, Revitalization and Reform](http://www.usip.org/events/pre2002/#econ) in accordance with the structure of our deliberations at Lansdowne. Lansdowne Workshop Participants **Journalists**  Aferdita Kelmendi (Director of Radio/TV 21)  Baton Haxhiu (Chief Editor, Koha Ditore)  Shaban Arifaj (journalist)  Dukagnin Gorani (journalist)  Gani Dili (journalist, women's issues)    **Independent**  Ylber Hysa (head of Kosova Associations for Civic Initiatives)  Mahmut Bakalli (head of Kosovo media board)    **United Democratic League (LBD)**  Bajram Kosumi  Mehmet Hajrizi  Hyadet Hyseni    **Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)**  Naim Jerliu  Edita Tahiri  Bujar Bukoshi  Alush Gashi    **Party of Democratic Unity (PBD)**  Bardyhl Mahmuti  Shaban Shala  Jakup Krasniqi    **Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK)**  Hashim Thaqi  Rame Buja  Fatmir Limaj  Azem Syla  Zhavit Haliti    **Non-governmental organizations and activists**  Palok Berisha (Mother Teresa Society)  Xheraldina Vula (Radio 21, Women's NGO)  Sevdije Ahmeti (Director, Organization for Protection of Women and children)  Marte Palokaj (Mother Teresa Society)  Edi Shukriu (activist, women's issues, president of LDK Women's Forum)  Vjosa Dobruna (Doctor, Organization for Protection of Women and Children)  Shkelzen Maliqi (Analyst, Open Society Institute)  Pajazit Nushi (Council for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedom)  Arben Koca (chairman of youth council in Skenderaj)  Ariana Xerxa (Humanitarian Law Fund)    **Economists**  Riza Sapunhaxiu (economist, formerly Kosovska Bank, World Bank)  Shefqet Cana (Joint Kosovo Bank)  Ahmet Shala (Professor of Economics)  Muhamet Mustafa (Riinvest)    **Local Officials**  Bajram Rexhepi (Mayor of Mitrovica)  Adem Bajri (attorney, Peja)  Ardian Gjini (Vice Mayor of Gjakova)    **U.S. Participants**  **Conference Chair**  [Chester Crocker](http://www.usip.org/events/pre2002/lansdowne-bios.html#crocker), Chairman of Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP)  **Conference Advisor**  [Harriet Hentges](http://www.usip.org/specialists/bios/2002/hentges.html), Executive Vice President, USIP  **Conference Director**  [Dan Serwer](http://www.usip.org/specialists/bios/2002/serwer.html), Director of the Balkans Initiative, USIP  **Sub-Group Chairmen**  [Michael Froman,](http://www.usip.org/events/pre2002/lansdowne-bios.html#froman) Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations  [Hal Saunders](http://www.usip.org/events/pre2002/lansdowne-bios.html#saunders), Director of International Affairs, Kettering Foundation  [George Ward](http://www.usip.org/specialists/bios/2002/ward.html), Director, Training Program, USIP  **Conference Organizers**  Burcu Akan, USIP  Kristine Herrmann, USIP  [Lauren VanMetre](http://www.usip.org/specialists/bios/archives/vanmetre.html), USIP  Christina Zechman, USIP  **Political Process**  We began by looking forward five to ten years into Kosova's future. We decided that the following nine elements were essential to a future of peace and prosperity for all Kosovars:   * **Self-determination** based on a referendum conducted under international auspices. * The **rule of law**, under which all Kosovars will be able to live without fear; * Under the law, guarantees for **human rights and individual liberties**; * **Government institutions** that are responsive and serve the needs of civil society; * A functional **multi-ethnic society** that includes equal opportunity for all; * A **free economic market** with protection for those members of society who are at risk; * Integration of Kosova into **international institutions**. * An **international role** that provides for the protection of Kosovars and their rights; and * An updated **education system** that provides opportunities for advancement to Kosova's most precious resources, its youth, and contributes to building civil society.     We then agreed to examine five of these categories in order to identify the institutions and processes that are essential to their realization.  In order to establish the **rule of law**, we identified the need for:   * A constitution; * Elections; * Agreement on and adherence to a political code of conduct.     Essential to **human rights and individual liberties** are:   * A functioning, unitary judicial system based on international human rights conventions; * Enforcement of respect for individual and collective rights; * Systematic respect for laws.     In order to develop responsive **government institutions**, the following are important:   * Adequate financial resources; * A professional civil service; * A functioning, unitary judicial system; * Effective and democratic police; * Effective defense of Kosova's territory, through transformation of the KLA into a national defense force and integration into the Partnership for Peace.     A functional, **multi-ethnic society** depends upon:   * Adequate legislation; * Confidence-building measures by government and civil society; * Intercommunal dialogue; * Merit-based employment decisions; * Where necessary, affirmative action to ensure minority rights.     An **international role** involving the United Nations, OSCE, NATO, the U.S.A. and the ICRC is essential to:   * Full implementation of UNSCR 1244 throughout the territory of Kosova; * Secure the release of prisoners detained for political reasons; * Ensure the prosecution of war criminals; * Protect the safety of those who bear witness to war crimes and other offenses against humanity; * Defense of the Albanian populations in Presheva, Bujanoc, and Medvegja, which are exposed to repression, discrimination, and ethnic cleansing; * Bearing in mind the temporary absence of Kosovar political and judicial authorities, the issuance of new travel and identity documents for the Kosovar people.     As a further step, we agreed to outline the elements of a political code of conduct. We arrived at the following:  **All individuals, political parties, and other groups should**:   * During this transitional period, resolve to establish, attend, and not boycott a political consultative forum that, meeting regularly, would be open to all political forces. The forum would meet and be chaired on a rotational basis. Its initial meeting would be facilitated by the U.S. Institute of Peace. The forum would operate in full respect of the legitimate roles of international organizations. * Build support for formulas for unified organs of government and administration based on democratic principles and international obligations. * Be guided above all by democratic values in striving toward the paramount goal of a more prosperous and secure future for all who live in Kosova. * Respect pluralism and the fair competition of political ideas and political programs. Corruption, intimidation, violence and other pressures are antithetical to democracy and must be excluded. * Promote the transparency of the political process, including party programs, party structures, and party activities. * Respect diversity, including the protection of the identity of minorities (i.e., ethnic, confessional, political, and social groups), ensuring free access to the political system for the latter. All forms and measures of discrimination that would endanger the identity of minorities must be rejected. * Pledge their determination to agree upon mechanisms for the conduct of democratic elections under international supervision and resolve to respect the results of those elections. Elections must be properly prepared with international support and with due regard to establishment of necessary social conditions, for example, adequate housing. See also the report on civil society regarding elections. * Preserve the institutions that have sustained the people of Kosova during times of difficulty, including families and non-governmental organizations. * Actively recognize that the contributions of women and men to the political process are crucial. * Extend political debate as widely as possible in Kosova, support the political parties in regenerating their programs and organizations to adapt to newly created conditions and the necessity for a healthy political atmosphere in Kosova.     **Strengthening Civil Society**  The Albanian people of Kosova have developed strong institutions of civil society, although they have not necessarily used that term. Identifying the elements of those foundations and naming them as such could be a useful step in strengthening civil society in the next stage of Kosovar development. Among those elements, we count those instances in which citizens came together to accomplish important objectives without the help of government. We specifically note the following:   * a growing tradition of citizens taking personal responsibility over a long historical period, refusing to bow to repression, protesting openly and organizing underground and demonstrating a strong will to govern themselves; * solidarity among Kosovar Albanians and Albanians in other countries; * increasing consciousness among Kosovar Albanians of the importance of education and national culture for development of a civil society; * formation of women's NGOs in the late 1980s with the effect of laying early foundations for civil society ; * the formation of human rights NGOs; * establishment of the Mother Teresa Society in 1990 as a base for assistance when Kosovar Albanians were forcibly removed from their jobs and lost their incomes and their right to medical care and health insurance; * the "alternative structures" developed by citizen initiative after Kosova's autonomy was suspended to provide education, medical services and political organizations to Albanians in Kosova; * establishment of Radio 21 and TV 21, Radio Koha and TV Koha, Kosova press news agency and Radio Kosova e Lire as an institution that was active in the war zones; * deliberate engagement of the Albanians to end the practice of blood feud and revenge through mediations; * development of the Students' Independent Union; * the actions of some newspapers to continue publishing despite Belgrade's efforts to stop publication; * formation of the Kosova Liberation Army and of a national network of its supporters by conducting dialogues with citizens in town after town; * a tradition of tolerance, especially among different religious traditions; * creation and gradual increase of opportunities for citizen assembly. * development of awareness for protection of personal rights and liberties.     Despite the emergence of Kosova from under repressive Serbian rule, obstacles to further development of a broadly based democratic civil society remain:   * lack of guaranteed security for citizens; * suspicion or mistrust among present Kosovar organizations; * residual "prejudices" from the period of socialist rule; * absence of a rule of law and an independent judiciary; * absence of a political culture with a tradition of opposition within the system; * a mentality of oppression or victimhood that limits realization of the full capacities of independence; * broad ignorance of what civil society is; * absence of agreed practices to assure fairness in political life; * exclusion of women from many political and economic activities, mainly because of the economic and political situation and partly as a result of a traditionally patriarchal mentality; * presence of domestic violence; * a hostile relationship between Serbs and Albanians that reflects Serb refusal to acknowledge wrongs done and a demand that Serbs be held accountable for what they did; * limited media workers, equipment, resources and coverage; * absence of enough opportunities for citizens, especially women, to talk together and to learn from one another; * actions by international organizations and some international NGOs that show lack of respect for Kosovar civil society and confine space for its development; * the traditional educational curriculum of the school system, which in its present form is not conducive to developing civil society; * the lack of a census of the population, including the population in temporary refuge, which would enable issuing identification cards and travel documents;     Against that background, we propose the following areas of work and specific projects for developing civil society in Kosova:   * Reconceptualization of the citizen as the central political actor in whom ultimate power resides, in contrast to the former view of the citizen as oppressed or victimized. This will require significant changes in educational curricula and projects to increase opportunities for citizens to experience an effective role in influencing decisions on the future of their communities. * A transitional period perceived as a time interval necessary for establishing democratic institutions in Kosova as well as other elements that define a civil society. This will require public and media discussion of the idea of a transitional period. It will also require a widely agreed timetable for preparing free and fair elections, including systematic identification of the necessary steps laying the foundation for that event. * Broad acceptance of principles and practices to govern social and political interactions. These include: resolving differences through dialogue, mediation and other non-violent means; respect for diverse views; dialogue rather than confrontation as the norm for communication; mutual respect in rivalry; openness in dialogue; tolerance; awareness of common interests and differences; commitment of all individuals; equality of all individuals; keeping one's word. This will require educational programs and deliberately developed experiences that model peaceful ways of resolving potential conflict. * Creation of opportunities at all levels of society for dialogue that will identify local needs and a conscious effort, from that dialogue, to frame the choices among fundamental social and political philosophies. This will require active programs to promote community dialogues and to make them part of normal political life. * Creation of opportunities in which relationships among majority and minorities can be healed and improved and of methods for assuring an appropriate role in social, economic and political life for minorities and women. This will require educational institutions, political organizations and NGOs to make inclusiveness an active part of their programs. * Encouragement of citizens in playing the greatest role possible in the revival of the economy. This will require providing materials for reconstruction of homes and public facilities and support of small business. * Legitimation of citizens' work, in collaboration with security authorities, to enhance local security. This requires acceptance of local organizations by the authorities. * Many of these projects require the rapid creation of normal conditions for the work of the media, in particular for the independent media. Above all, this requires urgent creation of an effective telecommunications system in Kosova and repairing radio and TV systems. This can only be done with the help of the international community. It requires immediate collaboration between media organizations and potential funders to identify technical and program needs, particularly providing necessary equipment and education of professional journalists from the younger generation. * Comprehensive registration of citizens is essential to holding elections and to all aspects of administering effective services for citizens. * Respect for the rights of citizens to express their free will through referenda on vital social issues and statehood. * Adopting and respecting a new legal framework for NGO operations, for political organization, for protection of property and the free market, for conservation of the environment, for protection of minorities and other special groups such as the physically and mentally handicapped, students and young people.   We call on the citizens and leaders of Kosova to contribute in every way possible to development of a strong civil society and on international organizations to recognize that this development is critical to developing democracy.    **Economic Reconstruction, Revitalization, and Reform**    Kosova faces several challenges on the economic front. First, it must engage in the immediate reconstruction of fundamental components of its economy which were damaged or destroyed during the war. Second, it must revitalize competitive sectors of its economy where production has severely declined or come to a halt as a result of both the war and Belgrade's policies during the 1990's. Third, it must undergo the process of reform as part of the transition to a market economy. Fourth, it must put in place institutions and policies to attract foreign investment.  We note that our objective is not to reconstruct pre-war Kosova or even to recreate pre-1989 Kosova, but to build a new, open, integrated and free market economy capable of carrying Kosova into the next century.    **Reconstruction**  In addition to the great human and psychological impact of the war on Kosovars, Kosova suffered significant material damage during the war in a broad range of sectors. We identify the following areas as priorities for immediate reconstruction and, with the winter fast-approaching, call on the international donor community to focus its efforts on ensuring adequate assistance and the appropriate distribution of that assistance to areas in need throughout Kosova:   * Housing * Water supplies * Electricity * Telecommunications * Agricultural production * Educational institutions * Health facilities     We also call on the donor community to develop a program through which proposals for modest infrastructure projects for Kosova, including at the level of the local community, can be funded. Efforts should be made to ensure that reconstruction is pursued consistent with prudent urban planning.  In order to help restart Kosova's economy, including its construction and construction materials sectors, we call on the donor community to use local, Kosovar resources to the greatest degree possible in the reconstruction effort.    **Revitalization**  The war greatly damaged Kosova's economy, but before the war, Kosova's economy suffered from the expropriation and asset-stripping of major industrial properties. There is an urgent need to revitalize factories that are idle, mines that are closed, farms that are lying fallow, and thermoelectric plants that are operating well below capacity. (This should be done in a manner consistent with environmental interests.) This is critical to creating jobs for Kosovars which, in turn, is critical to avoiding social upheaval.   * Revitalizing these properties will require outside support, and we call on the donor community to devote substantial resources to providing the critical inputs necessary to restart these assets.   However, the most significant obstacle appears to be uncertainty about who has the authority to make decisions regarding these assets:   * We call on UNMIK and KFOR to allow these properties to be revitalized immediately. * We call on UNMIK to create a process to resolve as quickly as possible issues regarding the status of these and other state/socially-owned properties, including who has the authority -- before and after elections -- to make decisions regarding the operation and sale of these assets. In our view, pre-1989 property rights should be presumed to be the legitimate basis for resolving this issue. * We call for a process by which transactions involving state/socially-owned properties during the 1990's, including transactions involving foreign investors, can be evaluated to determine their legal status.     **Reform**  We strongly recommend to Kosova-wide and international institutions that Kosova should build its own, open, free market economy integrated into regional and Euro-Atlantic institutions, and that this general perspective should define its political, legislative and administrative orientation.  As part of the transition process, we will privatize major state assets, recognizing that the public sector may have a continuing interest in some of them and that there are a number of different models for privatization:   * We support the privatization of major state assets as soon as possible following elections. * Before elections, we call on the political parties and other relevant institutions to work with Kosovar experts and experts from the international community to prepare proposed strategies for privatization, including by learning lessons from other transition economies.     We recognize the importance of creating a well-regulated banking system and a payments system and believe that that process should begin as quickly as possible.  We note that one of Kosova's strengths is its small and medium-sized enterprises, including its family businesses. We believe that Kosova's development strategy should emphasize this sector and that Kosova should create a strong network of support for this such enterprises, including facilities to finance their investment.   * Pending the development a full-fledged banking system, we call on the donor community to create as quickly as possible a development fund which could finance the creation and expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises as the first step toward recreating a banking system.     We believe it is important that Kosova develop a credible fiscal system, including by developing a transparent and responsible budget and a tax system that, over time, will provide sufficient revenue to fund the government bodies and the appropriate scope of government-supported activities.   * In that regard, we recommend that Kosova take care to develop governmental bodies and government-supported institutions (e.g., health and education institutions) which are efficient. * We recognize that a reform program will cause economic dislocation and, therefore, call for a well-targeted social safety net and other programs, including education and training programs and programs to support the development of small businesses, designed to help Kosovars adjust to the market economy.     Recognizing the size of Kosova's market, we recommend that Kosova should focus on the development of export-oriented industries, including the following:   * Agriculture/farming/wine production * Food processing * Electricity * Minerals * Metals/metal processing * Rubber * Textiles/leather goods/handicrafts     We are committed to free trade and to integration with the rest of the region, Europe and the international trading system.   * In that regard, we support the development of regional infrastructure projects in (e.g., Corridor 8, Pristina-Durres links) and internal infrastructure projects that facilitate trade. * We do not believe that it would be wise to adopt high tariffs or other forms of protectionism.     **Attracting and Retaining Foreign Investment**  We recognize that the long-term sustainability of Kosova's economy depends on its capacity to attract foreign investment. To do so, we propose the following:   * We are committed to working with each other to create an environment of political stability grounded in democratic principles. * We note the absolutely critical need for the rule of law. In that regard, we call for the development of a credible legal system and a transparent, consistent and reliable regulatory system on which Kosovars and foreign investors can rely. * We are committed to fighting official corruption and crime so as to avoid allowing the market economy to become a criminal economy.     **Working Together**  To better articulate a common position on these and other economic issues to the international community, and to develop public and political consensus on this platform, we recommend that the dialogue among economic experts and all political forces be continued, including through the creation of an economic forum. |