

Daily Press Briefing | What's New

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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## Kosovo

### U.S. Recognizes Kosovo As Independent State

The United States has formally recognized Kosovo as a sovereign and independent state. We congratulate the people of Kosovo on this historic occasion.

President Bush has responded affirmatively to a request from Kosovo to establish diplomatic relations between our two countries. The establishment of these relations will reaffirm the special ties of friendship that have linked together the people of the United States and Kosovo.



Flag of Kosovo

Nine years ago, the international community, led by NATO, acted to end brutal attacks on the Kosovar Albanian population. This timely international intervention ended the violence, leading to a United Nations Security Council decision to suspend Belgrade's governance and place Kosovo under interim UN administration. Since that time Kosovo has built its own democratic institutions separate from Belgrade's control. Last year, UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari developed a plan to build a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo and recommended Kosovo be independent, subject to a period of international supervision. In light of the conflicts of the 1990s, independence is the only viable option to promote stability in the region. The United States supports the Ahtisaari Plan and will work with its international partners to help implement it.

We welcome the commitments Kosovo made in its declaration of independence to implement the Ahtisaari Plan, to embrace multi-ethnicity as a fundamental principle of good governance, and to welcome a period of international supervision.

The unusual combination of factors found in the Kosovo situation -- including the context of Yugoslavia's breakup, the history of ethnic cleansing and crimes against civilians in Kosovo, and the extended period of UN administration -- are not found elsewhere and therefore make Kosovo a special case. Kosovo cannot be seen as a precedent for any other situation in the world today.

The United States takes this opportunity to reaffirm our friendship with Serbia, an ally during two world wars. We invite Serbia's leaders to work together with the United States and our partners to accomplish shared goals, such as the protection of the rights, security, culture and livelihood of the Serb community in Kosovo.

As Kosovo today begins its life as an independent state, the United States pledges to continue to be its close friend and partner. -- [Statement](#) by Secretary Rice | [Briefing](#) by Under Secretary Burns

## Highlights

### Kosovo: Timetable for NATO Engagement

Question on how NATO's role in Kosovo will be affected by the declaration of independence. [Full Text](#)



### Kosovo's Final Status

A key to stability and prosperity in the Balkans. [Full Text](#)

### UN Security Council Meeting on UNMIK

Amb. Khalilzad meetings with journalists during a Security Council Stakeout, Jan. 16, 2008, New York, NY. [Full Text](#)

### Kosovo: New Government Coalition

Statement on formation of a government coalition. [Full Text](#)

### UN Security Council Meeting

"Kosovo is a [unique situation](#)--it is a land that used to be part of a country that no longer exists and that has been administered for eight years by the United Nations with the ultimate objective of definitely resolving Kosovo's status." -- Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. Permanent Representative, Dec. 19, 2007. [Full Text](#) | [Remarks at Stakeout](#)

### Kosovo's Status

Statement on conclusion of negotiations on Kosovo's status. [Full Text](#)

### Elections in Kosovo

The United States welcomes the commitment to democratic development shown by the people of Kosovo on November 17. [Full Text](#)