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## **Stake-out by UN Special Envoy for the Future Status Process for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari after his briefing to the Un Security Council in New York**

Ladies and Gentleman of the Press,

We have had a good meeting with the Security Council. This has been an important week in many senses because I have had the meeting with the ministers earlier this week and you have seen the statement coming from there, and it has been possible for me to also meet different actors that are important for my work. You have seen the statement which says very clearly that ministers encourage the Special Envoy to prepare a comprehensive proposal for a status settlement and on this basis to engage the parties in moving the negotiating process forward. They also reaffirmed their commitment that all possible efforts be made to achieve a negotiated settlement in the course of 2006.

At the moment that's we are doing. I will return early next week back to Vienna and we will be working on this settlement. The technical discussions on certain areas will still continue and I have basically said that I am prepared to continue these technical discussions as long as I feel that they produce some results. Of course the idea is on those technical talks, which are meant to create conditions in Kosovo for everybody to live more comfortably than they are doing at the moment, they are important, that if we can bring the parties there where I believe they should be on both sides we will continue to do so.

Thank you.

*Q: Can you tell us roughly when you expect to put forward your proposal and how would you see the steps after you have done that?*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** No, I don't have any fix deadlines at the moment because first of all we have to get our work ready we have a lot of work to do. And there is not that much time. I have to keep on consulting also with the Contact Group and with the UN HQ's here and then in due course to come to the parties. I would be very hesitant to give you exact dates.

*Q: Have you prepared your proposal on future status of Kosovo?*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** No, we haven't. I presented some purely preliminary ideas. What we have actually produced in these technical discussions - there is sometimes a misunderstanding on the basis of that - is that we have worked on the basis we come with a proposal from UNOSEK side

in order to bridge the differences of the parties. So those are living documents. When we had for instance on decentralization eight meetings. So our proposals will reflect the outcome of the discussions we have had before. The good thing about this is that the parties know already now in most of these issues where we want them to be. So there won't be any great surprises when I would finally present my ideas because it is supposed to be there where I would like both parties to be. They are not there at the moment. And I have candidly described how the parties have behaved in the negotiations. That work will have to continue and therefore there is nothing specific that I could put to anybody at the moment. This we will have to discuss with the parties still and this work will live on. But what I am saying is that we are not pulling any rabbits. Even in the end of the exercise parties know roughly where we stand on this.

*Q: Mr. Ahtisaari do you see any difference between negotiating with Mr. Milosevic and Serbian leaders nowadays.*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** Of course I do.

*Q: And could you tell me the main difference between them?*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** I have actually negotiated very little with Mr. Milosevic because my task in 1999 with Mr. Chernomirdin was simply to present the outcome of the negotiations between Russia, Europe and the United States, the outcome of that. The question was put whether it is acceptable to him. It was not a negotiating round in 1999 so I have personally negotiated very little.

*Q: Mr. Ahtisaari, maybe it is a hypothetical question, but what if one of the sides withdraws from the negotiations process? If that were the case will there be a solution imposed?*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** First of all I don't believe that that is the case. Both sides have assured me that they will come whenever I have called them they have come. Sometimes we had a bit of scheduling problems when the leaders were travelling in different parts of the world. But I think that the most important thing is that the Contact Group has been very clear when this process starts, no one is allowed to block this process. From the beginning of the guiding principles it was made perfectly clear. So when that is known by the parties I don't expect them to pull out of the talks.

*Q: As you are working on this solution, how do you take into account the precedent that you may be setting for other regions and other conflicts, because a lot of people are taking up those precedents in one way or another at the moment in conflicts from the Balkans to the Caucasus.*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** First of all I am not thinking very much of the other problems, I have hands full with this one. My argument has always been - and I have made that - this is a *sui generis*. It has its own history. Like any other conflict has. And furthermore my point has also been that I think very clearly on this issue that this is *sui generis*, this a very special case. When it comes to other problem areas in the world, if there is a desire to solve them within the Security Council, as I would always hope that people would use the UN for that, then we have to remember that the

Security Council always has to agree and there are five permanent members that all have a veto right. So I think that this precedent discussion is perhaps more political than anything else. It's a reminder that somebody may in the debates in the Council use those arguments, but I don't think it has more importance than that. Because otherwise it would prevent us from solving this, we would be totally paralyzed if people would say "don't say this because it may have an effect on something else".

*Q: Just for pure information could you walk us through your action plan in the coming months is it going to be just technical talks or are you looking at getting the leaders, the heavyweights for another round again?*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** I find it very useful to use the technical discussions. The routine is that I normally see both delegations before they start. And my deputy and other colleagues will run those meetings. I find it useful because these are people who master the details of this whole exercise and we are coming to that phase, that, if there is a need we don't exclude anything. I will visit both capitals surely in the months to come and we have had an enormous amount of expert missions going with the help of Council of Europe and UNESCO for instance, Cultural Heritage and religious sites. We will use all the methods that we need. So, I don't exclude any meetings.

Thank you very much.