



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova-Republic of Kosova
Kuvendi-Skupština-Assembly
The Speaker

Speech of the Kosovo Assembly Speaker on the Occasion of the
International Day of Democracy- September 15th

Wednesday, September 15th, 2010, Pristina

Honorable Members
Honorable media and civil society representatives
Honorable citizens
Dear students
Ladies and Gentlemen

I have the pleasure and honor of opening the activities for the celebration of the International Day of Democracy, on September 15th, right here, in front of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo. This day is connected to the *Universal Declaration on Democracy* of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, approved on September 16 1997 in Cairo, and with the *Resolution on Democracy*, approved ten years later, on December 13 2007, by the United Nations General Assembly.

Democracy was and will remain the aspiration of people throughout the world, because it represents the institutionalization of freedom. Unlike the dark past, today about two-thirds of world countries have installed democratic systems. Kosovo has emerged independent from political oppression and now joins the big family of democracies in the world that celebrate this day. Democracy in Kosovo is not only an aspiration, but the new reality that we are building every day, and it is our permanent goal.

The celebration of this day in Kosovo is a good opportunity to speak to our children about the democratic values of our society, to remind them that many generations before them did not have the good fortune to enjoy the

democracy that we have today and have sacrificed a lot for these days of freedom and democracy.

The democratic process is developed in Kosovo by addressing all fields: political, economic, social, cultural and artistic. Rather than being a single action, democracy is a continuous process, and its continuous perfection knows no end. Kosovo respects and defends human rights and freedoms, minority rights, the principles of parliamentary democracy, of the rule of law and the market economy.

The rights of minority communities in Kosovo are ensured according to the highest international standards, enforced with effective instruments and in accordance with the *Comprehensive Proposal for the Status of Kosovo*, proposed by former President Ahtisaari, and are an integral part of our constitution. In the Constitution, Kosovo has enshrined the democratic political system, the sovereignty of the people, economic and political pluralism, free elections and human rights, good governance and the rule of law, the separation and limitation of powers and guarantees of citizens' rights and democratic procedures. The legitimacy of power in Kosovo is based on the Constitution, the laws, and the will of the people. The condition for the protection and advancement of democracy is, in our country as everywhere else, the free participation of citizens in public life, which is open to debating issues of their vital interest, and the ability to delegate representatives to cultivate the spirit of tolerance, solidarity and understanding.

All, together, have to take responsibility for the democratization of the country and society. As we have done until now, Kosovo will continue its partnership with the international community in its work towards a democratic state and society, in order to join the UN and other international organizations and to integrate into the European Union and NATO.

This legislature has succeeded in promoting parliamentary democracy and culture and ensuring representation of all minority communities. Democracy is the realization of freedom for all. To appreciate democracy means accepting the diversity in society and respecting the values and interests of different groups within it.

To conclude, I would like to thank the National Democratic Institute for organizing this celebration, for the generous support to the Assembly during these years after the war in Kosovo, as well as United States Agency for

International Development, for financing NDI's programs in Kosovo.