



Viewing cable 10Pristina44, Kosovo: Success in the north key to a successful

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to

[discuss them](#)

with others. See also the

[FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

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The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.

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The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.

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The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#10PRIS**

TINA44

Reference ID

Created

Released

Classification

Origin

[10PRISTINA44](#)

[2010-01-27 15:03](#)

[2010-12-09 21:09](#)

[CONFIDENTIAL](#)

Kosovo: Succes in the north key to a successful

Пише: Wikileaks
субота, 22 јануар 2011 07:46

Embassy Pristina

VZCZCXRO9597

OO RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHNP RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR

DE RUEHPS #0044/01 0271544 begin_of_the_skype_highlighting 0044/01 0271544
end_of_the_skype_highlighting

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 271544Z JAN 10

FM AMEMBASSY PRISTINA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9652

INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEOBZB/12SWS THULE AB GL PRIORITY

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RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 1330

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY

RHMFIS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1868

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RHFMISS/AFSOUTH NAPLES IT PRIORITY

RHMFIS/CDR TF FALCON PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEPGEA/CDR650THMIGP SHAPE BE PRIORITY

Kosovo: Success in the north key to a successful

Пише: Wikileaks
субота, 22 јануар 2011 07:46

RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY

RUZEJAA/USNIC PRISTINA SR PRIORITY

Wednesday, 27 January 2010, 15:44

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 PRISTINA 000044

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR (SCE, ACE, RPM)

EO 12958 DECL: 01/27/2020

TAGS PGOV, PINR, PREL, MARR, KV

SUBJECT: KOSOVO: SUCCESS IN THE NORTH KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL

KFOR DRAWDOWN

REF: A. 09 PRISTINA 509 B. 09 USNATO 409 C. BELGRADE 0003

Classified By: AMBASSADOR CHRISTOPHER DELL FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶ 1. (C) SUMMARY: While skirmishes and security incidents may be rare from day to day, an impending frozen conflict in Northern Kosovo remains the greatest threat to a safe and secure environment (SASE) in Kosovo in the near and medium terms. Fortunately, a constellation of factors exists that could reverse ten years of rot in Northern Kosovo and avoid letting this region become a frozen conflict. An impressive level of international consensus exists to address Northern Kosovo issues, and international actors and the GOK have agreed on a Northern Strategy to do just that. KFOR, at its current robust “Gate 1” force posture of 10,000, can play an important role, deterring extremists both north and south, as this strategy is implemented. As decisions are made on progress to “Gate 2” (5,000 troops) and beyond, the best way to operationalize the NAC’s central condition for successful drawdown -- maintenance of a safe and secure environment, with a threat level assessed as low -- will be success in this Northern Strategy. Benchmarks for this success include replacement of illegal parallel structures with legitimate Kosovo bodies, the establishment of robust rule of law institutions, the re-establishment of customs controls and revenue collection, and the re-establishment of legal, normalized electrical services and billing under KEK control. END SUMMARY

NORTHERN KOSOVO REMAINS THE BIGGEST THREAT TO SASE

¶ 2. (C) We have argued (ref A) that to achieve the conditions-based drawdown of KFOR troops agreed by the North Atlantic Council (ref B), it is crucial both to build local security capacity and address existing security threats now, while KFOR’s force posture remains robust. Northern Kosovo -- home base for illegal Serbian parallel structures and a region rife with smuggling and organized crime -- remains perhaps the greatest threat facing Kosovo in the short and medium terms. Kosovo institutions have exercised little control there since 1999, and practically none since riots after Kosovo’s independence in 2008. The result has been a zone where customs collection is essentially on an “honor system,” courts don’t function, international police all but fear to tread, and the only municipal governments are those elected by the Republic of Serbia in polls held in direct contravention of UNSCR 1244. Lack of activity or even access by Kosovo authorities in Northern Kosovo is a constant irritant for Kosovo’s leaders and the country’s majority Albanian population, and it represents for both the very real threat of the partition of Kosovo -- a reversal of ten years of USG policy and a grave threat to stability in Kosovo and the Western Balkan region. A series of recent statements by Belgrade’s leadership has established that the ultimate partition of Kosovo is, at a minimum, one of the policy options Belgrade has in view (ref C).

NORTHERN STRATEGY AN OPPORTUNITY

¶ 3. (C) For much of the past ten years, pursuit of our strategic goal of a stable, democratic, multi-ethnic Kosovo has taken a back seat in the North to tactical concerns of avoiding demonstrations and clashes. Fortunately, there is a growing consensus in the international community that the time is now to reverse this trend. Embassies of the major European powers, the U.S., the International Civilian Office and the European Union Rule of Law Mission EULEX have agreed on a Northern Strategy to displace the illegal parallel structures, introduce legitimate, legal GOK structures, and increase the presence and improve the performance of rule of law institutions (customs, police and courts) in Northern Kosovo. The GOK has accepted this strategy as its own, and has pledged budget resources toward its implementation.

¶ 4. (C) That this international and local alliance for action in Northern Kosovo comes while KFOR remains at a robust presence of roughly 10,000 troops is fortunate. The Northern Strategy (septel) has been designed to incentivize participation in GOK structures, not to impose them by force. That said, local forces, including Serbs and Albanians who benefit from the current near lawless environment, could attempt to use violence to disrupt attempts to collect customs duties or reopen courts. KFOR at 10,000 will play an important, if ancillary, role in this strategy to ensure Kosovo's long-term stability and territorial integrity. At 10,000, KFOR remains capable to respond to multiple, simultaneous incidents. KFOR's ability to respond with overwhelming force to multiple provocations will itself serve as a valuable deterrent. As recently as January 26, Serbian State Secretary for the Ministry of Kosovo and Metohija Oliver Ivanovic raised the specter of violence, arguing it is the inevitable outcome of the Northern Strategy. Whether meant as a warning, or simply to rattle the less committed elements of the International Community, Ivanovic's statement was a useful reminder that some Serb elements consider such threats and tactics as legitimate. A strong KFOR is the best deterrent to extremists on either side of the River Ibar.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE NORTH ARE PRACTICAL SASE BENCHMARKS

¶ 5. (SBU) While a robust KFOR is important to the success of the Northern Strategy, the implementation of the strategy is an opportunity for KFOR, a roadmap to a successful drawdown to deterrent presence. In our view, the central condition established by the North Atlantic Council for KFOR's eventual drawdown to deterrent presence is "maintenance of a safe and secure environment (SASE), with a threat level assessed as low." In the past, we have been all too quick to assess the durability of Kosovo's threat level based on the presence or absence of security incidents on a daily basis. Depending on a definition of SASE as the absence of security incidents risks masking a disturbing reality -- Northern Kosovo can be, at the same time, both free of security incidents and a frozen conflict in the making, at risk of partition. A Northern Kosovo like this, as it is today, is a far cry from stability, and is in fact an engine for future instability in Kosovo and the wider Western Balkan region.

¶ 6. (SBU) As the NAC debates the move to "Gate 2" (5,000 troops) and beyond, we would argue that the time is ripe to move from a negative operationalization of security, based on the absence of incidents, to a positive one. Such an operationalization would establish realistic, observable measures of success in reversing a decade of erosion in Northern Kosovo and establishing Kosovo's authority throughout its territory. Such benchmarks should include:

-- successful establishment of the decentralized municipality of North Mitrovica;

-- re-establishment of collection of customs revenue at Gates 1 and 31, as part of a single, Kosovo-wide customs regime;

-- the staffing of the Mitrovica District Court with ethnic Serb and Albanian judges recognized by the Kosovo justice system;

-- enhanced EULEX police presence in Northern Kosovo, and the full integration of Kosovo Serb members of the Kosovo Police (KP) in Kosovo Police structures;

-- the replacement of illegal parallel municipal authorities in Northern Kosovo with, legal, legitimately constituted Kosovo bodies;

-- the arrest and prosecution of major organized crime figures; and,

-- the normalization of electric power distribution and billing throughout Northern Kosovo by KEK, according to UNMIK law and regulation.

STATUS NEUTRAL, NOT VALUE NEUTRAL

¶ 7. (C) Some may protest that the establishment of such benchmarks represents a break with KFOR's status neutral stance. This is patently untrue. In no case do the benchmarks listed above violate UNSCR 1244, the source of KFOR's mandate, and in most cases -- like electricity and local self- government -- success in these benchmarks would represent a re-establishment of the UNSCR 1244 regime, respect of UNMIK laws and UNMIK regulations. In the end, this is true status neutrality. What some would request, only taking positions and actions which are equally acceptable to Belgrade and Pristina, isn't status neutrality, but rather value neutrality. This is neither in KFOR's interest nor in Kosovo's, and was never USG policy in the region.

COMMENT

¶ 8. (C) For ten years, stability in Northern Kosovo has been defined as merely the lack of conflict. Today's KFOR, at "Gate 1" levels of 10,000 troops, presents our best opportunity to define stability properly, as success in addressing Kosovo's most vexing security threat: Northern Kosovo as an emerging frozen conflict. Success in the Northern Strategy -- including reintroducing Kosovo structures to this region, and eliminating illegal Serbian parallel structures -- represents our best chance for a peaceful, stable Kosovo governing within the full extent of its recognized borders, and KFOR's surest roadmap to a successful reduction in troop strength to "Gate 2" and beyond. DELL