

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION



Joint meeting: Westminster and West Oxfordshire branches

The Ahtisaari proposal for Kosovo: a path to integration or stalemate?

Tuesday, 12 June at 6.30 pm
Committee Room 18, House of Commons
(Bob Laxton MP)

Alan Phillips

**President, Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention
for the Protection of National Minorities, Council of Europe**

Clive Baldwin

**Head of International Advocacy,
Minority Rights Group International**

The future status of Kosovo is due to be settled by the United Nations Security Council through agreement on a resolution agreeable to all interested parties, the Albanian Kosovars; the Serbs, now a small minority; and others. At the Security Council, Western nations support Mr Ahtisaari's plan but the Russian delegate stated that it did not provide a platform for a final settlement, hoping the Kosovo-Albanian side would make compromises and continue in the process. Meanwhile Serbia has taken over the Chairmanship of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers. Making it possible for the return of internally displaced persons, a critical element in the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) will be a vital element of the settlement; also improving living conditions for Kosovo's non-Albanian communities. While all agree the current status quo is not sustainable, is the proposed Security Council resolution premature? Is it really only Russia defending the rights of minorities there? Alan Philipps, speaking to the Assembly of the Council of Europe, the only organisation in the world to have produced a legally binding treaty devoted to minorities, has warned that "circumstances such as those in Kosovo demand that we take measures to protect and promote the rights of all communities, whether they be ethnic Serbs, ethnic Albanians or members of vulnerable smaller communities such as the Roma. No one should become a second class citizen yet the findings of the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee shows that there are real dangers of this in Kosovo."

This is an open meeting. All are welcome. You should allow 25 minutes to negotiate the heightened security procedures now deployed at the St Stephen's entrance.

For further information:

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