



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA**

**STATEMENT BY
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**AT THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
OF THE UN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

GENEVA, 15 MARCH 2005

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Honourable Mr. Chairman,

Allow me first to extend to You my congratulations on Your appointment as the Chairman of the 61th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights and to wish You successes in performing this important task.

The Albanian delegation endorses the statement made yesterday by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

The promotion and respect of human rights is one of the important missions of the United Nations, affirmed since the adoption of the UN Charter and lately in the Millennium Declaration. Human rights protection is a noble ideal of a democratic society, whose accomplishment may be difficult but not impossible.

The respect for human rights is not only a fundamental pillar of the most developed democratic societies, but also of the new democratic ones as the Albanian society. The Constitution of Albania embodies the basic principles of democracy, where the protection and respect of human rights are considered as essential values of the human rights culture that Albanian society is building up. The democratic reforms are the main objectives of the Albanian Government, not only because of the aspiration of our people towards the EU integration, but also as a necessity for the political, economic and social stability in the country, intending the improvement of living conditions of the Albanians in accordance with the European standards.

Becoming a member in the UN Economic and Social Council for 2005-2007 has paved the way for Albania to an active participation in the UN bodies by giving its contribution in facing the global challenges of democratic, economic and social developments of our days. In this regard, the Albanian Government is fully committed to take over all the responsibilities as a new member of ECOSOC, to foster the economic and social progress, strengthening of democracy and promotion of human rights all over the world.

The presentation by Albania of the initial reports on the six main UN conventions on human rights is a clear indicator of the importance that the Albanian Government pays to the reporting process to the UN treaty bodies on human rights. The Albanian Government is committed to the implementation of the recommendations of the relevant UN treaty bodies in order to further protection and promotion of human rights in Albania.

Considering that children are the future of our society, the Albanian Government has worked seriously on the adoption of the legislation on the rights of the children in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. I would like to stress the fact that the system of the protection of children in Albania is improving and being consolidated. The Albanian Government, in cooperation with the civil society and the UN specialized agencies, is working on the establishment of the contemporary infrastructure for the protection of children. The establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Rights of Children and some other important structures in central and local level are considered as important steps in this respect.

Albania has ratified the most important international documents on the protection of children's rights and it is in the process of the ratification of the Optional Protocols of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. I would like to emphasize that in Albania is being applied, as a new practice, the involvement of children in the planning, implementation and monitoring of programs and policies for the protection of their rights, aiming at the identification of children's problems and resolving them.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are aware that enhancement of the role of women and promotion of gender equality are the most efficient ways for emancipation and improvement of economic, social and cultural development of a society. A stable development can be fulfilled only by guaranteeing the equal rights and opportunities among men and women. Bearing this in mind, the Albanian Parliament has adopted in 2004 the Law on Gender Equality, which aims the full integration of the Albanian women in the political and social life of the country. The Albanian Government, pursuing the Vienna Declaration of 2003 and the guidelines of the Beijing Plan of Action, on which it is drafted and being implemented the National Platform on Women, is fully committed to improve the women's rights system, by the adoption of relevant legislation, establishment of the structures for the protection of women, raising the awareness on the women's rights, women's participation in the decision making process, and so on.

Mr. Chairman,

Considering the trafficking of human beings as a phenomenon that negatively effects the protection of human rights, the Albanian Government is implementing the National Strategy against the Trafficking of Human Beings and has compiled recently the National Strategy on Combating the Trafficking of the Children. These documents aim to maximize the fight against the trafficking of human beings and to strengthen the regional dialogue on this issue through the inter-state bilateral and multilateral agreements. With a view to prevent the illegal emigration, the Albanian Government has adopted in 2004 the National Strategy on the Management of the Migration, which will be followed soon by a Plan of Action.

With respect to the commitments in the framework of the Stabilization-Association Process, the Albanian Government has paid a special importance to the rapprochement of the standards on protection of the minority rights to the European ones. The Working Group on the Revising of the Albanian Legislation on Minorities has finished its work, providing the respective recommendations, which are included in the Plan of Action of Albania for the Implementation of the European Partnership Priorities. As regards the protection of the Roma rights, the Albanian Government has established the monitoring structure for the implementation of the National Strategy on Roma, which aims the integration of this community in all the dimensions of the Albanian society.

The efforts of the Albanian Government to foster the protection and respect of the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals have been complemented by the fruitful cooperation offered by the civil society, which is considered as a serious partner in the process of the reforms in the country.

Mr. Chairman,

The Albanian Government considers the regional cooperation as a key factor of stability, peaceful co-existence, tolerance and good understanding in the Western Balkans. We consider that the Western Balkans is a more secure and stable region. A remarkable progress has been evidenced in the context of economic and social development as well as in the structural reforms. At present, all the countries of the region, following their individual agenda, have a clear European prospective. The main challenges which will guarantee a sustainable progress are basically related with the ongoing improvement of governance, achievement of standards concerning the protection of human rights, and in particular of the rights of women, children and minorities. In this respect, Albania is having its constructive role by

participating more actively in the regional mechanisms, established for the enhancement of this cooperation.

Conceiving the definition of the final status of Kosova, as dynamic for the regional integration and its European aspirations, the Albanian Government, considers as very important, the development of the internal dialogue in Kosova between the Albanians and the Serb minority, and also the participation of the latter in the democratic institutions of Kosova. The Albanian Government considers also the protection and respect of the rights of all communities in Kosova, as the basis of the establishment of a civilized multiethnic society in the country, aiming its regional and European integration.

Referring to the latest developments in Kosova, I would like to emphasize the support of the Albanian Government for the courageous act of the Former-Prime Minister of Kosova, Mr. Haradinaj to cooperate with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. This is a clear evidence of the current emancipation and the democratic and civil values of the Kosova society. These developments indicate the responsibility and maturity of Kosova political factor and society. They are an added value to the image of the country and a clear message to the entire region concerning the way how should be the cooperation with the international mechanisms. The appointment of the new Prime Minister of Kosova and the keeping of momentum by the new government, its full commitment in achieving the standards, the positive consideration of the progress in the mid of 2005 and the beginning of dialogue regarding the final status of Kosova, would be the necessary steps towards the European prospective of Kosova. These steps obviously would influence positively to fostering of protection of minority rights, thus contributing to the enhancement of security and stability of Kosova and the region as a whole.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Commending the report of the High Panel on the Threats, Challenges and Changes, I would like to underscore that the conversion of the Commission on the Human Rights into a more representative body, would offer the possibility to all countries, to give a more concrete contribution in promotion of human rights, as an obligation deriving from the UN Charter and other international instruments on human rights. In this respect, the strengthening of the role of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the monitoring structures on protection and respect of human rights, would lead to a more efficient improvement of these rights all over the world and to the enhancement of the international cooperation in this field.

Thank you!