



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Statement on the Presevo Monument Dispute in Serbia**

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
24 January, 2013

The United States urges all parties in the Presevo monument dispute to continue to seek a solution. We continue to support the work of the OSCE Mission to Serbia in its efforts to facilitate dialogue between the Government of Serbia and the Albanian community in South Serbia.

We strongly condemn the acts of vandalism and violence targeting the Kosovo Serb community in response to a decision taken in Belgrade regarding a monument in Serbia. We call upon Kosovo authorities to investigate these crimes and prevent further illegal acts of retaliation.

We encourage all sides to show restraint and to avoid statements or actions that would increase tensions. We urge those in Kosovo and Albania to exercise restraint in their protests and to support a peaceful resolution of this issue. Issues such as this should not rise to the level of response we are seeing. They further distract from genuine issues of concern to be resolved in the Balkans, issues that require joint efforts, compromise, and dialogue. The Government of Serbia and representatives of the local communities in southern Serbia must engage constructively with each other to address the economic, social, and political challenges facing the area. We therefore encourage all parties to continue to work to find a long-term and durable solution to this dispute, with the assistance of the OSCE Mission, so that they can return to addressing broader issues.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.