

GUIDANCE: POLITICAL DIRECTOR VISIT TO PRISTINA AND  
BELGRADE: 6-8 FEBRUARY

**What is the Contact Group position?**

On 31 January the Contact Group met at Ministerial level in London (in the margins of the Afghanistan Conference) to discuss Kosovo. The meeting agreed a statement that introduced a number of new elements into the political process designed to support the work of the UN Status Envoy, Martti Ahtisaari. The statement made clear that:

- The final status process for Kosovo should be concluded during 2006;
- There were a distinct set of circumstances that differentiated Kosovo from other areas under dispute;
- The settlement needed to be acceptable to the majority of people in Kosovo, and;
- A negotiated settlement was the preferred outcome that would unlock the benefits of Euro-Atlantic integration.

Contact Group members agreed to convey some private messages from Ahtisaari in support of his work.

**What is the UK position on independence for Kosovo?**

UK has long made clear that independence is one option to be considered as a status outcome.

**What happened in the private meetings?**

The UK delivered a series of private messages prepared by Ahtisaari, as the US had done the preceding week. Not going to be drawn on what those messages were.

**Did the FCO Political Director say that the Contact Group had decided on independence for Kosovo? [i.e. as the Kosovo Serbs claimed to the press]**

No.

**The Process Itself: A longer-term vision**

It is important not to be distracted from the core issues, namely the process itself and what would underpin the settlement. Political leaders in Serbia and Kosovo need to demonstrate that they have the political vision and courage to bring stability and security on a sustainable basis to the region. For too long the region had faltered along prejudices of the past. Both Belgrade and Pristina