

Council of Europe
The Secretary General

Strasbourg, 10 June 2011

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to express my concern about the situation which followed the recent local elections in your country, and in particular the controversy related to the election of the Mayor of Tirana.

Many had hoped that these elections would set new standards when it comes to the conduct of the vote itself, as well as the attitude and responsibilities of political forces and the functioning of democratic institutions. These hopes have been reinforced by the smooth and orderly voting on the polling day. Regrettably, because of the dispute regarding the election of the Mayor in Tirana, Albania is now faced with a situation which has further aggravated political divisions and may threaten the efforts to ensure proper functioning of the democratic institutions, good governance and further economic progress. As a friend of Albania, I am concerned.

I should like to appeal, in the strongest possible terms, to you, Mr Prime Minister and to the leaders of other political forces in your country, to enter, immediately, into genuine dialogue on how to overcome the political deadlock, by respecting the rule of law and democratic principles, which is expected from every member of the Council of Europe.

I should like to inform you that, against the background of the decision by the Electoral College, I have the intention to ask the Venice Commission for an opinion on how to avoid similar situations in future elections.

Yours sincerely,



Thorbjørn Jagland

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Prime Minister of Albania

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