Introduction
During the last five years, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK) has supported the establishment and professional development of the Assembly of Kosovo. Coordination and cooperation with all projects and donors working with the Assembly of Kosovo has been one of its main priorities. This article focuses on parliamentary donor coordination, and provides a reflection on the role of the Assembly during the transition period before the resolution of the future status of Kosovo.

The main developments in the Assembly of Kosovo in 2006
Following the parliamentary elections in October 2004, the Assembly of Kosovo commenced its second mandate (2004-2007). While political efforts focused on the policy of Standards implementation, the political landscape was marked by an intensified struggle between the governing coalition and the parliamentary opposition. Despite the political struggle, substantial parliamentary reforms have been implemented.

In early 2006 and upon the request of the Assembly President, the OSCE Mission assisted in developing a reform package for the Assembly, which included the introduction of more regular plenary sessions and the parliamentary question time. In March 2006, fundamental changes to the leadership of Kosovo’s institutions occurred through the appointment of a new Prime Minister, a new President of the Assembly and a new President of Kosovo. The new President of the Assembly, Mr Kole Berisha, with the assistance of the OSCE Mission and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), began to implement the reform package and succeeded in instituting a pattern of regular parliamentary questions, budget oversight and interpellation of Ministers.

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An assessment of the functioning of the Assembly of Kosovo from a procedural point of view can be found in the regular OMIK monitoring reports. A compilation of the reports
The year 2006 could be identified as having three distinct trends regarding the functioning of the Assembly of Kosovo, all of which reflect the increased diversification of its work: (1.) moving from merely adopting legislation to reviewing the implementation of legislation; (2.) increased knowledge and the use of the Rules of Procedure during political debates and a self-correcting review of compliance with the Rules of Procedure; and (3.) increased assertiveness on the part of the Assembly to exercise its role in budget review, although in 2006 the development of the Kosovo Consolidated Budget remained under the authority of the Economic Fiscal Council, an UNMIK-led body.

Important laws, prioritized by the Contact Group within the framework of Standards implementation, were reviewed and adopted, such as the Law on Languages, the Law on Cultural Heritage and the Law on Religious Freedom. OMIK’s cooperation with the Stability Pact for SEE, with NATO PA and with the European Parliament along with the organization of various inter-parliamentary events have contributed to enhanced regional inter-parliamentary cooperation with the Assembly of Kosovo. In June 2006, the Assembly co-organized, for the second time, a regional parliamentary conference in Kosovo, where parliamentarians from all neighbouring countries participated in a discussion on security oversight.

The effective functioning of the Assembly Administration requires special attention in order to achieve sustainable improvement in the work of the Assembly of Kosovo. During 2006, the Assembly Administration took initial steps to improve and maintain its professional functioning. The ultimate goal should be an Assembly Administration that is flexible, has internal mobility and offers an enhanced perspective of career development for its staff. In early 2006, one of the first challenges of the Assembly of Kosovo related to mismanagement, the lack of organization of the Assembly Administration and the Office of the Assembly Secretary. A parliamentary inquiry committee is currently preparing recommendations to avoid such mismanagement in the future. A second challenge concerns the lack of sufficient knowledge of legal, political and expert language skills by professional staffers in the Assembly, which prevents them from producing quality outputs. Thirdly, there is a lack of procedures for the functioning of the Assembly Administration, the status of personnel, procedures to clarify the position of civil servants from political staff in the Assembly and unit-related procedures for the proper functioning of every unit with the Secretariat. As covering the period from 6 August 2005 to 4 August 2006 has been published in: OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Reports on the monitoring of the Assembly of Kosovo, Pristina, January 2007, 142 p., published on www.osce.org/kosovo See also the article: Andrew J. Taylor, ‘We are not asking you to hug each other, but we ask you to co-exist’: the Kosovo Assembly and the Politics of Co-existence, Journal of Legislative Studies, Vol. 11, No. 1, Spring 2005, p. 105-137.