



**Letter to the Editor**  
International Relations Committee  
Frank Koszorus, Jr., Chair  
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Via email

Letters to the Editor  
The Washington Post

Dear Editor:

John Podesta ["Standing With Kosovo Again," July 23] makes a strong case in favor of independence for Kosovo. Two caveats warrant attention.

If Kosovo becomes independent, the international community, including the United States, must ensure that the rights of the non-Albanian population are respected. Because intolerance toward minorities characterizes the region, minority rights guarantees – a prerequisite to democracy and stability -- must not be entrusted exclusively to the local political elites. Similar previous commitments have failed. For example, prior to annexing Transylvania after the First World War, Romanians promised to grant the province's 1.7 million Hungarians full rights and autonomy. Eighty-seven years later that promise has yet to be fulfilled.

Podesta acknowledges the need to protect the rights of all citizens of Kosovo. His statement of a country "not of Kosovar Albanians or Kosovar Serbs, but a nation for all Kosovars," confuses citizenship and nationality as understood in the region, however. That statement thereby unwittingly undermines minority rights.