



## THE NORKET DISTRICT

### *Confidential Instructions for the Representative of the DARBEEK GOVERNMENT*

You are a trusted adviser and long-time friend of the President of Darbek. The President himself has asked you to meet with a representative of the Norket District Parliament. You have learned that the representative you will be meeting is a close adviser to the Chairman of the District Parliament. The Chairman of the District Parliament is also the leader of the Norket District National Movement (“NDNM”), the group the President considers responsible for starting the separatist fervor that has swept across the District. The Chairman-in-Office of OSCE proposed that a representative of the European Union participates in the meeting. The European Union is a major partner for your government. Every year, you receive EU subsidies for the development of your country. In the long term, if the situation in the region settles down, you could even consider becoming a privileged partner of the European Union. This would be a great perspective for your country.

The following memo summarizes the President’s advice to you.

#### **Basic concerns**

The President is concerned about the mounting strength of the opposition Darbek People’s Party (“DPP”). The DPP is not officially tied to the Darbek People’s Movement (“DPM”), but many members of the DPP have also been supporting the efforts of the DPM in the Norket District. The DPP has recently been gaining significant popular support because of its vocal resistance to the separatist tendencies of the Norket District. With elections only a year away, we must be sure to minimize the extent to which the DPP can use the situation in the District as a tool for generating support.

In reality, the positions of the Government and the DPP on the issue of independence of the Norket District do not differ greatly. However, we do disagree with the DPP on the extent to which minority rights protection should be offered to the Norkets in the District. It was DPP extremists who were responsible for pushing through the recent language and education law. (The President privately opposes these laws and would like to see them changed.) The Government agrees with the DPP that Darbek must maintain permanent control over the territory of the Norket District. A loss of control would be devastating for the District Governor, his immediate entourage, and the Darbek members of the District Parliament. In fact, losing control of the District would likely to mean the end of their political careers, if not our own.

Even more threatening is the prospect of external intervention. We are concerned that Emperia might use the unrest in the District as an excuse to intervene in our internal affairs and reassert their control over Darbek through military force. (For example, they continue to offer the use of their so-called “peacekeepers”.) We are also concerned about aggression from

Norket in the form of “citizen militias” which are assembling on our border with Norket. While Norket assert these are “informal” groups, we suspect that the Norket government is at least encouraging the formation of such groups, if not covertly supplying and training them. They may try to use these groups to seize the District territory by military force without officially declaring any state of hostility.

In the longer term, our primary concern is for the continued development of a democratic and independent Darbek state, free from interference from Norket, Emperia or the international community. We do not intend to build a Darbek state for ethnic Darbeks only. We regard any person of Norket descent who is willing to be loyal to the Darbek government and learn our language as an equal citizen. We also recognize the right of ethnic Norkets to preserve their cultural heritage and language and we will protect their right to do so. No one need be excluded from an independent Darbek. However, it is difficult, at the present time, to build public support for measures that are seen as protecting or favoring ethnic Norkets in Darbek. Like any newly independent state, we need time to develop all the institutions of a democratic state.

### **Analysis of the current situation**

This is the land of the Darbek people, and it is here where it actually appeared as a separate people from the synthesis of the local population and the migrating tribes. The medieval fortress which used to be the center of the largest and most powerful Darbek state before it joined the Empire is located in the District. Our cultural heritage lies in the District. Before joining the Empire, the Darbek people had a numerical majority on the modern Norket state, until the recent tragic and cruel deportations left the Darbeks a minority in those lands. This obvious policy of forcing Darbeks out has been implemented by the Norket leaders on all their captive lands for a long time, and now they want to tear the historical heart out of our country's breast, to take away the cradle of our nation. This can only provoke just indignation.

It is not surprising that the deportation of many Darbeks from the District during the reign of the Empire created significant resentment among the Darbek population, and unfortunately, it was not possible to control how some radicals in Darbek have treated Norkets recently. This, in turn, has provoked a confrontation with Norket and the rise of an ultra-militant National Movement in Norket that is largely to blame for the current situation in the District. We are, of course, sorry for the clashes and even murders that took place, but it is impossible to deny that these events, the inter-ethnic clashes and the destabilization of the internal situation, were provoked by the actions of the separatists of the Norket District and the National Movement in Norket.

The President has told you that he would be willing to grant the Norket District a certain degree of autonomy, provided that it is conditioned on the District remaining as a province of the Darbek State. For example, we would be willing to allow the District Parliament to make certain decisions in the District. We could even perhaps allow democratic elections for the position of District Governor when national elections are held in two years, provided they are free from interference from Norket.

In the end, the Constitution guarantees the inviolability of provincial borders within Darbek, and we are obliged to follow its articles – and not to revise them. Our position toward the Norket people is exceptionally noble and considerate. They have been misled by the extremists who are trying to re-draw the borders of our country. It should also be remembered that the standard of living in the District is higher than that neighboring areas of Darbek. Thus, our government not only does not exploit the Norkets of the District. Instead, it has provided them with favorable conditions for economic activity. We make no claims against our neighbors. At the same time, we will not let others lay claim to our land, which we inherited from our ancestors. Our peoples have lived together, on the territory of this District, for a millennium, and there are no reasons why in the future, in a reformed and democratized Darbek, they should not be able to coexist.

Maneuvering between the extremist demands of our own nationalistic Darbek People's Party and pursuing an enlightened policy toward the District is our best hope for the democratic and economic development of the whole nation. The alternative is chaos, civil war and the inevitable loss of the Norket District in a situation of complete political destabilization. Our national interests therefore require that we do make some reasonable reforms in the District and to take some precautionary measures to prevent further violence in the District and protect Darbek from military incursions from Norket. However, it must be clearly understood that any political reform or other action taken to stabilize the situation in the District has to be seen as furthering the goal of building an independent Darbek state. We cannot be seen as having made concessions to the Norkets in the District, the Norket government, or the international community.

### **Approach to the talks**

Given the nature of the current political situation, the best hopes for peace must include our Government staying in power. If we are seen as making concessions to the separatists in the District, or to Norket, Emperia, or the international community, it is likely that the DPP will force us out of power. Accordingly, we do not believe that the Norket government should play a formal role in these negotiations, and it certainly cannot participate in any manner that suggests that it is an equal party. Similarly, if our policy receives negative coverage in the media, then our ability to negotiate real reform for the District will be constrained or eliminated. We cannot take any move if it means losing face. Thus, the sequence of the negotiations and of any agreements is critical. We should first seek commitments to respect the *current* borders of Darbek (from threats from both Emperia and Norket), measures to protect the lives of Darbeks living in Norket, and assistance in securing and stabilizing the situation in the District. After securing these agreements, which should demonstrate the resolve and the toughness of our government, then we can publicly indicate our intention to make political reforms in the District in consultation with the District Parliament.

We should also seek to find measures to stabilize in the District. The recent flag incident risks becoming an uncontrollable spark. The Norket District National Movement must be contained and it is not clear that our District police forces alone will be sufficient to preserve the peace and protect the lives of Darbeks in the District.

In your upcoming meeting, you are free to explore any arrangements you think are interesting. All of your discussions at this stage, however, must be on an unofficial, non-committal basis. Any commitments, including one to start any formal negotiation must be cleared by the President first. You are not obligated to enter into negotiations, if you believe that we would be better off not negotiating with the District Parliament. If you decide to break off negotiations, the President would like a report on how you propose to meet our interests if we do not negotiate with the District Parliament. Be also aware that an EU representative will be present during the meeting. We wish you luck in dealing with this delicate and crucial matter.