



# Security Council

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## **Letter dated 23 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council**

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a briefing provided by Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, the Niger, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam, in connection with the video-teleconference on “Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)” convened on Wednesday, 21 October 2020. Statements were also delivered by His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, and Ms. Meliza Haradinaj-Stublla.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, the briefing and statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* Vassily **Nebenzia**  
President of the Security Council



**Annex I****Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, Zahir Tanin**

During these past seven months, Kosovo has persevered through multiple and overlapping challenges, starting with the ongoing worldwide pandemic. Since it first began in Kosovo in March, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has moved through different phases. The initial response involved stringent measures and lockdowns, but later moved towards a more relaxed approach, prioritizing economic recovery. The pandemic itself has had severe spikes, as well as stable periods, and its spread is now again increasing. While the Government of Prime Minister Kurti maintained very strict lockdown measures for most of its short tenure during the pandemic, these were relaxed during his Government's last days. The succeeding Government, led by Prime Minister Avdullah Hoti, continued that approach, relaxing many of the strict measures previously in force, focusing in particular on economic recovery. Both Governments faced the reality that the public health infrastructure in Kosovo was insufficient and underequipped to respond to the rapidly spreading pandemic. That affected all aspects of the response, from hospitalization and treatment to testing and tracing, as well as the implementation of any other preventive measures. However, it is important to emphasize that the health-care system, and front-line health workers in particular, have worked heroically to make the best use of the limited resources.

The socioeconomic consequences have been severe and are not limited to the measurable macroeconomy. Both Kosovo's formal and informal economic sectors have undergone a severe shock, particularly affecting young people and their education, as well as women and vulnerable communities. The psychological fallout is also widely felt across society.

Certainly, Kosovo was not left alone in its battle against the pandemic. The international community came forward to strengthen Kosovo's professional and institutional capacity and to mitigate the pandemic's social and economic impact. During September, the European Commission approved a €138-million financial assistance package, of which €50 million was specifically directed to the COVID-19 response. The funds have augmented other material support, financial aid, loans and expertise, which have been extended to Kosovo by the European Union (EU), the World Bank, the World Health Organization and bilaterally.

We in the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, alongside the United Nations Kosovo team of agencies, funds and programmes, have also significantly adapted our activities to help meet the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our focus has been on providing direct support to people, institutions and communities in the framework of the Mission's strategic support for dialogue and trust-building in Kosovo. Projects have been tailored to contribute to the response to COVID-19.

The disproportionate impact of the pandemic on already vulnerable populations is of particular concern. There has been an increase in the number of security incidents reported against vulnerable and non-majority communities during the period of the pandemic restrictions. Significant increases in cases of domestic violence and violence against children have also been reported.

The removal of the reciprocity measures on goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Government of Prime Minister Hoti created an impetus for restarting the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. That was accompanied by the appointment of the European Union's new dedicated Special Representative, Miroslav Lajčák, and a high-level meeting hosted by the President of France and

the Chancellor of Germany on 10 July, leading to the official resumption of the EU-facilitated dialogue. The United States Government also launched new initiatives for improving relations between Pristina and Belgrade, which culminated in a meeting hosted by the President of the United States in September, during which agreements were signed in the economic and other spheres. I commend Belgrade and Pristina for resuming the negotiation process and call on them to maintain a constructive dialogue process despite the challenges and differences of views. The recent meetings in Brussels and Washington demonstrate the potential for progress when international resources are combined with leadership on the ground to move difficult issues forward.

Of course, the most important conditions to be met in order for negotiations to succeed are political unity, strong commitment and goodwill among leaders, both in Pristina and in Belgrade, and sustained international support. We welcome the renewed engagement and encourage both sides to find common ground to overcome disputed issues and reach a comprehensive normalization agreement.

Alongside the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, this year we also mark the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. I again stress the importance of women's meaningful participation in the peace process at all levels, particularly in the ongoing dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, as part of ensuring the broader representation of different sectors of society, including young people and communities. Such an approach is central to achieving results and helps to ensure that they correspond to the real needs of the people.

Since my last briefing to the Council (see S/2020/339), important steps have been made to advance the investigative and judicial processes of the Kosovo Specialist Prosecutor's Office and the Kosovo Specialist Chambers. In June, the Special Prosecutor's Office announced the filing of indictments against President Hashim Thaçi and the leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo, Kadri Veseli, alongside others whose names were not made public. President Thaçi has indicated his intention to step down from office if and when his indictment is publicly confirmed by pre-trial judges. In September, arrests were carried out pursuant to warrants and transfer orders issued by the Chambers. Three individuals concerned are now in pre-trial detention, with one facing war crimes charges. The two others are being held on suspicion of intimidation, retaliation, violating the secrecy of proceedings and unlawful disclosure of protected information. Their arrests followed the publication of allegedly leaked prosecution-related documents, which were also claimed to have included some names of possible witnesses.

Some of the public reactions in Kosovo to the June announcement of the higher-profile indictments have been of concern, including attempts to question the legitimacy of the Specialist Chambers and accusations that they are politically motivated. Unfortunately, some political leaders have not always helped to rectify such false narratives.

As is evident to all members of the Council the international community, the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office are integral parts of the Kosovo justice system with mandates crucial to Kosovo's rule of law aspirations and to Kosovo's future. I therefore take this opportunity to urge the leaders to redouble their efforts to counter misinformation and ensure that the Prosecution and Chambers proceedings receive unambiguous institutional and political support, essential for strengthening the rule of law and long-term stability in Kosovo.

Ruling by a slim majority, the current Government, led by Prime Minister Hoti, is contending with significant parliamentary opposition, as well as widely

diverging priorities among coalition partners. Having been in office for barely over 100 days, constant disagreements among its constituent parties and difficulty reaching compromises have hampered and delayed its responses in the critical areas that I have highlighted.

In the now 75-year history of the United Nations, never has the need for global solidarity and international cooperation been as clearly demonstrated as today. The COVID-19 pandemic and the geopolitical and ethnic tensions expressed in conflicts across the globe, as well as globally increasing inequality, are mutually and negatively reinforcing trends. For places such as Kosovo — still suffering the consequences of past conflict — cooperation, unity of political voice and vision, dialogue and preventing extreme polarization should be highest order priorities. This solidarity, especially during the current pandemic, should focus intensively on attaining the difficult balance among public health, economic recovery and human rights, a conundrum presently defying Governments the world over.

In this same spirit, I wish to conclude by reiterating the unqualified commitment of United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to supporting the EU-facilitated dialogue, and indeed for the efforts by leaders on both sides to move decisively towards a comprehensive agreement and long-term peace and reconciliation.

I thank all members of the Council for their kind attention today, and for their continuing support of UNMIK.

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**Annex II****Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Karen Van Vlierberge**

[Original: French]

I thank Special Representative Zahir Tanin for his detailed briefing. I also regret that it was not possible for the Special Representative of the European Union, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, to give a complementary briefing. However, it is in particular thanks to his resolute effort that we have been able to make further progress in the dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade. The European Union (EU) is therefore demonstrating once again its firm determination to fully carry out its role as facilitator.

Belgium welcomes the resumption of the dialogue on 12 July and the commitment of both parties. We encourage both parties to continue along that path in a spirit of openness and compromise. Belgium calls on both parties to work in good faith with a view to reaching a comprehensive and legally binding agreement on the normalization of their relations. Such an agreement will not only contribute to regional stability, but is also indispensable if the two parties are to continue to make progress on the European path.

We call for the implementation of the agreements already reached in the framework of the dialogue. This would make it possible to significantly improve the lives of many Serbian and Kosovar citizens. The recent developments regarding the Merdarë common crossing point, financed and built with EU assistance, are an important step in this regard.

We welcome the renewed commitment by the parties to make progress on the humanitarian issues of refugees, displaced persons and missing persons. These issues are essential to any lasting reconciliation and healing. We call for further efforts in this regard.

Women and youth play a key role in peacebuilding, and their meaningful participation must be ensured. This includes significant representation of women in delegations as well as in working groups created to foster dialogue.

The new Kosovar Government has reaffirmed its strategic commitment to the European path. Kosovo must now do its utmost to relaunch the reform process. We call on all Kosovar political parties to come together to that end.

Belgium remains extremely attentive to the situation of the rule of law. In particular, we strongly condemn the extremely worrisome attempts to weaken the Specialist Chambers in Kosovo or to obstruct their work. This transitional justice mechanism, by providing victims with the truth and establishing responsibility for very serious crimes, is essential in order to restore people's trust, and therefore achieve lasting peace.

We reiterate our full support for the efforts of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, which plays an important role in the further development of strong, effective and accountable rule of law institutions.

We welcome the recent adoption by the Assembly of Kosovo of a constitutional amendment that makes the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence directly applicable.

We welcome the commitment of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and the United Nations Kosovo team in the fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in cooperation with the local authorities. The

European Union and its member States have also proved to be an important partner in this fight. Substantive regional cooperation is essential to combat the virus and its consequences, and we encourage the parties to work towards that end. We reiterate the Special Representative's call on all Kosovo institutions and stakeholders to respect human rights and leave no one behind in the fight against COVID-19.

**Annex III****Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Geng Shuang**

[Original: English and Chinese]

I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin for his briefing, and welcome the presence of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić, and his statement. I also listened to the statement by Ms. Meliza Haradinaj-Stublla.

In July and September, Serbia and Kosovo held several rounds of dialogue, facilitated by the European Union (EU), focusing on the issues of missing persons and economic cooperation, marking the official resumption of the dialogue between the two parties after two years. On 4 September, the two sides signed an agreement on the normalization of economic relations and agreed to build roads and railways connecting the two sides. It is an important step forward. China welcomes these positive developments and hopes that the two sides will maintain political good faith, consolidate the positive momentum and achieve substantive results in the dialogue at an early date.

China's position on the Kosovo issue has been consistent. We respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia, understand the legitimate concerns of the Serbian side on the Kosovo issue and appreciate the positive efforts made by Serbia to seek a political solution to the Kosovo issue. China supports the efforts of both sides to seek a mutually acceptable solution through sincere dialogue and consultation on the legal basis of resolution 1244 (1999).

The reconciliation and a harmonious coexistence of all ethnic groups in Kosovo is in the common interests of all ethnicities. The Kosovo Government should create a favourable environment to this end and enhance amity and mutual trust among different communities. We hope Kosovo will continue to implement the Brussels agreement and effectively promote the formation of the community of Serbian municipalities. China notes that, according to the Secretary-General's report (S/2020/964), the municipality of Deçan/Dečani has recently resumed rail construction in the special protective zone of the Visoki Dečani monastery, giving rise to tensions and sparking wide international concern. We hope that the Government of Kosovo will abide by the relevant laws and the decision of the Constitutional Court to protect the property rights around the monastery.

Lastly, we reiterate our appreciation for the positive efforts of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin and the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) to push for a political solution to the Kosovo issue. China supports UNMIK in continuing to implement its mandate and play an important role, and calls on all parties to implement resolution 2518 (2020) in good faith to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel to create favourable conditions for UNMIK's mandate implementation.

**Annex IV****Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

We thank Mr. Tanin for his briefings today. We also express our gratitude for the noble work of the Special Representative and his team in the field, who continue exerting extraordinary efforts to discharge their mandate in the face of the challenging health circumstances currently affecting the world. We also thank His Excellency Mr. Dačić and Ms. Meliza Haradinaj-Stubllla for their statements.

We take this opportunity to warmly welcome the reports that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the United Nations Kosovo team are, together with the political leaders and the efforts of the Kosovar people, tackling the challenge of the health crisis head on, especially to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the most vulnerable.

This is a good opportunity to urge the various political factions in Kosovo to set their differences aside as they risk hampering the greater task of safeguarding the public health of the people. These activities will require the full support of all sectors of society to public institutions. In this regard, we encourage donor countries to increase their support through official development assistance and innovative financial and debt-relief programmes for countries most affected by the pandemic and its devastating consequences.

We also call for the vaccine and other health technologies required to tackle coronavirus disease to be made available on an equitable basis and their global distribution guaranteed.

We welcome with satisfaction the agreements signed by the parties under the auspices of the United States to facilitate economic normalization. We likewise welcome the resumption of talks between Belgrade and Pristina, facilitated by the European Union. We understand that they have been crucial steps, and provided a great opportunity to reach a comprehensive and legally binding agreement on the on the normalization of relations.

We echo the call of the Secretary-General on the leaders of Belgrade and Pristina to show flexibility in their positions in order to overcome differences. At the same time, we urge them to identify an inclusive process that involves women and young people in consultation and decision-making processes affecting the present and future of all residents.

During the Arria Formula meeting we convened in September on the implementation of resolutions on youth, peace and security in peacekeeping operations, we heard from a representative of UNMIK that, while Kosovo had youngest population of Europe, their opportunities were very limited — limitations illustrated by the representatives of civil society, Dielza and Angela. We echo their accounts. All efforts to advance peace and security in Kosovo must have the full backing and participation of young people in building inter-ethnic trust, local governance and economic development.

Like other colleagues, we express our concern about the construction of a road in the special protection zone around Visoki Dečani monastery. We hope that the suspension of construction will be definitive so as to conserve the areas considered of cultural value for humanity, and to uphold inter-community trust.



As this is the final meeting where we will discuss this important issue before my country leaves the Council at the end of this year, we want to reiterate our support for UNMIK's ongoing initiatives in collaboration with the United Nations Kosovo team, which are aimed at empowering young people, women and civil society and at strengthening multilingualism, inter-community dialogue and respect for human rights. We also recognize the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo for its work in strengthening the justice system and the independence of the judiciary.

In conclusion, we congratulate the parties on the progress achieved in this period. For those gains to last, we urge the parties to accept the commitments of the Brussels declaration and to act on the basis of resolution 1244 (1999). We reiterate our support and appreciation to UNMIK, the Kosovo Force, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for their dedication to building peace for the Kosovar people.

**Annex V****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson**

We would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his briefing as well as the Foreign Ministers of Serbia and of Kosovo for their statements.

The normalization of the relations between Serbia and Kosovo is the key to regional stability. We strongly support the efforts of the European Union-appointed Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristine dialogue and other Western Balkans regional issues, Miroslav Lajčák. We welcome the resumption of the dialogue process on 12 July. The two sides have shown commitment and engagement and we are encouraged by the substantial work done since July. It is crucial that, ultimately, all open issues will be resolved. We encourage both parties to advance engagement with their civil societies, in particular with women and young people, as they can significantly contribute to solutions on the issues at the negotiation table.

We welcome that both the Government of Serbia and the government of Kosovo have confirmed their strategic commitment to their European Union (EU) future. The EU-facilitated dialogue is a key condition for taking steps in their respective European path.

Estonia commends Mr. Tanin for leading the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in helping to advance Kosovo's democratization process and promoting human rights. We particularly appreciate UNMIK's support for women's participation in decision-making processes, as well as for initiatives aimed at young people and the fight against gender-based violence. During the critical time of the coronavirus disease pandemic, we commend the supportive actions taken by UNMIK in helping Kosovo to alleviate the challenges caused by the pandemic.

We welcome that the new Government of Kosovo has confirmed its strategic commitment to the EU path. Now all political actors should demonstrate that they can work together and build political consensus towards common goals. It is essential for Kosovo to reinvigorate the reform processes and ensure that citizens receive the necessary medical assistance and economic support. We also stress that respect of and cooperation with the Kosovo Specialist Chambers is an international obligation for Kosovo.

As strong cooperation with the e European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo becomes increasingly more significant, we would welcome the strategic review of UNMIK in due course.

Finally, we call on both parties to engage in further trust-building and refrain from negative rhetoric that could increase tensions and cause a setback in the dialogue. We expect both parties to engage in good faith and in a spirit of compromise and to work to reach a comprehensive, legally binding agreement on the normalization of relations in accordance with international law and the EU acquis.

## Annex VI

### **Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Nathalie Broadhurst Estival**

[Original: French]

I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Zahir Tanin, for his briefing. I also welcome the participation in this video-conference of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia as well as the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Diaspora of Kosovo.

One of the main challenges facing Kosovo today is the full normalization of relations with Serbia through a final settlement of their dispute. Reaching a comprehensive, final and legally binding agreement is one of the preconditions for both Serbia and Kosovo making progress as concerns their prospects for joining the European Union.

In that regard, we fully support the dialogue facilitated by European Union Special Representative Miroslav Lajčák, and we deeply regret the fact that he was unable to provide us today with an update on the dialogue between the two parties. The European Union's mediation, I would recall, is based on a General Assembly resolution. The dispute between Serbia and Kosovo is a European security issue, which fully justifies the role of the European Union in this matter.

We welcome the fact that Serbia and Kosovo decided to resume their dialogue at the 10 July Paris summit, which was co-chaired by President Emmanuel Macron and Chancellor Angela Merkel. The dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina resumed in July following a 20-month hiatus. We welcome the initial progress made in the framework of that dialogue, particularly on three issues: economic cooperation; internally displaced persons and refugees; and missing persons. We call for those negotiations to continue and for concrete progress to be made. It is vital that all contentious subjects, including the most sensitive ones, be dealt with, in particular that of the Association of Serb Majority Municipalities. We invite the actors involved in this issue to support the European Union mediation and to coordinate their efforts with it.

We welcome the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), which is working tirelessly to promote security and stability as well as the strengthening of the rule of law and the protection of human rights in Kosovo and the region. In particular, UNMIK and the United Nations agencies in Kosovo have played a major role in helping Kosovo cope with the coronavirus disease pandemic, in addition to the massive amount of aid provided by the European Union. UNMIK's efforts must continue, in coordination, of course, with the initiatives of other regional and international actors, in particular the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX).

France reiterates its full support for the EULEX mission, in particular in the context of its support activities for the Kosovo Specialist Chambers. France reiterates its commitment to the fight against impunity for perpetrators of serious crimes. We therefore call on all actors to continue to support and cooperate with the Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office.

Finally, France is absolutely convinced that Serbia and Kosovo have a common European future. The European Union, which is the largest trading partner of, the largest investor in and the largest donor to both countries, will continue its efforts to facilitate the conclusion of a comprehensive and legally binding agreement between the two parties, which will contribute to the lasting stabilization of the

Western Balkans and the European rapprochement of the two countries. France remains deeply committed to this issue, in support of both parties and the European Union mediation.

## Annex VII

### **Statement by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Christoph Heusgen**

When I hear the Serbian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ivica Dačić, speak, I have the impression that it is a copy-paste from previous interventions. We hear so much about the “horrendous crimes committed by the Kosovars”. I am just stunned that in his interventions we never hear anything about the horrendous crimes, ethnic cleansing and mass deportation that were committed against the Kosovars in 1998 and 1999. I really regret that.

The Serbian Foreign Minister always says that there are not 116 but only 92 countries recognizing Kosovo. I am surprised by this policy of trying to get countries to de-recognize Kosovo. Our Serbian friends are shooting themselves in the foot, because if they are honest about trying to join the European Union (EU), they should work very hard to see that Kosovo is recognized, and they should recognize it themselves. In the historical review we heard from the Serbian Foreign Minister, there was no mention of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 2010 (see A/64/881), which clearly stated that the declaration of independence of Kosovo did not violate international law. The logic behind this is that the country is legitimate and should be recognized.

The discussion at the very beginning about how Kosovo is represented in the Security Council shows that the unresolved relationship between Kosovo and Serbia not only remains a source of tension between the Kosovo and Serbia but also affects the whole region. It is an obstacle to the everyday life of the peoples of both countries and to both Kosovo’s and Serbia’s path to the European Union.

In that context, let me highlight the fact that we very much appreciate and fully support the work of the European Union Special Representative, Miroslav Lajčák. We really appreciate that the normalization dialogue restarted in Brussels in July. I must say that I share the frustration of many that we are not farther than where we were before.

The two sides have shown commitment and engagement, and we are encouraged by the substantial work that has been done so far. In addressing the topics on the table, we expect the two parties to continue to engage constructively in good faith, in a spirit of compromise. The goal must be a comprehensive, legally binding, sustainable agreement that contributes to regional stability and enables both countries to become members of the European Union. The EU-facilitated dialogue is the only way to turn both countries’ dreams into a reality for their citizens.

We were not very happy that you, Mr. President, did not allow Mr. Lajčák to brief us today, because with this dialogue, we want to turn the discussion to the future. Where do we go and where do we make progress? Otherwise we repeat ourselves and talk about the past. So we need to look to the future, and I think that any picture of the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia remains incomplete without Mr. Lajčák briefing the Council. We very much regret that that briefing has been blocked by the President.

We call on Serbia and Kosovo to increase their efforts to build trust and confidence, preparing the peoples of both countries for compromise and reconciliation. Positive rhetoric and concrete confidence-building measures are of the essence in that context.

I would like to thank the Special Representative for his words, particularly now as we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) this month. The United Nations and the EU Special Representative are exploring options for

enhancing the role of women in dialogue. We call upon both sides to include women representatives and civil society in the dialogue and to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women.

I want to highlight the importance of the Special Chamber of the Supreme Court. We expect Kosovo to show its ongoing commitment to the Special Chamber as a demonstration of its commitment to the rule of law and ending impunity. We call on all actors to cooperate with the Special Prosecution Office of Kosovo in order to advance accountability in the country as a prerequisite for building trust.

## Annex VIII

### **Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Muhsin Syihab**

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Zahir Tanin for his insightful briefing. I would also like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

I would also like to join others in expressing our views over the recent developments in the field. Today I would like to bring the following three points to the attention of the Council.

First, the Indonesian Government steadfastly upholds the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States Members of the United Nations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Indonesia will not condone any act that violates the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a State. Dialogue is the best and only way to address differences.

Secondly, we call for the resumption of dialogue. We welcome the lifting of the 100 per cent tariff imposed on the goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. That development leads us to the official resumption of the European Union-facilitated dialogue, focusing on issues related to missing and displaced persons, as well as economic cooperation.

Indonesia also welcomes the economic normalization commitment that was signed under the auspices of the United States. That commitment has shown us that there will be no economic progress if recognition and withdrawal of recognition campaigns between the parties continue. During this critical circumstance of the pandemic, no action is more important than engaging in dialogue.

Thirdly, with regard to the role of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in the region, Indonesia commends the Mission's multiple capacity-building initiatives and workshops, including inter-ethnic youth cooperation. The meaningful participation of young people in peace processes and decision-making is crucial for reconciliation and building collective memory towards breaking the community divide.

In conclusion, for almost two years, Indonesia has followed closely the progress of UNMIK in seeking a peaceful solution in the region through dialogue. Sadly, there is still no significant progress, as the parties continue to present diverging narratives on the expected outcomes of dialogue. We support the Secretary-General's call for the leadership in Belgrade and Pristina to demonstrate flexibility and creativity to overcome their differences. Political leaders need to ensure an inclusive approach through greater participation by key stakeholders, in particular women and youth, in consultations and decision-making processes. Young people are the hope for a future to which Indonesia — even beyond our term in the Security Council — will always be committed as a true partner for peace.

## Annex IX

### **Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Niger to the United Nations**

[Original: French]

At the outset, allow me to thank Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for the quality of his briefing.

The new Government of Kosovo has prioritized economic recovery, the fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the pursuit of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. That positive momentum should spur all political forces in Kosovo to unite and compromise in order to achieve the Government's economic recovery plan to address the multidimensional consequences of the health crisis.

Allow me to commend the relevant agencies, funds and programmes, including the Mission and the United Nations Kosovo team, for their constructive engagement in the COVID-19 response, including the allocation of resources to public health institutions and operational support in the implementation of risk-reduction measures.

The resumption of dialogue in July, facilitated by the European Union, is a decisive step in the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. It is therefore crucial that regional and international actors support the parties in that process in order to create the necessary conditions for a comprehensive peaceful settlement of the conflict.

In any peace process, confidence-building, partnership and cooperation are of paramount importance. In that regard, the launch of the intercommunal confidence-building platform aimed at advancing the recommendations of the United Nations Kosovo Trust-Building Forum, is a welcome step.

Furthermore, the participation of young people in the peace process, especially in the areas of decision-making and reconciliation, requires a participatory approach involving central, local and civil society institutions, as well as international partners.

The increasing number of requests for the recognition of the status of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence remains a major concern. To that end, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, is necessary.

We commend the tripartite Security and Gender Group, chaired by UN-Women, for its support of shelters for victims of violence through the provision of online schooling for children living there.

In conclusion, the Niger urges the parties to engage in constructive political dialogue, and good-faith negotiations, and to respect agreements reached freely.



**Annex X****Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Vassily Nebenzia**

[Original: Russian]

We welcome the participation of Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. We share the profound concerns he expressed about the situation in Kosovo, which remains unstable and needs the attention of the international community. We also listened carefully to Ms. Haradinaj-Stublla.

We thank Special Representative Zahir Tanin for a very informative briefing on the situation in the province. We believe that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo continues to be the major international presence acting on the basis of resolution 1244 (1999). We thank him for the unbiased assessment of the situation in the province and the information on the progress of the settlement of the Kosovo issue. We fully support his work and are convinced that he should always have enough material and staff resources to proceed with effective action.

Pursuant to a General Assembly decision, the European Union (EU) is an authorized mediator in the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The EU should ensure that both sides meet their obligations unconditionally, especially with regard to implementing previous agreements.

At the same time, there are few tangible results. Here is a vivid example of Pristina's intractability — for seven and a half years it has been sabotaging the process of creating a community of Serb municipalities in Kosovo. On 14 October, when meeting with EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajčák, Avdullah Hoti again precluded the possibility of endowing the community with executive authorities, even though that derives directly from the Brussels Agreement of April 2013. We hope that under the leadership of Mr. Lajčák, who was appointed this April, European mediation will gain momentum and translate into progress towards resolving Kosovo's problems.

Our American colleagues also boosted mediation activities. We have taken note of the documents that the sides signed in Washington, D.C., on 4 September. We assume their implementation will be in line with efforts to help Belgrade and Pristina find mutually acceptable solutions. Besides, we should not forget that resolution 1244 (1999) remains the international legal framework for a Kosovo settlement.

It is also important to be mindful of what has not yet been implemented, despite many pledges. Indeed, ever since the release of Dick Marty's 2010 Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe report, we have been waiting for a fair international investigation of grave crimes committed on Kosovar territory. In 2020, there was a positive development in this regard: the Kosovo Specialist Chambers has started the real work of investigating crimes committed by the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army. At the same time, we are concerned by scandals circulating around this body, document leaks, reports of witness elimination and use of the case materials for internal political purposes. We insist that all the guilty parties be held accountable and subject to the due penalty, regardless of the offices they currently hold.

We see no improvement of the situation in the province in terms of security and upholding the rights of non-Albanian communities. This is seen through recurrent cases of intimidation, seizures and vandalism of property, cemeteries and

facilities belonging to the Serbian Orthodox Church. Obviously, in this situation we can hardly speak of any return of internally displaced persons and refugees.

We need to specifically focus on the task of ensuring the reliable protection of Orthodox sites in Kosovo. On 16 June 2020, the first segment of a highway linking Kosovo and Montenegro and running through the protected area of the Visoki Dečani monastery started its operation, contrary to a ruling of the Kosovo Court, which has international judges among its members. We emphasize that this is not an internal Kosovar issue, because the monastery is on the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites. We believe that the Kosovo Force and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo should play the leading role in influencing Kosovar authorities, pursuant to their respective mandates. Against this backdrop, we believe it imprudent and groundless to consider the question of Kosovo's accession to such international organizations as UNESCO.

The province remains a comfort zone for recruitment of all sorts of terrorists. The return to Kosovo of former militants of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant is working like a time bomb, posing a threat to peace and stability in the region.

Let me refer to one more troublesome aspect that needs our continued attention. It is outrageous that the Security Council has still received no information concerning the punishment of those guilty of detaining and beating by the Kosovo Albanian special forces of UNMIK personnel, among whom there was a Russian national — Mr. Krasnoshchekov — on 28 May 2019, in the municipality of Zubin Potok. This issue must not be snuffed out or overlooked. To ignore a blatant attack on United Nations personnel means to undermine the safety and security of Organization staff in all countries of the globe. In this case we are dealing with the obvious desire of the Kosovo Albanian authorities to oust the United Nations Mission from the province. The Mission has to operate in precarious circumstances, which amounts to a de facto boycott by the Pristina authorities. It is also a serious problem that steps have been taken to establish a Kosovo army and that they are supported by a number of States. This contradicts resolution 1244 (1999), in the first place, but it also escalates tensions; indeed, it may destabilize not just Kosovo but the Balkans region at large.

We are concerned about the reports of yet another joint session of the Government of Albania and the so-called Minister Cabinet of Kosovo, which took place on 2 October in Tirana. It is inevitable that we would be bothered by one of the meeting's points: the need to erase the border between Albania and Kosovo. Such gatherings are interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign Serbia, of which Kosovo is a constituent part.

All of the foregoing shows that the problems of the province are growing rather than getting resolved. Russia's position on Kosovo is very coherent: we advocate Belgrade and Pristina achieving a viable and mutually acceptable solution on the basis of resolution 1244 (1999). This solution must abide by the international law and be endorsed by the Security Council. Advancing or imposing other scenarios will not lead to the desired result.

## Annex XI

### **Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Halimah DeShong**

We thank Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK), His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić and Ms. Meliza Haradinaj-Stublla for their briefings.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines takes note of the agreements signed on 4 September by the Serbian and Kosovo leaders in Washington, D.C. In particular, we welcome the various commitments made with a view to increasing economic cooperation between the parties.

We commend the efforts of UNMIK and the United Nations Kosovo team in containing the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and ensuring that persons made most vulnerable, including displaced persons, receive much-needed health, social and economic support during this critical time. We also appreciate UNMIK's overall initiatives, including those related to women, youth and trust-building projects. We call on all political parties in Kosovo to unite to combat the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We welcome the resumption of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina facilitated by the European Union (EU) and the overall significance of dialogue in resolving the issues and attaining a lasting solution. This is key to stability in the region. In this regard, we applaud commitments by both parties to move forward with economic normalization. We also call for the implementation of existing agreements in the EU-facilitated dialogue.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines commends UNMIK's dedication to maintaining and promoting security, stability and respect for human rights in the Kosovo region, in particular for women and girls. We commend the work of UN-Women, UNMIK and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to promote durable solutions to empower women and girls in Kosovo, such as the awareness-raising campaign that was launched to support survivors and victims of domestic violence.

As we mark the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we must accelerate actions to facilitate the full, equal and meaningful participation of diverse women in preventing and resolving conflict. Women's leadership and contribution to all efforts aimed at maintaining and promoting peace and security, as well as ensuring the safety and protection of women and girls, are essential to comprehensive security.

We encourage efforts in Kosovo to uphold the rule of law, fight against corruption and organized crime and ensure that no one is left behind. My delegation also emphasizes the nexus between development and security. Efforts to promote economic recovery must be inclusive, climate-friendly and youth- and gender-responsive, in order to lay the foundation for widespread social and political transformation of the region.

As we conclude, we remain a committed partner in the quest for long-lasting peace in and around Kosovo.

**Annex XII****Statement by the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations**

Allow me to begin by acknowledging and welcoming the ongoing work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the United Nations Kosovo team. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Zahir Tanin, for his briefing. We would also like to acknowledge the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić, as well as that of Ms. Haradinaj-Stublla.

South Africa wishes to reiterate that the presence of the United Nations in Kosovo and its constructive engagement with all stakeholders to create an environment conducive to compromise, reconciliation, unity and stability remains critical. We welcome and continue to support UNMIK's facilitation role in building trust among communities and in capacity-building, as well as its advocacy of the role of women and youth in building peace. In this regard, we support UNMIK's continued cooperation with UN-Women and the empowerment of women and youth in peacebuilding and training.

In line with South Africa's consistent position on the need for dialogue to resolve long-standing disagreements, we support efforts to continue engagement between authorities in Belgrade and Pristina, as well as the role of civil society and bilateral and multilateral partners in building peace and intercommunity trust in Kosovo.

We are pleased with and commend the ongoing work towards establishing the Kosovo truth and reconciliation commission. Our own Truth and Reconciliation Commission was an integral part of the process that paved the way for our democratic transition, which was achieved through constructive engagement and difficult compromise. Our Truth and Reconciliation Commission experience confirmed that facing the past was crucial for realizing national unity, as hearing the different views and versions of events of all communities can contribute to reconciliation and ultimately a peaceful, inclusive political process and solution.

A lasting, comprehensive peace can be achieved only with the involvement of all stakeholders. It is only through dialogue that existing disagreements can be resolved and the foundations laid for an inclusive and fair political settlement acceptable to both sides. We believe that through confidence- and trust-building measures a sustained dialogue between the sides will prevail.

We commend the important mediation role that the United Nations has continued to play in the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. We also commend the role that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has played as well as all efforts made by the European Union Special Representative, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, and the United States Government, to bring the sides closer together. We urge the parties to continue to take these opportunities for engagement to build confidence and strengthen relations between the sides. The normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina is key to regional stability.

In the context of women and peace and security, UNMIK and UN-Women continue to do valuable work with regard to the creation of safe spaces for Kosovar women who have fallen victim to gender-based violence and domestic violence, particularly during the coronavirus disease pandemic. We also commend the role played by UNMIK and all other United Nations agencies to contain the spread of the disease.

Let me conclude by calling on the sides to refrain from any actions that could undermine constructive engagement between them. In this regard, we are hopeful that a spirit of compromise will be the basis for negotiations towards an inclusive and fair political settlement that is acceptable to both sides.

**Annex XIII****Statement by the Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations**

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Zahir Tanin for his valuable briefing on the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2020/964). I also wish to welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, and Ms. Haradinaj-Stubbla.

My delegation reiterates its appreciation for the important role of the United Nations, and in particular that of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, in promoting security and political stability in Kosovo and the region as a whole amid the ongoing repercussions of the coronavirus disease pandemic. We commend UNMIK staff on its efforts to confront the crisis.

Despite the enormity of the pandemic-related socioeconomic challenges, we are satisfied that, during the period covered in the report, there were positive signs of progress in dialogue leading to a comprehensive political settlement. In particular, long-suspended dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina resumed, facilitated by the European Union, and a meeting was convened at the summit level in July, on the initiative of France and Germany.

In that regard, we reaffirm our support for the efforts of the European Union Special Representative for Kosovo aimed at advancing political dialogue in the hope that the two parties will build on the progress made thus far in discussions, moving towards a settlement of the various issues, in particular the return of displaced persons, economic cooperation and the implementation of the relevant agreements. This, in turn, will help to create conditions conducive to a consensus-based, comprehensive political solution within the framework of relevant Security Council resolutions, and foster respect for human rights, particularly the rights of women and girls.

We once again urge the parties to overcome their differences and continue to build upon the progress achieved to date. We call for intensified efforts aimed at promoting a climate conducive to building confidence. Any steps that might exacerbate existing tensions or affect the political settlement process should be avoided, and the participation of women in the process should be promoted.

**Annex XIV****Statement by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations**

I would like to begin by thanking the Special Representative and his team for their continued commitment to Kosovo, as laid out in the comprehensive report on the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2020/964). I would also like to extend my thanks to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Her Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo for their briefings this morning.

Over the past 20 years, UNMIK has played a key role in Kosovo's transformation into a multi-ethnic, stable and inclusive democracy. However, the situation in Kosovo today is very different from that of 1999, when UNMIK started its work. We therefore continue to support a review of UNMIK to ensure that it is able to meet Kosovo's current needs and challenges effectively.

Dealing with the health and socioeconomic challenges of the coronavirus disease must remain the Government of Kosovo's top priority, as it is for Governments across the world. We welcome the support in managing the effects of the virus that UNMIK and the United Nations Kosovo team provided during the reporting period. I am proud that the United Kingdom has been able to provide nearly £2 million through United Nations agencies in support of this response. However, I echo the Secretary-General's concerns that political infighting has delayed legislation needed to manage the pandemic and mitigate its economic impact. We urge all political parties in Kosovo to focus on building consensus in the public interest.

The normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia remains crucial for regional stability and prosperity and is in the interests of both countries. We welcome the resumption of the dialogue led by the European Union (EU) and facilitated by EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajčák. We also welcome the progress towards greater economic cooperation between Kosovo and Serbia that was recently achieved in Washington, D.C. The United Kingdom stands ready to support a comprehensive, conclusive, legally binding normalization agreement that respects territorial integrity, is acceptable to the citizens of both countries and delivers long-term benefits to them and to the whole region.

To that end, we welcome the joint statement made by President Vučić of Serbia and Prime Minister Hoti of Kosovo on 7 September, affirming their commitment to the EU-facilitated dialogue. Progress in the dialogue and wider reconciliation between Kosovo and Serbia will require both parties to implement all outstanding agreements and establish and protect a calm and rational atmosphere that allows cooperation. We look to the leaders of both countries to take a constructive and inclusive approach, working in good faith to overcome differences.

The United Kingdom wants to see justice for war crimes committed during the conflict in 1999. We cannot allow impunity. We regret the continuing slow progress in domestic prosecutions for war crimes and urge Kosovan and Serbian authorities to work together in dealing with these historic crimes.

In that context, the United Kingdom supports the work of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office. It is vital that these institutions be able to continue their work without interference. We urge the Governments of Kosovo and Serbia and the members of the Council to cooperate fully with them.

We commend the technical support that UNMIK has provided to the Belgrade-Pristina Working Group on Missing Persons. The United Kingdom is committed to supporting all efforts to resolve missing persons cases from the conflicts of

the 1990s. We have been supporting several projects through the International Commission on Missing Persons and the Missing Persons Resource Centre. It was disturbing to hear harmful and provocative comments by senior ministers recently on this topic. The United Kingdom is clear that all, but particularly those in positions of power and authority, have a responsibility to refrain from such rhetoric, which is disrespectful to victims and families. As the Secretary-General notes in his report, 1,643 persons remain unaccounted for from the conflict in Kosovo. We urge all parties to redouble their efforts and to foster the cooperation needed to bring closure to all outstanding cases.

Kosovo's interests and those of its people are best served by the rule of law and tackling corruption. We welcome the support that UNMIK and others have given to building the capacity of institutions to conduct financial investigations and build an inclusive justice system. There is still considerable work to be done in this area, and we continue to call on Kosovo to implement the reforms necessary to strengthen further the rule of law, good governance and security.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my thanks to the Special Representative and his team. We look forward to continuing to support them in their important work.



**Annex XV****Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Cherith Norman-Chalet**

I want to thank Special Representative Tanin for his briefing this morning, as well as thank the Foreign Ministers of Kosovo and Serbia for their participation.

We also believe that the discussion this morning would have been more fulsome if we were also able to hear from the European Union (EU) Special Representative. But I will turn to a few of the substantive issues that we would like to highlight today.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has posed serious challenges to security and prosperity in the Western Balkans, especially among its most vulnerable populations, but we have been encouraged by the cooperation between Western Balkan countries to address the crisis and mitigate its effects.

Much has happened since the last briefing (S/2020/339). As other colleagues have mentioned today, on 4 September the world witnessed a truly historic day at the White House. President Trump hosted Kosovo Prime Minister Hoti and Serbian President Vučić at the White House to sign a historic economic normalization agreement. The United States applauds the leadership of Kosovo Prime Minister Hoti and Serbian President Vučić in advancing relations between their countries. These leaders demonstrated tremendous courage by embarking on the talks.

The agreements signed at the White House on 4 September spanned a range of economic normalization issues. They will bring growth, investments and jobs to citizens in both countries and set a new tone of reconciliation in the pursuit of progress for the Western Balkans. The commitments made by Kosovo and Serbia are a significant step forward. They will create new opportunities for broader collaboration and enhance trust-building measures that will lay the foundation for continued dialogue.

The significant commitments made at the White House are a starting point, and we will be closely monitoring the parties' progress in implementing the agreements. Skeptical publics in both Kosovo and Serbia are too accustomed to seeing agreements made with much fanfare, but with little or no implementation or tangible impact. It is incumbent on both leaders in both countries to demonstrate to their citizens that reconciliation has concrete benefits.

The 4 September agreements present also the greatest opportunity for real progress in many years, and we will continue to encourage the parties to build on this milestone and move further towards a normalization agreement, which remains critical for the region. Seeing the full normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo remains a shared goal as well for the United States and the European Union. The United States-brokered agreements complement the EU-facilitated talks, which we continue to strongly support.

For both Kosovo and Serbia to secure their European future, both will need to address painful parts of recent history. The United States maintains its strong advocacy for justice for all victims of the wars in the Western Balkans and encourages the countries of the region to utilize existing mechanisms to ensure accountability and justice for all victims. As part of this, the United States has complete confidence in the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutors Office.

I want to conclude by emphasizing that the important progress mentioned here today underscores that the role of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the region as a peacekeeping mission has long since outlived its original purpose. The Security Council now has the responsibility to redirect

limited peacekeeping resources to areas and issues where they are more needed. The United Nations can still play an important role in furthering the development of democratic norms and institutions in the region, but it does not require a Chapter VII-mandated mission to advance recognition, integration and normalization.

The United States expresses disappointment that the many prior calls from Council members to end the UNMIK mission have gone unheeded and that a plan to do so has not been produced for the Council's review. We strongly encourage the development of such a plan. We urge Security Council members to think seriously about UNMIK's transition and to begin taking the steps needed for a responsible drawdown. We are confident that doing so will ensure a more relevant and effective role for the United Nations in helping Kosovo and the rest of the Western Balkans realize its full potential.

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**Annex XVI****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dang Dinh Quy**

I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2020/964) and Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for his valuable briefing. I thank Mr. Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and Ms. Haradinaj-Stublla for their contributions.

Viet Nam welcomes the official resumption of high-level dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina since July 2020 and subsequent agreements that have been reached, including the joint statement on 7 September and commitments expressed by parties on 4 September to promote normalization of economic relations.

Yet it is regrettable that there is still lack of implementation. We would like to stress the importance of previous signed agreements on key areas and look forward to the implementation of these agreements, together with recent commitments. We urge both parties to take this opportunity to push forward further dialogue and overcome the remaining differences and long-lasting obstacles.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continues to loom over all corners of the world, affecting billions of lives. We would like to express our sympathy for the loss of lives and are concerned about reports of the rising number of cases in Kosovo since June and the disease's continuing heavy impact on the socioeconomic development and well-being of the people in Kosovo. In that regard, we welcome UNMIK's efforts to maintain its operations, protect its personnel and support local authorities in their COVID-19 response, including risk-reduction measures.

We call on all related parties to continue their efforts to overcome socioeconomic challenges in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and the legitimate concerns and interests of communities in Kosovo.

We call on the parties to engage in good-faith dialogue and peaceful negotiations to resolve their differences. We support efforts aimed at a durable and comprehensive solution to the issue, in accordance with the fundamental principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and resolution 1244 (1999), for sustainable peace and development for all peoples in Europe.

In that regard, we highly value the European Union-facilitated dialogue, which greatly contributes to international and United Nations efforts to resolve long-standing differences with a view to achieving peace, stability and long-term development for Belgrade and Pristina, the Balkans and Europe. We also commend and support activities undertaken by UNMIK to promote confidence and trust-building measures, encourage cooperation between Belgrade and Pristina, as well as to assist communities in Kosovo amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Annex XVII****Statement by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Ivica Dačić**

I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres and Special Representative Tanin for the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2020/964) and their efforts in carrying out the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), in line with resolution 1244 (1999). The undiminished presence of UNMIK in Kosovo and Metohija is critical to building lasting peace, stability and security in the province.

Serbia has been taking a very serious and responsible approach to the dialogue with Pristina, which has lasted for almost a decade. I would like to point to the problems that we have been facing since the beginning and persist to this day. Let me remind the Council that more than seven years ago in Brussels, Hashim Thaçi and I signed the Brussels Agreement following difficult negotiations and major concessions on our part. The guarantor of the agreement was none other than the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy at the time, Ms. Catherine Ashton. I have already noted in this organ that, by refusing to form a community of Serb municipalities, under the pretext that it was contrary to the so-called Constitution of Kosovo, Pristina misled Serbia and the EU, as guarantor, by failing to implement the agreement it signed.

For years now, we have kept asking the EU the same question, which I have repeated in the Chamber time and again, concerning whether something we discuss, agree and sign can be called a dialogue and agreement if one side says it will not implement what was agreed. I ask the same question again today: What would happen if Serbia decided not to deliver on its commitments? Would the Council have patience and understanding and make excuses for us the way it has done for Pristina for more than seven years?

Nevertheless, Serbia has patiently demonstrated its commitment to dialogue and the implementation of what was agreed in the hope that others will realize how the process as a whole was damaged by Pristina's unacceptable conduct. We are encouraged that last week, on his visit to Pristina, Special Representative Lajčák insisted on the full implementation of the agreements reached. The negative reaction of Pristina to his statements, however, indicates that they still lack the political will necessary for substantial progress in the dialogue process.

I would like to reiterate that the Republic of Serbia remains committed to the EU-facilitated dialogue, in the sincere belief that dialogue is the only true path towards a sustainable solution to the issue of Kosovo and Metohija. We are also grateful to the United States of America, President Trump and his Special Presidential Envoy for Serbia and Kosovo Peace Negotiations, Mr. Grenell, for their commitment and engagement, as the agreement reached on 4 September in Washington, D.C., on economic normalization represents a significant step forward. The fact that Pristina joined the mini-Schengen zone is important not only for the economy, but also for the day-to-day life of all communities in Kosovo and Metohija and the entire region.

Unfortunately, by continuing to lobby for new recognition, Pristina has violated the section of the Washington agreement calling for a one-year moratorium on activities that recognize Kosovo, thereby undermining trust and rendering meaningless the agreements reached in good faith.

I am confident that the Council shares the view that a great deal of time has been wasted. For seven and a half years, Pristina has stalled dialogue by failing to implement the obligations it has undertaken. It is high time for Pristina to start to act

in a serious and responsible manner by implementing what has been agreed, rather than waiting for another seven and a half years to make progress in the dialogue.

To live as a Serb in Kosovo and Metohija today is an achievement in itself. Unlike anywhere else in Europe, Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija have become a legitimate everyday target — just for belonging to another nation and religion. Their houses are set ablaze, their property is usurped and destroyed, their cemeteries and churches are desecrated and their families are attacked and intimidated. Videos of people trampling on the Serbian flag are shared on social networks and hatred towards members of the Serb community is still rampant.

The report under review today, like most such reports since UNMIK was deployed, expresses concern about a large number of incidents directed against Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija. Yet, despite the appeal to local authorities to respond urgently in order to track down the perpetrators and publicly discourage such acts, justice for Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija is slow and unachievable, and the number of incidents are undiminished.

Even during the pandemic, under even more adverse conditions, acts against the Serb community continue unabated. Just a few weeks ago, in the village of Donja Brnjica, near Pristina, Serb children were shot at by an Albanian in the elementary schoolyard. In the village of Babin Most, near Obilić, there was an attempt to abduct a Serbian schoolgirl coming home from school. The attacks on families of returnees have not ceased, not to mention cases of houses being set on fire, as well as looting and intimidation.

It is no wonder, then, that internally displaced persons are not returning to their homes. Twenty years on, out of 200,000 people, a meagre 1.9 per cent have achieved a sustainable return. Pristina claims that every displaced person who wished to return to Kosovo and Metohija could have done so, and that most Serbs did not return because they did not wish to do so. Information from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says otherwise, while the report of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) states that

“a considerable number of displaced persons are interested in returning, but many of them remain deprived of their property or face serious obstacles to return”.

How can returns take place when security is still not guaranteed and when it is impossible to enjoy fundamental human rights, access to justice, the right to property and freedom of movement?

I should also mention the Serb cultural and religious heritage in Kosovo and Metohija and Pristina’s attempts to revise history with claims that Serb churches in Kosovo and Metohija are not actually Serb. What then is next — claiming that Serbs have never lived in Kosovo and Metohija? Other examples of Pristina’s arrogance in the cultural heritage sphere are its repeated attempts to build a road through the special protected zone of the Visoki Dečani monastery, which has been placed on the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger. Despite interventions by representatives of the Quintet group and other international organizations — the EU, the OSCE and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) — it remains uncertain whether the final court order will be enforced, since the local authorities have not committed to permanently ceasing the construction in the special protective zone.

Today Council members will probably hear again the same falsehoods on Serbian colonialism and the alleged genocide against Albanians that the representatives of Pristina have been promoting for 20 years. Let me be clear: every victim deserves justice, and every perpetrator must be brought to justice. That

said, this principle must apply equally to everyone. For the past 20 years, Serbia has maintained that it had to process perpetrators of horrendous crimes committed against Serbs and Roma as well as some Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija by the terrorist so-called Kosovo Liberation Army. And yet for years we have been hearing Pristina lament the Albanian victims, the plight of innocent civilians and the “pure and unblemished fight” of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army. The fact that Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office were established more than five years ago suggests that there is another side to the coin.

Notwithstanding the more than five years that have elapsed since the establishment of the court, we welcome the first indictments. However, we are also following with great concern Pristina’s activities aimed at derogating the functioning of the court, attempting to formally limit and prevent its operation or even to abolish it. We are particularly concerned with the activities aimed at intimidating witnesses and disclosing witness identities. It is unheard of that the Specialist Prosecutor’s Office would publicize the indictments against Thaçi, Veseli and other individuals before they were formally indicted for charges that include war crimes and crimes against humanity, killings, forced disappearances, persecution and torture. According to the Specialist Prosecutor’s Office, this decision was made because of the “repeated efforts by Hashim Thaçi and Kadri Veseli to obstruct and undermine the work of the Specialist Chambers”. In his report, the Secretary-General also singled out this problem (S/2020/964, annex II).

The initiative of adopting a law on the protection of the values of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army is equally unthinkable at a time when indictments are brought against its members for the most serious criminal acts. How can it be explained that the current President of so-called Kosovo is trying to abolish a court that Pristina itself had established, so as to avoid indictment and prosecution for crimes he had committed? How can one explain the appearance of a masked man at the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army veterans association headquarters, removing thousands upon thousands of documents, including draft indictments and protected-witness testimonies with their names and personal data? This would be too much for even a Hollywood thriller. We genuinely hope that, despite these incredible events and obstructions, the court will manage to conduct proceedings so that the victims of the horrendous crimes will finally obtain justice.

Needless to say, the UNMIK presence in Kosovo and Metohija remains necessary, and we expect the Mission to continue to actively perform its mandate, together with the equally important presence of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and KFOR, for its engagement in the rule of law and as major guarantors of security, respectively.

In the context of KFOR’s activities, allow me to voice our serious concern over the practice introduced by its forces to conduct joint patrols with so-called Kosovo police forces in the vicinity of the administrative boundary line, which is contrary to the existing security framework according to which KFOR is the only partner of the Serbian Armed Forces in securing that boundary line. The announced intention by Pristina officials to introduce three-month mandatory military service also gives reasons for concern. This is yet another announcement of a one-sided and unacceptable act of Pristina, contrary to resolution 1244 (1999) and the established KFOR mandate as the only legal and legitimate military structure in the province.

In early September, we took a step in the right direction. Economic cooperation is important for future political agreements, but the road to political normalization is long. The talks we resumed in Brussels are not easy, since major differences in our respective approaches persist. However, we truly believe that dialogue is the only possible way to reach a long-term solution to our problems and ensure better relations, peace and stability in the region.

## Annex XVIII

### Statement by Ms. Meliza Haradinaj-Stublla

On behalf of the Republic of Kosovo, I want to thank the Security Council most sincerely for this opportunity to address its members. Everything I say to the Council today is said as an expression of confidence and hope for the future of our country and our region, and it is based on the truth and the reality of our experience.

It must be clearly understood that Kosovo is a fully independent and sovereign State — no less so than Estonia, Belgium or Germany. This is not an assertion; it is an irrefutable and irreversible fact supported by a ruling of the International Court of Justice in 2010. This is the key to political progress and enduring peace. Acceptance of this reality is the only basis for a resolution of the issues that divide Serbia and Kosovo. Once this inescapable reality is acknowledged, the way forward will be clear and the future can begin tomorrow.

Another United Nations court of law, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, ruled conclusively that the military and paramilitary forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia conducted a widespread and systematic armed attack on the ethnic Albanian civilian population of Kosovo, with the aim of driving them out and preventing their return. This same United Nations tribunal ruled that this ethnic cleansing was to be achieved through the widespread commission of crimes against humanity, war crimes and other humanitarian law violations. Finally, this same United Nations tribunal conclusively ruled that these attacks were coordinated and formed part of a joint criminal enterprise, the members of which included the senior political, military and national security leadership of the former Yugoslavia.

Some 12,000 people were killed in the ensuing attacks on the towns and villages of Kosovo. Some 20,000 women were raped, half of the entire population became refugees, vast numbers of properties were destroyed and cadastral records and cultural artefacts were stolen and never returned. These are not assertions; they are proven facts.

It is also a fact that the political and national security leadership that perpetrated these crimes included Aleksandar Vučić and Ivica Dačić — respectively, the current President and Foreign Minister of Serbia.

Serbia has never acknowledged the past. It denies the past. Just last year, President Vučić denied that the internationally verified massacre of civilians in the village of Racak ever happened; it was, he said, “fabricated”.

As all Council members know, Serbia has intensified its attempts to sabotage the Republic of Kosovo, issuing spurious arrest warrants, lobbying small States to withdraw their recognition of Kosovo, manipulating its own media channels with a constant stream of racist propaganda and preventing Kosovo’s accession to international bodies, such as INTERPOL.

These are facts. These are the inescapable realities that we deal with every day in Kosovo. What happened to our families, to our lives, is not a dim or distant memory. The aggressor State, our neighbour, has not acknowledged its guilt. It has not returned our missing people, our cadastral records or our cultural artefacts, nor has it returned the stolen savings and pension funds of our people.

Today, the trauma of Kosovo is best understood in the context of missing persons. More than 1,700 people are still missing and presumed dead. Returning their bodies to their families is no less important to us than the return of ethnic Albanians.

But how does Serbia respond to what should be a simple humanitarian issue. Let me tell the Council how they respond. Minister Dačić, just last week, issued a public threat against anyone, including human rights activists, who dares to “leak information” about the mass graves of Kosovo war victims in Serbia.

This continuing campaign of hatred and hostility against a neighbouring State is an exercise in futile malignity. In the long term, it achieves precisely nothing. Yes, it harms Kosovo now; it delays our full integration into the global community. It hurts our economy. It perpetuates poverty. But it also harms Serbia, politically and economically. And it harms the United Nations and the European Union.

The only way forward is true reconciliation. The overwhelming majority of the people of Kosovo and Serbia want to move on — not to forget the past, not to allow the crimes of the past to go unpunished, but to acknowledge and account for the past, fairly and honestly, and then build a future for all our people, of all nationalities and ethnicities, where difference is embraced and celebrated, where trade and culture flourish and where the well-being of our people and international solidarity are our shared objectives.

Kosovo strongly desires to resolve the last remaining issues from the wars in the former Yugoslavia. The principles for a resolution are simple and clear. Serbia must acknowledge the fact of Kosovo’s statehood, including its territorial integrity, unitary character and constitutional order. The crimes of the past, against people and property, must be accounted for in an agreed manner. The bodies of the Missing must be returned.

In the long years since the war in Kosovo ended in 1999, Kosovo has done everything that has been asked of us by the international community. We have respected and worked with international institutions. We have been asked to be patient, we have been patient. We have enshrined in our laws and Constitution the most comprehensive protections for minorities in history. We have unequivocally supported the rule of law. In a very short period of time, we have created a functioning State that protects all of its citizens equally.

These are the realities. The Republic of Kosovo has been a unitary, sovereign State with defined borders since 2008. Serbia will argue that there is an alternative reality — resolution 1244 (1999). I would simply recall that resolution 1244 (1999) always envisaged that Kosovo would become an independent State based on the will of the people. We all know resolution 1244 (1999) is a zombie, that it exists on paper only and for one reason only — the veto power of certain members of this organ, which is exercised for reasons that have nothing to do with the well-being of either Kosovo or Serbia.

We must account for the past but we must live in the present and plan for the future. The Republic of Kosovo stands ready to be a constructive and friendly neighbour of the Republic of Serbia and a fully contributing member of the international community of nations.

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