



THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Fifth Committee
Agenda Item 158
Financing of the United Nations
Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Check against delivery

STATEMENT

by

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Attaché

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the United Nations
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Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished representatives,

I wish to thank the Controller, Assistant Secretary-General Ms. Maria Eugenia Casar, and Mr. Collen Kelapile, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing the reports of the Secretary-General and the ACABQ on the budget of UNMIK.

At the outset, let me reiterate the strong support of my country to the important role of UNMIK and the necessity of continuous active engagement of the United Nations in the province of Kosovo and Metohija in ensuring security, stability and respect for human rights, as mandated by UNSCR 1244. The continued presence of the United Nations mission remains a crucial factor, requiring adequate staffing and financing. Its status-neutral approach remains the only acceptable framework within which all of us can work together in order to improve the lives of ordinary people in Kosovo.

We believe that it is necessary for UNMIK to function more actively than it has been the case so far. If UNMIK's role and capacity cannot be strengthened, we must make sure that they are not reduced either, particularly in connection with its functions in accordance with the status-neutral framework, based on Security Council Resolution 1244 which defines its mandate. In this context, we wish to point out that the sensitivity of the situation and the events in the field fully justify the active presence and intensive engagement of the Mission. Also, its close cooperation with KFOR and EULEX is vital for providing security and stability in Kosovo and Metohija.

It is particularly important that UNMIK continues to represent Kosovo in international fora in accordance with Resolution 1244. Accordingly, UNMIK representatives should secure their attendance at international meetings and conferences to which the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo representatives are invited, except in cases where specific solutions are agreed upon in the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. It is also important that UNMIK functions more efficiently and more proactively in the fulfillment of its duties of protection of minorities, particularly since the situation in this regard in Kosovo is far from satisfactory.

Mr. Chairman,

In this connection, having in mind that basic human rights of non-Albanian population in Kosovo continue to be violated, it is necessary to maintain every post in the Mission dealing with the status and needs of that population. Therefore, we find the proposal of the Secretary-General to reassign the P-5 post of the Senior Political Affairs Officer from the Office for Community Support and Facilitation to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General as Senior Coordination Officer unacceptable. The proposal to abolish the post of Senior Political Affairs Officer, who serves as a deputy to the Head of the Office for Community Support and Facilitation and deals with the issue of returns, cannot be justified either by the fact that UNMIK cooperates with UNHCR and other agencies dealing with the returns, or the contention that there is a sufficient number of posts responsible for the question of returns. ACABQ, too, does not concur with this proposal.

We consider the proposal of the Secretary-General to reassign one Field Service post of Information Technology Assistant from the Mitrovica Office to the Office of the Chief of Technical Support Services in Pristina unjustified. An explanation given by the Secretary-General that the Office in Mitrovica has a sufficient number of posts and that, with the current structure, this Office can continue to function does not reflect the real needs. Even though this is the post of an assistant, it is important for the functioning of the Office and it should not be reassigned.

We also believe that the proposal to abolish the P-2 post of Report Officer in the Office of Community Support and Facilitation and replace it with a national General Service post of Programme Assistant would not bring positive results. This post concerns the monitoring and reporting on the situation of non-majority communities in the Gnjilane region. Even if this post is filled by a member of the Serbian community, it cannot guarantee "greater trust and better communication," especially in municipalities in which Albanians account for the majority population and are represented in large numbers in local institutions. Therefore, we consider it necessary that this post remains international.

Let me once again point out that it is very important for Serbia that the process of attrition of UNMIK through abolishing posts is not continued any further. That process is particularly unacceptable in regard of posts dealing with the protection of Serbian cultural heritage and its Christian Orthodox monuments. Equally, all the vacant posts, especially those that have been vacant for a longer period of time, should urgently be filled.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.