



## **THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

76<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly  
Fifth Committee  
Second Resumed Session  
Agenda item 159  
Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

*Check against delivery*

### **STATEMENT**

by

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FIRST SECRETARY  
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS**

New York, 3 May 2022

Mr. Chair,

I would like to thank the Controller, Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Chandru Ramanathan, for introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 under agenda item 159. I would also like to thank the Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Ms. Donna Marie Chiurazzi-Maxfield, for presenting this body's related report.

The Republic of Serbia, within the international community as a matter of principle insists on respecting international law in the field of application of legally binding international documents, and especially, in that sense, the UN Security Council resolutions. In the hierarchy of international bodies whose scope includes peace, stability and security, Security Council occupies the highest place, which is why its resolutions hold particular importance in terms of their implementation and fulfillment. In this regard, the Republic of Serbia considers an imperative full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1244, as an agreed legal framework for ensuring peace and stability in Kosovo and Metohija. The resolution, among other things, clearly defines the mandate of UNMIK, which enables a clear projection of the activities of this mission in the field of administrative management in our southern province. Its provisions guarantee the territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia and its sovereignty over Kosovo and Metohija as part of its territory and guarantee the status neutrality of the international presence in the Province.

On this basis, Serbia strongly supports the work of UNMIK in its undiminished scope and composition, which can ensure the achievement of the mission's goal - building and maintaining a stable political and security situation in Kosovo and Metohija.

The Republic of Serbia approaches with great care the Reports of Secretary-General on UNMIK, presented to the Security Council. These reports sufficiently present unstable security situation in the province, which is continuously caused by the irresponsible behavior of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Pristina, its discriminatory acts and, in that sense, the policy of impunity when it comes to various crimes against non-Albanians. The security situation remains worrisome, as the position of members of the Serbian ethnic community is far from UN standards when it comes to human rights. Unfortunately, there are still many ethnically motivated incidents, hate speech, intimidation, violations of the right to a fair trial, threatening the rights to the freedom of movement and religious rights, desecration of churches and cemeteries. This environment creates tension, which in turn obstructs the return of more than 200,000 IDPs, of whom, after 23 years, less than two percent have achieved sustainable return. Such a percentage of IDP returns is unprecedented. The PISG in Pristina has an indifferent attitude towards the return of IDPs, without concrete measures in this regard.

Mr. Chair,

In these circumstances, it is clear that UNMIK must remain engaged in an undiminished scope and with an unchanged mandate, as some of the Mission's key tasks remain unfulfilled, notably in creating the conditions for the sustainable return of IDPs, the protection of non-Albanian populations and of Serbian religious and cultural heritage in Kosovo and Metohija.

It should be taken into account that numerous incidents, provocations, acts of discrimination and intolerance in Kosovo and Metohija take place in the conditions of UNMIK's presence, so the question arises as to what the security situation would be without UNMIK involvement. The international community and the UN should not allow such a hypothesis to even be considered, as it would be inhumane towards people of Serbian nationality in Kosovo and Metohija, who are trying to exercise their basic rights to a peaceful life. Serbs and other non-Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija consider UNMIK, together with KFOR, a protector and hope that one day they will be able to exercise their rights to freedom of movement and property rights and enjoy a peaceful life. They also expect UNMIK will, through its activities, contribute to the creation of peaceful coexistence with Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija. For these reasons, and in view of the importance and the specific nature of UNMIK and the complexity of circumstances, political and others, in which the Mission carries out its mandate, Serbia will continue to insist on adequate personnel and financial resources for the Mission. The complex political and security situation in the Province makes it incumbent upon us to consider approving additional resources, primarily with respect to the programmatic activities and confidence-building projects through which UNMIK seeks to improve the current situation in the areas of key importance for the realization of its mandate, such as rule of law, human rights and reconciliation among communities. The continuation of the UNMIK mandate is of key importance for the fate of many people in Kosovo and Metohija. Serbia is firmly convinced that the UN, the Security Council and UNMIK must remain fully engaged in all issues of importance for the consistent implementation of the set goals in Kosovo and Metohija.

Mr. Chair,

My delegation shares the concern expressed by ACABQ about the continuing deterioration of the cash position of the Mission, for which the outstanding contributions of \$45.1 million are higher than the appropriation of \$41.3 million approved for the current budget. We hope that all member states which haven't done so, will pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without condition. We also expect that all vacant posts within UNMIK will be filled expeditiously.

We share the concern expressed by ACABQ regarding the Secretary-General's proposal to reassign and convert the post of the Associate Legal Officer in the Justice and Correction Section of the Office of Rule of Law to an Associate Programme Management Officer post. We remind members of the Fifth Committee that this proposal of the Secretary-General was also submitted last year, but the Committee decided not to approve it. We share the view of ACABQ that the decisions of the

General Assembly should be implemented, which is why we believe the proposal for reassignment and conversion of this post should not be supported.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.