



Security Council briefing on UNMIK, 23 October 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Vanessa Frazier

Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President, and I also thank SRSG Ziadeh for her comprehensive briefing and welcome the participation of President Ms. Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu and Prime Minister Ms. Ana Brnabić to our briefing.

Malta is deeply concerned about the recent developments in the north of Kosovo following last month's incidents. We condemn the terrorist attack against the Kosovo Police that took place on 24 September, and call for those responsible to be swiftly brought to justice and held accountable. Such acts of violence only serve to de-stabilise the situation and reverse hard-earned progress achieved on the path towards normalisation of relations between both sides.

Malta is also concerned about the deployment of Serbian military forces at the border with Kosovo which constitutes a further escalation of the situation. We welcome that the number of troops has since been reduced and call on Serbia to cooperate fully in the ongoing investigation. Moving forward, we urge both sides to focus all efforts on de-escalating tensions, and to refrain from any unilateral action or divisive rhetoric that could undermine the diplomatic efforts made during the past months. Dialogue is



key in resolving outstanding issues, and collaboration is the only way to ensure peace and stability in the region.

Positive steps to create an atmosphere conducive to reconciliation, good neighbourly relations, and further dialogue are of the utmost importance at this juncture. The holding of local elections in the northern municipalities of Kosovo will be crucial, and we call on the full and unconditional participation of all players in the electoral process. Hate speech, vilification of women in politics, and physical and verbal attacks on journalists are unacceptable and deplorable.

I take this opportunity to reiterate Malta's full support to Serbia and Kosovo's EU accession aspirations. In this regard, Malta underlines that the path to membership for both parties runs through the EU-facilitated Dialogue. It is crucial that both sides commit to and engage constructively to realise this goal.

In this regard, we take good note of the progress achieved so far by Kosovo in its reform path and stress the importance of undertaking this process with the full participation of various stakeholders from within civil society, including vulnerable and marginalised communities.

Malta also acknowledges the importance of the role of UNMIK in promoting security, stability and the preservation and promotion of human rights, gender equality and empowerment of women and youth in Kosovo.



The normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia will not only foster peace in the area, but also lead to economic and social prosperity in the Western Balkans. Therefore, we stress the importance of both parties respecting the agreement on the path to normalisation of relations agreed by both parties earlier this year and urge them to fulfil their respective obligations under it.

In conclusion, President, Malta reaffirms its support for UNMIK in its efforts to engage all communities in Kosovo, as well as regional and international actors proactively and constructively. We urge Kosovo and Serbia to prioritise dialogue over confrontation and hope that the coming period will be marked with meaningful progress in the efforts to normalise relations.

I thank you.