



## Security Council briefing on UNMIK, 8 February 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Darren Camilleri

Political Coordinator of Malta to the United Nations, New York

---

Thank you, President, and I thank SRSG Ziadeh for her briefing. I also welcome the President of Serbia and the Prime Minister of Kosovo to today's meeting.

Malta has been following closely the latest developments in Kosovo. We are concerned about the sudden decision by its Central Bank to ban cash transactions in dinar in its territory.

The closure of several offices of Serbian-run institutions, as well as the Centre of Peace and Tolerance in Pristina, likewise raises serious concerns on the living conditions of Kosovo-Serbs.

We reiterate that unilateral actions implemented without due notification and consultation, especially actions that directly affect ethnic minorities, only serve to de-stabilise the situation in the region, and increase the risk of violence.



We welcome that since the announcement by the Central Bank was made, the government of Kosovo has taken heed of the concerns raised. It has committed to a transition period and a communication campaign regarding the impact of the regulation. We stress that this period must be sufficiently long to allow all those impacted to access alternate methods of payments.

Malta urges both sides to focus all efforts on easing tensions, and to refrain from any further unilateral action or divisive rhetoric that could undermine diplomatic efforts. Positive steps to create an atmosphere conducive to reconciliation and good neighbourly relations are of the utmost importance.

The normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia remains the only way to ensure security and stability in the region. Dialogue and collaboration are key. This approach would also have a positive effect on the entire Western Balkans.



Therefore, we stress the importance of both parties respecting all agreements reached under the EU-facilitated Dialogue, including the agreement on the path towards normalisation of relations reached in Ohrid last year. We urge them to fulfil their respective obligations under it. The formation of the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities will be especially instrumental in the normalisation process, and we hope to see work on this advance swiftly in the coming months. This is the only path that leads towards EU membership. We once again reiterate Malta's continued full support to Serbia and Kosovo's EU accession aspirations.

To this end, the EU-facilitated Dialogue remains of paramount importance. It is crucial that both sides commit to this process and respect it. Any actions of consequence must be duly discussed in a transparent way with all stakeholders, and appropriately negotiated through the EU-facilitated Dialogue framework.



Moreover, Malta underscores the need for the continuation of the reform process in Kosovo, and the full participation of various stakeholders from within civil society, including vulnerable and marginalised communities. The full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation of women in the political sphere and decision-making process must also be at the heart of such efforts.

In conclusion, President, we urge Kosovo and Serbia to prioritise dialogue and avoid any confrontational actions or decisions that could aggravate the already tense situation in the region.

We hope that the coming period will be marked with meaningful progress in the efforts to normalise relations. We call for a serious commitment from both sides to respect their obligations and take tangible steps towards a peaceful and mutually beneficial resolution to the situation.

I thank you.