



Security Council briefing on UNMIK, 22 April 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

I thank SRSG Ziadeh for her briefing and welcome the President of Serbia and the President of Kosovo to today's meeting.

Malta welcomes the positive steps taken by both Serbia and Kosovo during the past months, including the resolution of the issues relating to vehicle licence plates and on the property of the Visoki Decani monastery. However, we remain concerned that tensions remain high, and we regret the several instances of hostile actions witnessed during the six months under review.

Following the terrorist attacks on the Kosovo police force last September, the situation has been worrying with a heightened risk of escalation. We urge for concrete actions by both sides to ensure de-escalation and safeguard the safety of all residents.



We reiterate calls for the perpetrators of the September attacks to be brought to justice and to be held accountable for their actions. It is crucial at this stage for both sides to do their utmost to show restraint in their rhetoric and actions and to avoid violence at all costs. Dialogue remains the only tool available to parties in the hope of sustained peace and economic and social progress.

We take note of the local referendum held yesterday on removing mayors in the northern municipalities of Kosovo, which is a crucial part of the democratic process. However, we regret the conditions that have led yet again to another boycott. The full and unconditional participation of all players in the electoral process remains vital for the proper functioning of a democracy.

Malta calls on parties to respect their obligations stemming from the agreement on the path to normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo. We remain concerned by the lack of progress in this regard, in particular in relation to the formation of the Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities which will be especially instrumental in this normalisation process, and we hope to see work on this advance swiftly in the coming months.



The Agreement also includes a commitment by both parties to not object to each other's membership in international organisations, which will be a significant step towards further regional cooperation and integration.

Malta continues to stress the importance of the EU-facilitated dialogue as the best platform to facilitate dialogue between both sides and an ideal forum to discuss and negotiate issues that affect the entirety of the population in the territory.

Case in point is the decision to ban cash transactions in Serbian dinar. Although its objectives seemed well-intentioned, this decision will have a negative impact on Serb minorities, and a transparent discussion with all stakeholders before implementation is appropriate.



Malta remains fully committed to Kosovo and Serbia's EU accession ambitions and urges both to pursue the path of reforms leading towards EU integration with 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.

Malta also acknowledges the importance of the role of UNMIK in promoting security and stability especially given the recent escalation in tensions. We commend its work on the preservation and promotion of human rights, gender equality and empowerment of women and youth in Kosovo.

To conclude, Malta encourages both parties to direct all efforts to avoid backsliding on the progress that has been achieved and for work to persist and intensify on finding a mutually beneficial, long-lasting peaceful solution.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.