

(Check against delivery)

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR GERT ROSENTHAL,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GUATEMALA
DEBATE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM
ADMINISTRATION MISSION IN KOSOVO (UNMIK)
(29 August 2013)**

Madam President:

We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary General Mr. Farid Zarif for the presentation of the report S/2013/444, which is heartening in many respects. This should encourage us to make even greater efforts in Kosovo.

The Security Council will have to closely monitor the progress made on the implementation of the agreement of 19 April. It is a critical moment in the relation between the parties. The support provided by the international community and its engagement in Kosovo are still essential.

We hope that the parties will continue doing everything in their power to implement this agreement. Belgrade's commitment to Kosovo-Serbs remains important in this regard. Also, Pristina should complement these efforts holding outreach activities and offering reassurance to the local population. We agree with the Secretary-General that in order to avoid tensions and achieve success, it is important that Kosovo-Serbs see themselves as partners in the process.

On the other hand, we feel as a positive development that in northern Kosovo, the frequency of incidents involving the use of explosive devices has decreased significantly. Furthermore, we note that the number of incidents affecting minority communities also decreased throughout Kosovo, compared with the previous period. We also note that the implementation of integrated management agreement on crossings continued without major problems.

Despite these advances, the report also indicates that tensions in northern Mitrovica continue in relation to the construction of houses for the IDPs from Kosovo and Albania. In this regard we are concerned that in accordance with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in the months of April and May, there were only 36 cases of displaced persons returning to Kosovo, compared with 159 in the same period of 2012. According to UNHCR the lack of sufficient funds for the allocation of housing and / or land remains one of the main obstacles to voluntary returns.

Madam President:

As mentioned in the last debate on this matter, we believe that during this new phase of implementation of the agreement of 19 April UNMIK has a central role to play. We welcome that UNMIK is intensifying its efforts and collaboration with all relevant parties in relation to the main problems on the ground.

We support the efforts of UNMIK to perform mediation and facilitation in northern Kosovo and serve as a channel of communication between municipal representatives and minority communities to ensure the effective delivery of public and social services. In short, there is a wide range of activities in which UNMIK continues to use its ability and resources to help reduce tensions and incidents. It is therefore important that UNMIK continues enjoying all necessary support to strengthen its presence in Kosovo, particularly in the North.

Madam President:

Turning to the work of the Investigation Task Force in charge of analyzing allegations of inhumane treatment of migrants and trafficking in human organs, we note with interest the information included in the attached report of EULEX. We follow with interest its progress.

We take seriously the observation of the Secretary-General on the importance that the international community remain committed to advancing reconciliation and help to heal the wounds left by the conflict. We agree that it should continue to give priority to the efforts to resolve the legacy of the conflict, including the pending cases of missing persons and accountability for war crimes and other crimes. The investigation of this Task Force is an important part of these efforts and we call on all stakeholders in Kosovo to redouble their efforts to accelerate progress in these areas.

Madam President:

Finally, we reaffirm the primacy of resolution 1244 (1999) as the legal framework applicable in Kosovo, as well as the importance of full respect for international law. We thank the Special Representative for his sustained efforts to promote reconciliation in the communities of Kosovo.

Thank you.