

B. Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held eight meetings in connection with the item entitled “Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)”. At those meetings, the Council discussed the political developments in Kosovo, focusing on the need for Belgrade and Pristina to resume the European Union-facilitated bilateral dialogue, as well as implementation of the first agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations between Pristina and Belgrade. The Council also focused on the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK),⁶⁸⁷ as well as the role of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), the Kosovo Force (KFOR), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Briefing on the situation in Kosovo and activities of UNMIK

On 8 February 2012, the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, who noted that while the situation in Kosovo had calmed down it was still fragile. He urged the Council to renew its attention in order to resolve long-standing differences between the parties and to consolidate long-term peace and stability in the region. Regarding northern Kosovo, he referred to the efforts of UNMIK, EULEX and KFOR to stabilize the situation. He also reported on considerable progress in the European Union-facilitated dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade. Furthermore, he urged both sides to maintain their commitment to engaging in a constructive dialogue.⁶⁸⁸

The representative of Serbia appealed to the new members of the Council to continue to refrain from recognizing any solution to the “Kosovo problem” that was not the product of an agreement between the parties. Commenting on the Secretary-General’s

report,⁶⁸⁹ he concurred with the call to support the role of UNMIK, especially in facilitating engagement between all stakeholders. He further expressed the view that pursuing outcomes outside the framework of negotiations, including through seeking new recognitions of the unilateral declaration of independence, as well as attempts to “force one’s way into international organizations”, were both futile and counterproductive.⁶⁹⁰

On the other hand, Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, while highlighting the progress achieved, as well as current challenges in Kosovo, stated that full recognition of the country’s independence remained an important goal for the Government of Kosovo. He expressed the view that Serbia should implement its obligations under the agreements with Kosovo, stating that “agreements are not worth anything if they were not implemented in practice”. He maintained that the implementation of the Ahtisaari plan was the best framework for political and democratic participation of all Kosovo Serbs.⁶⁹¹

In their comments, Council members stressed the need for both sides to remain committed to the European Union-facilitated dialogue in order to reach a lasting peace and stability in the region. Many speakers expressed appreciation for the efforts of UNMIK in collaborating with EULEX and KFOR to calm tensions in the north of Kosovo, as well as in facilitating stability in the region.⁶⁹² A number of speakers supported the work of the EULEX Special Investigative Task Force mandated to investigate all allegations of human organ trafficking,⁶⁹³ while others expressed the view that such an investigation should proceed under the auspices of the Security Council and United Nations.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁸⁹ S/2012/72.

⁶⁹⁰ S/PV.6713, pp. 4-6.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 6-11.

⁶⁹² Ibid., p. 4 (Serbia); p. 12 (Russian Federation); p. 13 (China); p. 14 (Germany); p. 16 (Azerbaijan); and p. 21 (Pakistan)..

⁶⁹³ Ibid., p. 7 (Mr. Hoxhaj); p. 15 (Germany); p. 17 (India); p. 18 (United Kingdom); p. 19 (France); pp. 20-21 (Portugal); p. 23 (Colombia); and p.25 (United States).

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 6 (Serbia); p. 12 (Russian Federation); p. 13 (China); and p. 16 (Azerbaijan).

⁶⁸⁷ For more information on the mandate of UNMIK, see part X, sect. I, “Peacekeeping operations”.

⁶⁸⁸ S/PV.6713, pp. 2-4.

Serbian general and presidential elections

On 14 May 2012, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK reported that voting in the Serbian general and presidential elections was facilitated safely and calmly in Kosovo on 6 May 2012. He stated that a highly professional facilitation operation was organized and carried out by OSCE, assisted by the contributions of KFOR, EULEX and the Kosovo authorities, in line with the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999). He said, however, that two municipalities in northern Kosovo had proceeded with plans to conduct their own local elections outside the framework of resolution 1244 (1999) and noted that both Belgrade and the international community had taken unambiguous positions on the legitimacy of that matter. He reported that ties between the Western Balkans and the European Union had taken significant steps forward with the decision to grant candidate status to Serbia and also to launch a feasibility study in Kosovo. He expressed concern that the absence of unity of purpose among key international actors sometimes undermined the power of the European perspective for the region. He requested Council members to assume a proactive approach to the continuing challenges in Kosovo and urged them to use their authority and influence with the parties to encourage them to engage in good faith in order to reach substantial and sustainable solutions.⁶⁹⁵

The representative of Serbia maintained that his country's long-standing position on the European Union's engagement in Kosovo remained unchanged and urged the European Union to sustain its status-neutral efforts in order to build the missing institutional environment and improve the "dismal" societal conditions in the province. He also expressed the view that Pristina continued to engage in a campaign of intimidation against Serbs in Kosovo. Acknowledging the efforts of UNMIK and OSCE, among others, in facilitating the elections, he underlined that Serbia remained fully committed to the dialogue process.⁶⁹⁶

Mr. Enver Hoxhaj recounted efforts relating to Kosovo's consolidation of statehood, the integration of the Serb community at the central and local levels of government in the north, the technical dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, as well as on Kosovo-

European Union relations. Referring to the Serbian presidential and parliamentary elections, he noted that Serbs living in Kosovo had been able to vote during the elections. He also referred to the fact that Serbia had not organized local elections in the three municipalities in the north of Kosovo, which showed that Serbia had begun to accept the "reality of an independent Kosovo".⁶⁹⁷

Council members welcomed the calm and peaceful holding of the Serbian general elections and commented on the challenges encountered, as well as other positive developments, including the role of UNMIK, OSCE, EULEX and KFOR in facilitating the elections. They welcomed the progress made thus far in European integration and urged both parties to continue engagement and remain committed to the European Union-facilitated dialogue. Most speakers indicated that conditions should be created for safe voluntary return of displaced persons, as well as the preservation of cultural and religious sites. A number of speakers expressed concern regarding the protection of minority communities.⁶⁹⁸ Some speakers underlined that all international organizations operating in Kosovo should maintain a status-neutral position in the execution of their mandates.⁶⁹⁹

On 21 August 2012, in his briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that, according to his assessment, a more active and deliberate political international engagement with the parties was urgently needed. He reported that sessions of the European Union-led Belgrade-Pristina dialogue had remained suspended owing to the May general elections in Serbia and the political process leading to the formation of a new Government on 27 July 2012, and expressed hope that the European Union-facilitated dialogue would soon resume. He reported that coordination between UNMIK and the internationally mandated presences in Kosovo was aimed at supporting a much-needed progress in human rights protection, the return of internally displaced persons and refugees, and determining the fate of missing persons.⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 8-11.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 16 (United Kingdom); p. 18 (India); and p. 23 (Guatemala).

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 4 (Serbia); p. 12 (Russian Federation); p. 13 (Pakistan); p. 14 (South Africa); and p. 19 (India).

⁷⁰⁰ S/PV.6822, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁹⁵ S/PV.6769, pp. 2-4.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 4-8.

The representative of Serbia emphasized that resolving the final status of Kosovo and Metohija through a process of negotiations and dialogue that took into account the legitimate interests of ethnic Albanians, Serbs and all others living in Kosovo was among the most important priorities of his newly elected Government, while underlining his country's position, which was not to recognize Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence. Referring to the reforms by the authorities in Pristina expected to remove the executive authority of international organizations in Kosovo as described in the Secretary-General's report, he expressed the view that the Security Council was the only legitimate institution that had the authority to make such changes. He also expressed concern over the security threats faced by the Serbian community in both northern and southern Kosovo, which in his view were all part of an orchestrated campaign of intimidation directed at Kosovo Serbs.⁷⁰¹

In his statement, Mr. Hashim Thaçi outlined developments regarding the end of the internationally supervised independence of Kosovo, the situation in the northern municipalities, and the country's prospects for European integration. With regard to the recent Serbian elections, he said that the Government of Kosovo had reached an agreement with OSCE which enabled Kosovo Serbs with dual citizenship to vote. Concerning the technical dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, he noted that true progress in the dialogue could be achieved only if the agreements were fully implemented, and therefore called on Serbia to deliver on what was agreed during the dialogue process. He further reiterated that normalization of relations with Serbia was a priority for Kosovo.⁷⁰²

Council members welcomed the newly formed Government in Serbia and stressed the importance of resuming the European Union-facilitated dialogue, as well as implementation of technical agreements previously reached in that dialogue in cooperation with UNMIK, EULEX and KFOR. Some members welcomed Kosovo's creation of an administrative office in northern Mitrovica aimed at providing services to citizens of that part of Kosovo,⁷⁰³ while

others expressed concern that funds intended for UNMIK would be diverted to finance that office.⁷⁰⁴

Resumption of the European Union-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina

On 27 November 2012, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General detailed key events and activities in Kosovo and reported on the significant progress made during new sessions of the European Union-facilitated high-level dialogue on 19 October and 7 November 2012. He said that the two leaders, the Prime Minister of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, and the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, had assumed direct leadership within this process, met on those occasions for the first time as leaders of their respective delegations and were able to agree on concrete steps to move forward in the dialogue in a more profound and far-reaching manner. He commended both on demonstrating the political will and courage to embark on the process of working together to recast relations between Belgrade and Pristina. He hoped that Council members would not simply commend the initiative of the two leaders to tackle the issues in a higher-level dialogue, but also provide appropriate resources and political backing to encourage and endorse sustainable agreements. However, given the complexity of the issues that had continued to inhibit progress on both sides, he noted that it would be unreasonable to expect solutions to emerge easily or quickly. The situation in the north of Kosovo remained fragile. Regarding the coordination of the international presence, he was pleased to inform the Council that UNMIK was fulfilling its mandate as part of a genuine team that encompassed KFOR, EULEX, OSCE and the European Union Special Representative in Kosovo.⁷⁰⁵

The representative of Serbia, while opposing unilateral actions by any party, stated that Serbia continued to promote and pursue a policy of finding peaceful solutions in a constructive dialogue with Pristina. He expressed the belief that UNMIK should continue to have an important role to complement the dialogue, so that an effective exchange of information and reporting to the Security Council could be ensured. He further stressed that the executive role of EULEX

⁷⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 4-7.

⁷⁰² Ibid., pp. 7-11.

⁷⁰³ Ibid., p.12 (United Kingdom); p. 15 (Germany); and p. 19 (United States).

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid., p.15 (Russian Federation); and p. 22 (Guatemala).

⁷⁰⁵ S/PV.6872, pp. 2-4.

must not be changed since it was also crucial for the implementation of the agreements reached.⁷⁰⁶

Mr. Enver Hoxhaj commented on the establishment of contractual relations with the European Union and the new phase of bilateral relations between Kosovo and Serbia. Referring to the decision of the International Steering Group to end the supervised independence of Kosovo, he underlined that it was the result of exercising the full extent of their sovereignty. However, he pledged that Kosovo would remain committed to working closely with international technical missions to further enhance the progress made in the country.⁷⁰⁷

Council members noted the relatively calm security situation in Kosovo as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General.⁷⁰⁸ However, they expressed concern regarding the fragile situation in the north of Kosovo. They supported the activities of UNMIK and welcomed the resumption of the European Union-facilitated high-level dialogue between the two parties. Some members supported efforts towards the integration of Kosovo into the international community,⁷⁰⁹ while others reiterated their support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia.⁷¹⁰ A number of speakers expressed the belief that UNMIK should maintain its key role in coordinating all international efforts in Kosovo under its status-neutral framework as envisaged in resolution 1244 (1999).⁷¹¹

On 22 March 2013, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General informed the Council that the direct Belgrade-Pristina engagement in the high-level political dialogue facilitated by the European Union had yielded some important positive developments. Reporting that both leaders had met for a total of seven rounds of dialogue in Brussels, he indicated that the meetings had marked an essential and historic new chapter in the collective effort to overcome the legacy

of the past conflict. However, significant challenges on the ground remained, including adverse security incidents and frequent instances of inflammatory rhetoric and posturing from various quarters. There had also been episodes of increased tension in northern Kosovo, such as a series of incidents involving the use of explosive devices, and a wave of vandalism against several Serbian Orthodox cemeteries, including the destruction of a Second World War monument. He was gratified that appropriate actions had been taken by the Kosovo authorities, including the allocation of public funds for the repair and reconstruction of the graves and monuments. He further underlined that the ending of budget allocations to the UNMIK administrative office in Mitrovica had undermined the most functional channel available to address problems in the north through consensus.⁷¹²

The representative of Serbia reiterated his Government's principled position on the unilaterally declared independence of Kosovo, but at the same time confirmed its commitment to the success of the political dialogue facilitated by the European Union.⁷¹³

In his statement, Mr. Hashim Thaçi detailed the progress made in Kosovo and underlined that its commitment to the dialogue with Serbia was in accordance with General Assembly resolution 64/298, as well as the relevant resolution of the Assembly of Kosovo, and in full compliance with the Constitution and laws of Kosovo, and that there could be no negotiation on the sovereignty, political status or territorial integrity of Kosovo.⁷¹⁴

Members of the Council welcomed the progress made in several rounds of the high-level European Union-facilitated political dialogue and commended the ongoing efforts of the two parties towards normalization of their relations. They expressed concern regarding the fragile security situation especially in the north, including the recent attacks against Orthodox religious and cultural sites. Furthermore, they commented on the EULEX Special Investigative Task Force and the important role of UNMIK and its contribution in stabilizing the region, as well as its collaboration with the other international presence and local authorities in Kosovo.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 4-6.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 6-9.

⁷⁰⁸ S/2012/818.

⁷⁰⁹ S/PV.6872, p. 10 (Germany); p. 13 (France); p. 17 (Togo); p. 18 (United Kingdom); and p. 22 (United States).

⁷¹⁰ Ibid., p. 11 (Russian Federation); p. 16 (Azerbaijan); and p. 19 (China).

⁷¹¹ Ibid., p. 5 (Serbia); p. 11 (Pakistan); p.12 (Russian Federation); p. 13 (France); p. 16 (Azerbaijan); p. 19 (China); p. 20 (South Africa); p. 21 (Guatemala); and p. 23 (India).

⁷¹² S/PV.6939, pp. 2-4.

⁷¹³ Ibid., pp. 4-8.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 8-15.

First agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina

On 14 June 2013, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported that on 19 April 2013, following difficult political negotiations facilitated by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union, a historic first agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina was initialled. He noted that the agreement consisted of 15 points which provided for the establishment of an association/community of Serb municipalities that would encompass a range of competences related to the people's day-to-day life, and envisaged the holding of local elections in 2013 in northern Kosovo municipalities with the facilitation of OSCE. Both parties had undertaken not to block the other side's progress in their respective European Union integration paths. He reported that on 22 May 2013, as a sign of their commitment, the parties had agreed on an implementation plan for the provisions contained in the agreement of 19 April. Nonetheless he underlined that the threat of instability remained present in sensitive areas, both in the north and south of the Ibar River. While expressing the view that the agreement was a major achievement and a decisive step forward for both Belgrade and Pristina, he stressed that the implementation of the agreements reached would require hard work by the parties and the active support of the international community, and underlined that UNMIK was making efforts in this regard.⁷¹⁵

The representative of Serbia stated that his country had invested considerable efforts and demonstrated great flexibility during the dialogue, and noted that, in furthering the process, Serbia would continue to be guided by the firm belief that the negotiations might lead to a solution acceptable to all. Referring to the six-month political dialogue which had resulted in the "First agreement on principles governing normalization of relations", he noted that Serbia was determined to implement the agreement. At the same time, he expressed concern over the fragile security situation and underlined that the role of UNMIK in stabilizing the situation in the region was irreplaceable. He said he expected the international

community to give an impetus to the implementation of the agreement and the building of regional stability.⁷¹⁶

Mr. Hashim Thaçi, while highlighting the various aspects of the agreement, commended the efforts of the Prime Minister of Serbia in reaching the agreement on principles. He pledged Kosovo's commitment to engage in political dialogue with Serbia, as well as to ensure the timely and constructive implementation of all aspects of the agreement. He said that the agreement represented an opportunity for the Council to consider adopting a resolution to end the mandate of UNMIK. He requested the Council to provide support for the European Union in monitoring the implementation of the agreement.⁷¹⁷

Council members welcomed the historic European Union-facilitated agreement and congratulated both sides for reaching this significant milestone, while encouraging them to continue to compromise towards a timely and full implementation of the agreement in close coordination with UNMIK, EULEX and KFOR. Many speakers expressed concern over the security situation especially in northern Kosovo and supported the continued efforts of UNMIK to implement its mandate. Some speakers underlined that UNMIK had a role to play in the implementation of the agreement of 19 April.⁷¹⁸ Other speakers underlined that resolution 1244 (1999) was the legal basis for resolving the question of Kosovo and that efforts to resolve the issue should be carried out within the framework of that resolution.⁷¹⁹

On 29 August 2013, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported on the progress made towards the implementation of the agreement reached between Belgrade and Pristina on 19 April. He noted the commitment of the leaders to work towards the implementation of the agreement in a timely and constructive manner, notwithstanding some complications in the process. Referring to the preparations for holding local elections in Kosovo on 3 November 2013, he brought attention to the swift response of OSCE in facilitating voting in the northern territories, as well as voting by eligible internally displaced persons, and stated that the registration of

⁷¹⁵ S/PV.6979, pp. 2-4.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 4-8.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 8-11.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid., p. 6 (Serbia); p. 17 (Pakistan); and p. 18 (Russian Federation).

⁷¹⁹ Ibid., p. 12 (China); p. 14 (Azerbaijan); and p. 18 (Russian Federation).

political entities in the short time window for the elections was a challenge. He underscored the importance of full participation by voters, particularly in the northern municipalities, and called on both sides to show steadfastness and flexibility, particularly to address the concerns of the local population effectively and overcome the uncertainty prevailing in the north. He reaffirmed the commitment of UNMIK to actively adapt its activities in the field to most effectively support the political process and related work on the ground.⁷²⁰

The representative of Serbia reaffirmed his country's commitment to the political dialogue facilitated by the European Union. He, however, noted with regret that only little had been achieved in terms of concrete results in solving people's problems, particularly those besetting minority ethnic groups. He therefore noted that the continued presence of the United Nations in Kosovo and Metohija was of paramount importance for future developments, and emphasized that the implementation of the agreements might not be possible without the active participation of the United Nations.⁷²¹

In his statement, Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, while informing the Council that Kosovo had engaged proactively in implementing its obligations arising from the normalization agreement between Kosovo and Serbia, noted the progress made by Kosovo towards European Union integration, as well as its stability and achievements on a number of domestic issues. He further expressed the view that the Council should consider removing Kosovo from its agenda and requested that a resolution be adopted recognizing the progress that had been made on the ground by Kosovo. He also held the view that the Council should consider transforming UNMIK into a United Nations political office for coordinating all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.⁷²²

Council members welcomed progress made thus far and the efforts of both sides to implement the dialogue agreement in cooperation with the international presence in Kosovo, while urging them to work together to overcome obstacles to the implementation process. Some Council members took note of the further agreement reached on 22 May 2013

on an implementation plan of the agreement of 19 April.⁷²³ Most Council members commended the relative calm and at the same time reiterated concern about the fragile security situation in Kosovo.

Situation in Kosovo following municipal elections

On 19 November 2013, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General stated that the successful conduct of Kosovo-wide municipal elections on 3 November was an important milestone in the implementation of the agreement of 19 April between Pristina and Belgrade. He reported on the problems that had occurred in northern Mitrovica on election day and said that a repeat vote at the three affected polling stations was subsequently ordered by the Central Election Commission, which proceeded peacefully without significant incidents. He noted that UNMIK continued to focus its efforts and resources in support of the European Union-led political process and towards the fulfilment of its mandate. He emphasized that the period ahead would be essential in consolidating the positive outcomes of the Kosovo elections and important progress achieved in the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue.⁷²⁴

The representative of Serbia commented on and expressed several concerns regarding the conduct of the elections, as well as the implementation of the European Union-facilitated agreement. He said that Pristina had not yet taken the necessary steps in key areas of this agreement.⁷²⁵

Mr. Hashim Thaçi briefed the Council on the progress made in Kosovo, particularly the holding of the local elections and the process of European Union integration, as well as the dialogue on the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. He said that in most of Kosovo the elections had proceeded peacefully and calmly, and that only at three polling stations in northern Mitrovica were there isolated incidents involving Serb extremist groups. He called those incidents orchestrated and organized attacks on the fundamental right of citizens. He underscored Kosovo's commitment to continue the dialogue with Serbia including talks on new issues that

⁷²⁰ S/PV.7026, pp. 2-4.

⁷²¹ Ibid., pp. 4-8.

⁷²² Ibid., pp. 8-11.

⁷²³ Ibid., p. 13 (Morocco); p. 16 (Togo); and p. 19 (Azerbaijan).

⁷²⁴ S/PV.7064, pp. 2-4.

⁷²⁵ Ibid., pp. 4-8.

were important to good-neighbourly relations and the quality of life of their citizens.⁷²⁶

Many Council members commented on the elections facilitated by OSCE, and commended the Governments of Serbia and Kosovo for encouraging

their citizens to take part in the elections, while noting the increased participation of the Kosovo Serbian population. They condemned the violent incidents that had occurred in a number of polling stations in northern Mitrovica during the elections on 3 November 2013 and welcomed the peaceful conduct of the rerun elections on 17 November 2013.

⁷²⁶ Ibid., pp. 8-12.

Meetings: Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.6713 8 February 2012	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2012/72)		Serbia (Minister for Foreign Affairs)	Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, and Enver Hoxhaj	All Council members, Serbia, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Enver Hoxhaj ^a	
S/PV.6769 14 May 2012	Report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2012/275)		Serbia (Minister for Foreign Affairs)	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Enver Hoxhaj	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.6822 21 August 2012	Report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2012/603)		Serbia (Prime Minister)	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Hashim Thaçi	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.6872 27 November 2012	Report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2012/818)		Serbia (Minister for Foreign Affairs)	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Enver Hoxhaj	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.6939 22 March 2013	Report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2013/72)		Serbia (Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs)	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Hashim Thaçi	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.6979 14 June 2013	Report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2013/254)		Serbia (Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs)	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Hashim Thaçi	All Council members, all invitees	

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.7026 29 August 2013	Report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2013/444)		Serbia (Minister for Foreign Affairs)	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Enver Hoxhaj	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.7064 19 November 2013	Report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2013/631)		Serbia (Prime Minister)	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Hashim Thaçi	All Council members, all invitees	

^a The Special Representative of the Secretary-General did not make a statement.

Middle East

22. The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held 26 meetings, including one closed meeting,⁷²⁷ in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question” but adopted no resolutions or presidential statements. Meetings during 2012 focused mainly on the efforts by the international community to restart talks between Israel and Palestine that could lead to a resumption of peace negotiations; the Palestinians’ bid for upgrading their status to that of non-member observer State in the United Nations; and the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. During 2013, the Council considered the escalation of activities that undermined a two-State solution following the General Assembly decision to grant Palestine non-member observer State status; the situation of Palestinian prisoners in Israel; and the resumption of direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians in July for a nine-month period. Developments in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and the overall political situation in the Middle East were also discussed during the period.⁷²⁸

Middle East peace process and the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories

On 24 January 2012, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that meetings between Israel and Palestine had started in Amman on 3 January, after having remained suspended since late September 2010. He hoped that those preparatory meetings would lead to serious negotiations but he expressed concern over actions on the ground, including settlement activity in the West Bank and related violence. He also reported that the Palestinian Authority had continued to build its institutions, despite concern over its financial situation due to shortfalls in funding and a slowdown in economic growth. With regard to the situation in Gaza, he condemned any indiscriminate firing towards civilian

areas and called for the lifting of the closure in the framework of resolution 1860 (2009).⁷²⁹

The Permanent Observer of Palestine reaffirmed that recognizing the State of Palestine would constitute a genuine investment in the two-State solution for peace. He added that Palestine had fully cooperated with the efforts of the Quartet to advance the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders while Israel was acting to entrench the occupation by continuing its settlement activities. He stated that the humanitarian situation in Gaza remained critical owing to the Israeli blockade by land, air and sea, and that Israel had been using excessive force against peaceful protesters.⁷³⁰

The representative of Israel indicated that resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was important but that, in the context of the Arab Spring, the misallocation of the time and resources of the Council was eroding its credibility. He said that the primary obstacle to peace was not settlements but the so-called claim of return, which would mean the destruction of Israel. He also expressed concern about the situation in the Gaza Strip and the rocket attacks by Hamas targeting Israeli cities and civilians.⁷³¹

Many speakers expressed support to the efforts of Jordan and the Quartet for a resumption of negotiations. They also condemned Israeli settlement activities and rocket attacks against Israel launched from Gaza, and urged the Council to step up its efforts in support of a two-State solution. Concern regarding the situation in Gaza was also raised. A number of speakers expressed support for the application of Palestine for admission to membership in the United Nations submitted on 23 September 2011 to the General Assembly.⁷³²

On 28 February 2012, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that the talks

⁷²⁷ See [S/PV.6863](#).

⁷²⁸ For information on these questions, see part I, sect. 23, “The situation in the Middle East”.

⁷²⁹ [S/PV.6706](#), pp. 2-5.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-9.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

⁷³² *Ibid.*, p. 6 (Palestine); p. 24 (Azerbaijan); and p. 31 (Egypt).