

Statement by Mr. Vinay Kumar, Minister, Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations at the Security Council briefing on UNMIK on May 14, 2012

Thank you, Mr. President.

Let me join others in thanking SRSG Farid Zarif for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Kosovo and the activities of UNMIK. I also want to thank H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, for his statement outlining his country's perspective on the situation in Kosovo. We have also carefully listened to the statement of Mr. Enver Hoxhaj.

2. Mr. President, the Secretary General's report on UNMIK for the quarter ending 15 April 2012 has brought out in detail the ground situation in Kosovo. We would like to congratulate Serbia for getting the EU Candidate-Country status in early March this year. We also note that the EU has launched a feasibility study for a Stabilization and Association Agreement with Kosovo in late March. These mark the most positive political developments during the reporting period, flowing from concrete progress in the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

3. We are happy to note that in February in an EU-facilitated dialogue, the parties reached an agreement on Kosovo's regional representation and cooperation. We hope that differences in the use of the footnote concerning Kosovo's status and their mutually exclusive interpretations will be resolved soon by mutual agreement and understanding. Conclusion by the parties of a technical protocol, providing an operational dimension to the agreement on integrated management of crossing points, is also a welcome development.

4. Mr. President, we are seriously concerned by the overall security situation in Kosovo that was marked by political tension as well as by criminal incidents, including the attack on a diplomatic Embassy. Compared to the same period last year, there was also an increase in crimes affecting minority communities. These crimes including damage to Serbian Orthodox churches and household properties have serious implications for inter-communal relations in Kosovo. In this connection, we suggest that the concerns of the Serbian Orthodox Church about transfer of security responsibilities at Devic should be paid heed to.

5. We urge UNMIK to continue to prioritize adequate protection of Serbian religious and cultural heritage in Kosovo, particularly in view of the significant resistance that has been noted in the Kosovo Albanian population against legislative measures and their implementation aiming at the protection of Serb cultural and religious sites and the gap between the commitments made by the Kosovo authorities in this area and their implementation.

6. Mr. President, with respect to the rule of law, UNMIK should continue to provide document certification services of civil nature and facilitate the interaction of the

Kosovo authorities with INTERPOL and other organisations. UNMIK should also remain engaged in the missing person issue and other measures for confidence building between the communities. We also welcome the adoption of a law by the Albanian Parliament to facilitate cooperation with the EULEX Special Investigative Task Force, led by John Clint Williamson, allowing the Task Force to fully implement its mandate.

7. In conclusion, we encourage UNMIK to continue to implement its mandate in status neutral manner in strict accordance with resolution 1244 and other relevant decisions of the Security Council. This will help us realize the hope of the Secretary General that the trends of tension and confrontation which have become discernible in the last year will gradually subside and the positive trends of dialogue will strengthen. To that end, leaders on both sides should exercise their leadership in a manner in which tension may be reduced and which can promote a climate conducive to dialogue and mutual understanding.

I thank you.

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