

# Speech: Strengthening good governance in Kosovo

Thank you, Mr President. Let me start by thanking the Special Representative and the Under-Secretary-General for their briefings today. I'd also like to thank the Special Representative and his team for their continued dedication to Kosovo.

Since UNMIK was authorised by this Council in 1999, Kosovo's development from a conflict zone to a democratic country has been significant. And UNMIK has played an important role in achieving this progress. Due to the change in the situation on the ground in these past 20 years, the United Kingdom supports a strategic review of the mission to ensure that UNMIK's efforts are properly tailored to the current needs and addresses the challenges that Kosovo still faces. We continue to call on Kosovo to implement the necessary reforms that will allow it to strengthen further the Rule of Law, good governance, reconciliation and security.

Mr President, the United Kingdom echoes the concern expressed by the Special Representative about the prolonged disengagement by both Pristina and Belgrade from the EU-facilitated dialogue. We welcome the recent efforts by Germany and by France to reinvigorate the process. Progress on normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia is in the interest of both countries, including in respect of their EU aspirations. But the provocative language and actions of both Governments risks future progress. We call on the leaders to react in a measured, proportionate fashion, reflective of the standing of their offices, and to focus on reaching a comprehensive, sustainable agreement that enjoys domestic support.

It is also important for both sides to implement all agreements already reached to build confidence between the parties. We welcome the progress noted in the report on the common border crossing points and call for the resumption of coordination to enable the full implementation of the integrated border mechanism technical protocol.

Mr President, we welcome the important work done by UNMIK and the Government of Kosovo to address legacy issues, including overseeing returns of displaced persons, verifying survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and investigating cases of missing persons. Justice for all victims and their families is crucial to future stability. We cannot allow a culture of impunity to exist. We call on both Pristina and Belgrade to provide all necessary support to existing domestic war crimes courts to ensure that outstanding war crimes cases are heard.

Corruption and organised crime negatively affect the people of Kosovo and those across Europe. We welcome Kosovo's efforts so far to tackle this scourge and urge that these efforts continue and indeed are increased and developed further. The Kosovo police operation on the 28th May was a legitimate operation carried out in accordance with the law, which resulted

in the arrest of 19 police officers suspected of involvement in smuggling and organised crime and targeted multiple ethnicities across a number of municipalities. It is with regret that we note the injuries sustained. We are aware of the detention of two UNMIK officials during the course of the police operation. International personnel acting in the course of their duties must be treated in accordance with international law, just as they too must follow their missions' mandates and codes of conduct. It would be inappropriate for me and for other members of this Council to comment further on that specific incident without clarification of the facts and so we should look forward to the outcome of UNMIK's internal review before commenting further.

Mr President, the United Kingdom welcomes the establishment of the anti-fraud unit, progress on legal reforms to increase transparency in political parties and the recent convictions in several high profile corruption cases. However, despite some progress on the rule of law, stronger, more consistent implementation of the rule of law and good governance structures are needed and will help Kosovo's integration into the international community.

Mr President, the United Kingdom will continue to support Kosovo as it moves forward with its efforts to develop as a stable, prosperous, multi-ethnic state, including through our support of UNMIK. We strongly urge the Governments of Kosovo and Serbia to desist from the divisive rhetoric that has become all too common and to return to the EU-facilitated dialogue in the interests of their peoples and European stability. Thank you.