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PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
TO THE INTERNATIONAL
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S T A T E M E N T

**by Ambassador Gilbert Galanxhi in response to the UN SRSG's for Kosova,
Ambassador Lamberto Zanier,
and to the Head of OMIK, Ambassador Tim Guldemann,
at the 730th meeting of Permanent Council
Vienna, 4 September 2008**

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

First of all, allow me to state that Albania fully agrees and aligns its self with the EU statement, but I took the floor to touch upon a few issues on my national capacity.

The Albanian Delegation warmly welcomes Ambassador Zannier and Ambassador Guldemann to the proceedings of this PC meeting, and wishes to express its thanks for the very detailed and realistic reports and assessments of the last months' developments in Kosova. I wish to reiterate the sincerest gratitude of the Albanian Government and Albanian people for the substantial contributions of UNMIK and OSCE Mission in Kosova, which serve not only to the stability of Kosova itself, but also to the long-term stability of the whole South-Eastern Europe.

Mr. Chairman,

It is with pleasure that we notice positive developments in Kosova, as well as that the positive and co-operative response of the democratically elected Government of Kosova, central and local, has allowed for the OSCE Mission to continue normally its activities even during the reconfiguration of UNMIK.

The Albanian Government believes that a good coordination and cooperation amongst OSCE, UNMIK, EULEX and NATO is indispensable in order to avoid overlapping and duplications, or institutional and territorial vacuums.

The long-term cooperation of Kosova Government with all international partners in the field, particularly with the OSCE Mission, as well as its commitment and dedication to implement in full the Ahtisaari's Package has to be appreciated and applauded. This is one of several clear indicators that the political leadership of Kosova has chosen the right path of building a democratic multiethnic state, based on the principles of consolidated western democracies, beneficiaries of which will be Albanian and non-Albanian communities.

Distinguished Ambassadors,

It is encouraging to be informed by your reports that the reconfiguration of UNMIK is going smoothly. It is also encouraging to hear that the Kosova Administration (Albanian and non-Albanian) are taking over their legitimate responsibilities, showing their political maturity and capability. At the very end of the day, it is the wellbeing and welfare of Kosova citizens that counts, and I stress it again: Albanian and non-Albanian – all should be treated equally and should be equal before the law. All influential actors in the region should keep this in mind. Artificial or imposed boycott, non-participation and parallel structures do not produce democracy and their time is passed. The newly adopted Constitution of Kosova complies with the highest standards of human rights and freedoms, as well as it provides equal opportunities and offers wide protection for all communities living in Kosova, especially for the Serb community.

Albania believes that EULEX Mission is an added guarantee for the rule of law in Kosova, and the gradual transfer of competencies from UNMIK to EULEX and to Kosovar Administration is a normal and expected process.

Mr. Chairman,

The Albanian Government has always been realistic and optimistic for the stability of Kosova and the whole region, and has worked and contributed for the long-term stability of the region. The Albanian Government believes in integration and cooperation, and it urges the Administrations of Prishtina and Belgrade to establish good neighbourly relations which will ease all artificial tensions. The expressed aspiration of both, Prishtina and Belgrade, is integration into EU. Generations to come will be grateful to both governments, the sooner this happens, and be sure 'bad times' will be forgotten as history teaches us. Yet Rome was not built in one day.

Distinguished Amb. Zannier,

Distinguished Amb. Guldemann,

The Albanian Delegation wishes to thank You personally, as well as all your staff for the excellent work performed so far, for Your contribution in consolidating the democratic standards of good governance in Kosova, for the excellent cooperation with Kosovar Administration. All Your efforts are a valuable input for the future of the whole region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.