

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 949th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

25 April 2013

Regarding the agreement between Belgrade and Priština

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia has consistently taken the position that a peaceful political solution to the Kosovo problem is possible only on the basis of direct negotiations between the interested parties with clear observance of the provisions of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244, which remains the internationally recognized framework for a settlement, and also of the norms and principles of international law.

We have from the outset supported a high-level political dialogue between Belgrade and Priština. We regard such a dialogue as an effective instrument for the settlement of contentious issues and the stabilization of the situation, including in the Balkans as a whole. We agree with the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office as regards the importance of continuing this dialogue with the aim of improving the lives of the members of all communities in Kosovo.

In this context, we note the agreement signed at the outcome of the meeting on 17 April of this year in Brussels of the delegations of Serbia and Kosovo, mediated by the European Union.

We support Belgrade, *inter alia* as regards Kosovo and Metohija. We believe that solutions for this problem must be acceptable to both sides.

We also note that the agreement reached in Brussels does not mean any change in Serbia's position regarding its non-recognition of the self-proclaimed "Republic of Kosovo".

We trust that the activities of the international presences in Kosovo, including the OSCE Mission, will also continue to develop in a status-neutral and unbiased manner, in strict accordance with their mandates and United Nations Security Council resolution 1244, and in the interests of all the communities in the territory.

Thank you for your attention.