



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MIROSLAVA BEHAM,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SERBIA TO THE OSCE,
UNDER CURRENT ISSUES
ON THE EVENTS PROVOKED BY KOSOVO POLICE SPECIAL UNITS
AT THE CROSSING POINTS IN
NORTHERN KOSOVO,
AT THE 876th MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

28 July 2011

Mr. Chairperson,

On Monday July 25th in the late evening hours, special units of the Kosovo police called “ROSU” launched an operation to take over two crossing points at the administrative boundary line in the North of Kosovo. This unilateral, unprovoked, highly hazardous and totally unacceptable action by Pristina raised the tensions in an already volatile environment to a dangerous degree.

Serbia strongly opposes such unilateral and violent measures and believes that anyone who supports or encourages them makes a disastrous mistake and leads this part of Europe into incalculable risks, as President Tadić said. There is no conceivable alternative to the peaceful resolution of disputes, and Serbia remains resolutely committed to this principle.

Let me in this regard underline that the Serbian authorities and their representatives were not taken in by the deliberate provocation of the Kosovo special units, but reacted in a sober-minded and reasonable way, doing everything to pacify and de-escalate the situation in cooperation with the international community. This is why Serbia strongly condemns any violent acts performed by extremists and hooligans following Pristina’s unilateral action. As President Tadić said – these acts are against the interests of the Serbian citizens and the Serbian State. The President called for an immediate cessation of violence and repeatedly appealed to the citizens in Kosovo to keep calm and restraint, emphasizing that violent extremists on the Serbian side join those extremists on the Albanian side who wish by their unilateral and violent actions to cut off the peace process between Belgrade and Pristina that has just begun.

Mr. Chairperson,

We deplore any casualties caused by the events following Pristina’s operation. The attempt to forcefully and unilaterally change the reality on the ground can lead to an extremely dangerous escalation of tensions and violence and to broader instability.

This would be a grave setback for all the efforts – our common efforts – to overcome existing disagreements and find solutions in a peaceful, democratic and civilized manner. It would run counter to all our principles of conflict resolution. We count on the international community to uphold these principles as determinedly as Serbia is willing to do. The dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina must go on.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.