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# STATEMENT BY MR. DMITRY POLYANSKIY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1581st MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

15 October 2026

## In response to the report by the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Mr. Gerard McGurk, for his report on the Mission's activities during the reporting period. We pay tribute to the balanced and professional approach to addressing mandated tasks that has now become a hallmark of the senior management of that field operation.

We note the Mission's ongoing work in areas such as ensuring public safety, maintaining dialogue between representatives of different communities, and protecting the rights of Kosovo Serbs, including the preservation of their cultural heritage.

We recognize that, given the current situation in the province, the Mission is facing considerable challenges. The domestic political crisis, brought about by the Kosovo Albanian leadership's long-standing failure to reach a compromise on key issues, has required the field operation to make additional efforts in the electoral sphere. Added to this is the destructive impact of Kosovo Albanian nationalism on the public security situation.

A striking example of this negative trend was the reaction of far-right activists to the verdict handed down on 16 September this year by the Kosovo Specialist Chambers against the leaders of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army. Leaving aside issues relating to the specific nature of the justice system in The Hague, we should nevertheless like to emphasize that the aggressive actions of these youths have once again demonstrated the need for constant monitoring by the OSCE presence deployed in the province. In this regard, we reaffirm our position that the proposals by certain participating States of the Organization to reduce the frequency of the reports by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo from two to one per year are premature.

Overall, the negative trends in the field of security are clearly anti-Serb in nature. The statistical data contained in the report confirms this quite clearly: the victims of the vast majority of recorded incidents (35 out of 43) were Serbs living in the province. In this connection, we should like to pay tribute to the Mission's work in establishing dialogue between representatives of different communities. Stigmatization and persecution on the grounds of nationality are phenomena that have no place in the modern world.

Against this backdrop, the statements by the leadership of the Kosovo Force regarding the alleged "significant improvement" in the security situation are puzzling. We reaffirm our position regarding the harmful decision to hand over responsibility for ensuring the security of the Visoki Dečani Monastery, as well as the bridge in North Mitrovica, to the so-called Kosovo Police. Such an arbitrary decision poses potential risks to the safety of Serbs living in the north of the province.

At the same time, pseudo-judicial reprisals against Kosovo Serbs for so-called war crimes are continuing. We have already spoken about the abuses committed by the "justice" system of the Pristina authorities at a previous Permanent Council meeting. In this context, we should like to note the impartial nature of the report submitted by the Mission following its monitoring of the court proceedings in the cases in question. The document unambiguously highlights such systemic violations as delays in carrying out procedural actions, the arbitrary interpretation and application of provisions concerning legal safeguards for suspects, and the restriction of their rights, including their right to familiarize themselves with the case materials; and so on.

The systematic violations of the property rights of Serbs are a cause for concern. The demolition of their property has become common practice. According to the statistics cited in the report, 35 structures around Gazivode Lake have been demolished since June this year alone. The authorities in Pristina are also failing to fulfil their obligations regarding institutions operating within the territory of the province under the jurisdiction of the authorities in Belgrade. A total of 132 such properties have been seized over the past five years. We are grateful to the Mission for keeping these pressing issues at the forefront of the Permanent Council's attention.

It is important to understand that none of these problems facing the Kosovo Serbs arose of their own accord; they are the result of a deliberate policy by the authorities in Pristina to drive the Serb population out of the province. In this regard, we should like to reaffirm our principled position that, in order to avert a catastrophic scenario, it is necessary to work towards the swift and full return of Kosovo and Metohija to the control of the authorities in Belgrade. This would not only restore historical justice but also help to strengthen stability in the Balkans. Moreover, the search for a solution must be pursued in strict compliance with the provisions of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244. Any attempts to interpret these loosely are unacceptable.

At the same time, we call upon the Mission to continue to devote the utmost attention to the situation regarding respect for the rights of Kosovo Serbs. It is essential to respond promptly and comprehensively to any concerns they may have, while keeping the Permanent Council fully informed, in a timely manner, of current developments.

In conclusion, we should like to thank the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo for his work and wish him and his team every success in their future endeavours.

Thank you for your attention.