

PC.DEL/745/10
8 July 2010



ENGLISH only

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MIROSLAVA BEHAM,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SERBIA,
UNDER CURRENT ISSUES,
AT THE 822nd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL,
ON THE BOMB ATTACK ON A SERBIAN DEMONSTRATION IN
KOSOVO/ SERBIA**

8 July 2010

Mr. Chairman,

Let me thank the distinguished representatives of the United States, the Russian Federation, the European Union and Albania for their statements, and let me briefly react to them. In my reaction I will refer to what Serbian President Boris Tadić said in his speech before the United Nations Security Council on Tuesday, 6 July, on what by no means was an isolated incident of violence and intimidation against Serbs and other non-Albanians in our southern province as our statements of the last weeks and months, or even years, in the Permanent Council clearly show, as do the reports of all international organisations present on the ground in Kosovo, including the OSCE Mission. There are incidents on an almost daily basis.

On the incident itself President Tadić said:

“Serbs came in peace, yet they were met with unprovoked violence. Two high-intensity bombs were thrown into the crowd. They came from within courtyards of homes owned by ethnic Albanian supporters of the February 17th, 2008, unilateral declaration of independence.”

On unilateralism President Tadić stated:

„It is incredibly disappointing that some in Pristina still believe in unilateralism—and that they believe it can ever provide an answer to any of the open issues we have an obligation to peacefully resolve.

The bottom line is that the Security Council must not tolerate unilateralism. Opposing one-sidedness is its fundamental mission. So let me make myself clearly understood: differences notwithstanding, whoever does not condemn unilateralism of any sort in Kosovo—as Serbia has—will be responsible for any future violence, deaths, and acts of terror that may take place in the province. (...)

The truth about UDI, however uncomfortable for some to hear, is that it cannot lead to peace and stability—for peace is the product of agreement, just as stability is the result of consensus. UDI rejected them both at the moment of its stillbirth. It has clearly divided the world and brought into question the fundamental tenets of the contemporary international system. That is why, in reality, the stubborn continuation of attempts to implement UDI can only produce what everyone responsible must seek to avoid: a long-term freezing of Kosovo's limbo. (...)

It is our shared responsibility to find a way to overcome the present impasse. I want to be very clear on that. Unilateralism has gotten us nowhere. It is time to chart a course towards a secure future for all the residents of our southern province, for all the citizens of our country, and for all the nations of our region.(...)

This past Friday's tragedy reminds us of the fear and violence that stands at the foundation of unilateralism. But it can also teach us that the failure of one thing—UDI—can be repaired by the success of another: the establishment of a harmonious peace between two vibrant and proud nations—Serbs and Albanians.

I close by saying that the time for anyone to try half-measures—devoid of real imagination or foresight—has come to an end. We have entered a period where only results matter—a period of consequence and momentous choice.

We are determined to reach a sustainable agreement on the final status of Kosovo. We have no right to fail in this task. And we have no intention of humiliating anyone. What we seek is a just status that all parties can embrace. This is the only way to secure regional gains, reinforce shared priorities, and complete the democratic transformation of the Balkans.

What everyone needs to do is reject the extremist voices who find comfort in the old ways, and who believe it is impossible for Serbs and Albanians to normalize their relations by reaching a historic compromise.

This has been our vision all along—because we believe that comprehensive peace is essential for securing our shared, prosperous future in the European Union.”

We will circulate the integral version of President Tadić's speech today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman