



Plenary sitting

B9-0441/2023

16.10.2023

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on recent developments in the Serbia-Kosovo dialogue, including the situation
in the northern municipalities in Kosovo
(2023/2880(RSP))

**Anna Fotyga, Angel Dzhambazki, Ryszard Czarnecki, Adam Bielan,
Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Assita Kanko, Andżelika Anna
Możdżanowska, Anna Zalewska, Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Eugen
Jurzyca, Bogdan Rzońca, Elżbieta Rafalska**
on behalf of the ECR Group

European Parliament resolution on recent developments in the Serbia-Kosovo dialogue, including the situation in the northern municipalities in Kosovo (2023/2880(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Kosovo and Serbia,
 - having regard to the statement of 19 September 2023 by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on expectations from Serbia and Kosovo,
 - having regard to the statement of 24 September 2023 by NATO’s Kosovo Force (KFOR),
 - having regard to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and Kosovo, of the other part¹, which entered into force in Kosovo on 1 April 2016,
 - having regard to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Serbia, of the other part²,
 - having regard to the Agreement on the path to normalisation between Kosovo and Serbia and its Implementation Annex,
 - having regard to the EU-Serbia accession negotiations, which began in January 2014,
 - having regard to the Inter-Party Dialogue process,
 - having regard to the Commission’s country reports on Serbia and Kosovo,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 24 September 2023, Kosovo police forces clashed with local Kosovo Serbs in Banjska, leading to the death of one police officer and three Kosovo Serbs; whereas police stated that, in the lead-up to the incident, a group of armed Serbs had used two trucks without licence plates to block a bridge leading to the village of Banjska, located near the city of Mitrovica;
- B. whereas, over the past year in northern Kosovo, there have been a number of incidents including road blockades, election boycotts, attacks on municipal buildings and violent assaults on police officers and NATO soldiers;
- C. whereas there are legitimate concerns that these provocations are designed to compromise the ‘normalisation’ talks between Serbia and Kosovo, testing the

¹ OJ L 71, 16.3.2016, p. 3.

² OJ L 278, 18.10.2013, p. 16.

international response to organised violence and preparing the conditions for forced secession;

- D. whereas the group of armed Serbs reportedly opened fire on the police that had arrived on the scene; whereas the gunmen took shelter in the local Serbian Orthodox Banjska Monastery; whereas the crossfire, which included hand grenades, reportedly led to the death of one police officer and three Kosovo Serbs and left another police officer injured;
- E. whereas Bojan Mijailovic, ‘the bodyguard’ of Serbian intelligence chief Aleksandar Vulin, was identified by the Kosovan authorities as one of the Kosovo Serbs who died during the incident; whereas four of the eight Kosovo Serbs who were arrested over the incident were released owing to a lack of evidence, according to prosecutors;
- F. whereas Serbia observed an official day of mourning as the country cancelled sports events and lowered flags to half mast, with Serbian Defence Minister Miloš Vučević describing the Serb gunmen killed in Kosovo as ‘martyrs’;
- G. whereas, following the incident, a large number of KFOR security forces were dispatched to the region and the Brnjak border crossing point between Kosovo and Serbia was closed;
- H. whereas tensions had reportedly intensified in the region over the past year and, in particular, following the April elections; whereas the latest clashes have left citizens, KFOR soldiers, law enforcement and media representatives wounded, some with serious and permanent injuries;
- I. whereas this reportedly violent encounter is eerily similar to the June 2023 escalations in Zvečan, where at least 30 soldiers were injured, some seriously, in clashes between NATO’s KFOR task force and Serbian protesters;
- J. whereas reports from December 2022 stated that Serbs had erected multiple roadblocks and had been involved in crossfire along the northern border;
- K. whereas the local elections of September 2022 further escalated tensions; whereas the partial elections held in April 2023 had a very low turnout and did not provide for a long-term solution; whereas the EU has also called for local elections following the boycott by Srpska Lista, a Belgrade-controlled party, on the grounds that a Serb municipal association should be established first;
- L. whereas the security situation in northern Kosovo has been fragile, in particular, since the 2022 elections, when the Kosovo Serbs withdrew from Kosovo’s state institutions (including the judiciary, police and government) in protest over the dismissal of the Kosovo Serb police commander by the Kosovan central authorities in November 2022; whereas this was preceded by a dispute over reciprocity measures in the recognition of car licence plates, from those on the Kosovo Serb side, which date back to the pre-independence era, to the types now issued by the Pristina authorities; whereas, in July 2023, an official order was issued by the Kosovan authorities allowing for a two-month transition period, which was then extended to the end of 2023;

- M. whereas a high-level meeting of the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue took place on 14 September 2023 in Brussels, in which the EU expressed its concern over both parties' lack of implementation of their commitments; whereas the EU representatives reiterated that the 'sanctions' would remain in place, including the suspension of high-level meetings with Kosovo; whereas all parties involved in the dialogue process were reminded of their duty to uphold the principle of confidentiality in the dialogue;
- N. whereas the expropriation of land in the north of Kosovo, eviction orders, decisions related to telecommunications and the use of special police forces for community policing duties have been detrimental to efforts to de-escalate tensions in the north; whereas these actions by Kosovo are not in accordance with the rule of law and risk intensifying tensions;
- O. whereas Serbia's blocking of the energy roadmap, the continuous small-scale attacks by criminal groups and the intimidation of newly recruited Kosovo Serb police cadets and the local population are not only unacceptable, but they also run counter to the spirit of the dialogue process;
- P. whereas Serbia and Kosovo are both EU candidate countries and have both concluded Stabilisation and Association Agreements with the EU;
1. Condemns in the strongest terms the violence in the north of Kosovo;
 2. Deeply regrets the casualties of the latest incidents in particular, and expresses its condolences to the families of the deceased and injured;
 3. Remains highly concerned over the lack of progress by both parties in de-escalating tensions in the north of Kosovo;
 4. Calls on the Kosovan and Serbian authorities, and all political actors involved, at all levels of governance, to engage constructively to fulfil their commitments and implement the agreements reached under the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue;
 5. Stands firmly behind NATO's KFOR mission in fulfilling its mandate;
 6. Encourages transatlantic coordination between the Member States, the US and NATO to ensure that the EU common security and defence policy is upheld and that NATO personnel are protected;
 7. Supports the calls for elections to be held in the north of Kosovo and encourages the authorities to implement all necessary policies and instruments to ensure fair, democratic and peaceful elections and that the Kosovo Serbian community fully engage in such elections and respect the rule of law;
 8. Reiterates the importance of shared responsibility and the need for long-term peaceful resolutions to the conflict and that the normalisation of relations through the achievement of a comprehensive and legally binding agreement between Serbia and Kosovo is crucial for the two countries to advance their respective European paths;
 9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the

European External Action Service, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the parliaments and governments of the Member States and the Presidents, Governments and Parliaments of Serbia and Kosovo.