



*Plenary sitting*

**B9-0437/2023 }  
B9-0439/2023 }  
B9-0440/2023 }  
B9-0441/2023 }  
B9-0446/2023 } RC1**

18.10.2023

## JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 132(2) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure

replacing the following motions:

B9-0437/2023 (S&D)

B9-0439/2023 (Renew)

B9-0440/2023 (Verts/ALE)

B9-0441/2023 (ECR)

B9-0446/2023 (PPE)

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

**Michael Gahler, Lukas Mandl, Vladimír Bilčík, Željana Zovko, Rasa Juknevičienė, Andrey Kovatchev, Franc Bogovič**

on behalf of the PPE Group

**Pedro Marques, Tonino Picula**

on behalf of the S&D Group

**Klemen Grošelj, Petras Auštrevičius, Dita Charanzová, Katalin Cseh, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Nathalie Loiseau, Javier Nart, Dragoș Pîslaru, Hilde**

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PE754.342v01-00 }  
PE754.336v01-00 }  
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PE754.347v01-00 } RC1

**Vautmans**

on behalf of the Renew Group

**Viola von Cramon-Taubadel**

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**Anna Fotyga, Angel Dzhambazki, Ryszard Czarnecki, Assita Kanko,**

**Elżbieta Kruk, Anna Zalewska, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Bogdan**

**Rzońca, Elżbieta Rafalska, Adam Bielan**

on behalf of the ECR Group

**Fabio Massimo Castaldo**

**Motion for a European Parliament resolution on the 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 Serbia and Kosovo, in particular those of 10 May 2023 on the 2022 Commission Report on Serbia<sup>1</sup> and of 10 May 2023 on the 2022 Commission Report on Kosovo<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the previous EU statements on Serbia and Kosovo, in particular to the European Council conclusions of 9 February 2023 on the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina,
- having regard to Serbia's application for EU membership, submitted on 19 December 2009,
- having regard to Kosovo's application for EU membership, submitted on 14 December 2022,
- having regard to UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999,
- having regard to the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalisation of Relations between the Governments of Serbia and Kosovo (Brussels Agreement) of 19 April 2013, to the agreements of 25 August 2015, and to the ongoing EU-facilitated dialogue for the normalisation of relations,
- having regard to the agreement on free movement between the Governments of Serbia and Kosovo of 27 August 2022, and to the agreement on licence plates of 23 November 2022, as well as to the Energy Agreements' Implementation Roadmap in the EU-facilitated Dialogue of 21 June 2022,
- having regard to the Brussels Agreement of 27 February 2023 and the Ohrid Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia of 18 March 2023 and to the Implementation Annex thereto,
- having regard to the European Parliament's co-facilitated parliamentary dialogue process in Serbia,
- having regard to the EU Statement of 28 September 2023 on the recent developments in the north of Kosovo made at Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Permanent Council No. 1444,
- having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0192.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0193.

- A. 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; whereas since July 2022, extremist organised groups with links to members of the Serbian Government have stoked tensions in the north of Kosovo by building barricades and engaging in violence against the Kosovan authorities as a reaction to the decision regarding car licence plates; whereas in November 2022, Kosovo Serbs withdrew from Kosovan institutions in the north of the country;
- B. whereas the first agreement on principles governing the normalisation of relations between the governments of Serbia and Kosovo was concluded on 19 April 2013, followed by other agreements, most recently the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of 18 March 2023, which, however, Serbian President Vučić refused to sign; whereas the EU-facilitated dialogue for the normalisation of relations has been ongoing since 2011; whereas only three elements have been addressed from the latest Implementation Annex: the Declaration of Missing Persons, the presentation of the Management Team statute for the Association/Community and the announcement of the Joint Monitoring Committee;
- C. whereas on 23 April 2023, Kosovo held local by-elections in four municipalities with a Serb majority in the north of the country; whereas the main ethnic Serb party *Srpska Lista*, which has close links with President Vučić and the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), actively boycotted the elections; whereas as a result of this boycott, the turnout in the elections was only around 3 %; whereas the elections were held in line with Kosovo's legal framework, but cannot be considered to have yielded a representative outcome;
- D. whereas on 26 May 2023, the Kosovo Special Police escorted the newly elected mayors so that they could enter the municipality buildings; whereas on 26 May 2023, there were violent clashes between protesters and the Kosovan police in the north of Kosovo; whereas between 29 and 31 May 2023, violent agitators brutally attacked NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) officers, Kosovan police officers and journalists; whereas following these events, KFOR increased its presence on the ground;
- E. whereas on 1 June 2023, Commission Vice-President / High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy (VP/HR) Josep Borrell asked Kosovo to withdraw special police forces from urban neighbourhoods in the north of the country, to hold new local elections while ensuring the participation of Kosovo Serbs, and to start work on bringing the Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities (ASM) into the EU-facilitated dialogue; whereas VP/HR Borrell warned that failure to do so would have serious consequences for the EU's relations with Kosovo;
- F. whereas on 14 June 2023, Serbian special forces violently abducted three Kosovan border police officers in the border region between the north of Kosovo and Serbia; whereas officials from Kosovo and Serbia gave different locations for the abduction, each accusing the other of crossing the border illegally; whereas the officers were later released by Serbia;

- G. whereas since 1 July 2023, the Commission has imposed negative measures against Kosovo; whereas the EU has not imposed similar measures against Serbia;
- H. whereas following the high-level meeting of the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue held on 14 September, the EU expressed its concern over the parties' lack of implementation of their commitments under the Ohrid Agreement and its Implementation Annex;
- I. whereas on 24 September 2023, a group of heavily armed ethnic Serb paramilitaries carried out a terrorist attack in the north of Kosovo, in which one Kosovan police officer and three attackers lost their lives; whereas the terrorists barricaded themselves inside Banjska Monastery despite the presence of a group of pilgrims from Serbia, who were also inside; whereas when the Kosovan police gained control of the situation, arrested some of the gunmen and confiscated a massive amount of weapons, explosives and ammunition;
- J. whereas inter-ethnic attacks in Kosovo are frequent, such as the attack perpetrated against two young Kosovo Serbs on Orthodox Christmas Eve 2023;
- K. whereas among the Serbs who died during the incident of 24 September 2023, Bojan Mijailović was identified by Kosovo authorities to have links to the Serbian intelligence chief Aleksandar Vulin; 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';
- L. whereas the Kosovan Government accused Serbia of organising the attack, later claiming that the goal was to annex the Serb-populated north of Kosovo; whereas they presented evidence showing the group's connection to Serbia;
- M. whereas Milan Radoičić, Vice-President of the *Srpska Lista*, claimed responsibility for organising the attack, denying that the Serbian Government was involved; whereas he was detained, but released from custody in Serbia and is yet to be prosecuted; whereas in 2021, Radoičić was added to the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List of the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the US Department of the Treasury, which targets persons responsible for corruption and serious human rights violations; whereas in 2022, Radoičić was also sanctioned under the UK Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regulations;
- N. whereas the Serbian authorities have denied any involvement in the attack;
- O. whereas the Serbian police, special police and army units had been moved into forward positions close to the Serbian border with Kosovo in the weeks and months before the 24 September 2023 attack, further escalating what was an already tense situation; whereas on 29 September 2023 the EU, the US Administration and the German Government urged Serbia to withdraw its troops from the border with Kosovo; whereas Serbia later withdrew part of its forces; whereas these incidents have exacerbated regional instability and undermined the Serbia-Kosovo dialogue;
- P. whereas the *Srpska Lista* publicly announced on 13 October 2023 that it would

unconditionally take part in the local elections in the north of Kosovo;

- Q. whereas the Kosovo police is the first security responder in the country, with the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo's (EULEX) Formed Police Unit as the second and KFOR as the third;
- R. whereas, despite the facilitation efforts of the EU over the past few months, Serbia and Kosovo have failed to make progress towards the normalisation of their relations;
- S. whereas Serbia's continued close relationship and partnership with Russia and China raises questions about Serbia's strategic direction and hinders the country's economic and political development; whereas Russia is using its influence in Serbia to try to destabilise, interfere with and threaten neighbouring sovereign states, including Kosovo; whereas Serbia has become a safe haven for Russian companies; whereas social media platforms have become tools for fostering anti-democratic political movements in the Western Balkans;
1. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the hideous and cowardly terrorist attack on Kosovan police officers by well-organised Serbian paramilitaries in Banjska/Banjskë in the north of Kosovo, which took place on 24 September 2023 and resulted in the murder of the Kosovan police officer Afrim Bunjaku and the injuring of two more Kosovan police officers; calls on all EU Member States that have not already done so to also condemn the attack; deeply regrets the casualties and expresses its condolences to the family, colleagues, and loved ones of Afrim Bunjaku; commends the Kosovan police's cooperation with international partners, EULEX and KFOR in its response to the attack;
  2. Urges all sides to work to de-escalate the situation in northern Kosovo and avoid any rhetoric or action that would further increase tensions; calls for all the facts about the attack to be established and is closely following the ongoing investigations by the Kosovan authorities; calls on the EU to support the investigation by the Kosovan authorities, including with EULEX support; stresses that the perpetrators of this deplorable attack must be held accountable and face justice without delay; calls on the Kosovan authorities to disclose all the evidence regarding the incident; calls on international institutions in Kosovo, including EULEX, to assess the evidence; urges Serbia to fully cooperate with the investigations and to bring those responsible for the attack who are currently residing in Serbia to justice in accordance with the law, including their extradition to Kosovo;
  3. Stresses that this operation indicates a serious military build-up and constitutes a major escalation, which is illegal and goes against the EU's repeated calls for a de-escalation in the north of Kosovo; calls on Serbia to refrain from any further escalation that undermines the constitutional order of the Republic of Kosovo, and to prevent any smuggling of weapons across the border; urges, further, in this regard the Kosovan authorities to work towards open trade for all civilian goods and services;
  4. Calls on the Commission and the Council to take measures against the Serbian Government if investigations reveal that the Serbian State was directly involved in the Banjska terrorist attack or the violent attacks that took place in the north of Kosovo in

May 2023, or if the Serbian authorities are unwilling to cooperate fully; calls, in this context, on the Commission to freeze the funding provided to Serbia under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance III if investigation findings indicate that the Serbian State was directly involved in these attacks; calls on the Council to adopt targeted restrictive measures, including but not limited to asset freezes and travel bans, against destabilising actors in the north of Kosovo and the leaders of major organised crime networks; calls on the Council, in this context, to follow the example of the United States and impose targeted measures against Milan Radoičić;

5. Strongly denounces the Serbian army's military build-up on the border with Kosovo; takes note of the important step that Serbia's partial withdrawal of its troops from the border with Kosovo represents; calls on Serbia to refrain from this repetitive pattern of escalation in the future and to behave fully in accordance with the Kumanovo Agreement; calls on Serbia to enhance its efforts to de-escalate the tensions caused by its military build-up; calls on Serbia, in this regard, to withdraw all the military forward bases located near the border with Kosovo, including equipment such as anti-aircraft systems and heavy artillery units, to refrain from any disproportionate military deployments in the area in future and to halt any support to terrorist formations in the north of Kosovo;
6. Stresses that such aggressive military behaviour, together with radicalised political messaging in Serbia and strong indications of the Serbian State's involvement in the recent political violence in the north of Kosovo, indicates that the Serbian Government is pursuing a very dangerous but coherent policy with regard to Kosovo and its Western partners;
7. Strongly condemns the violent attacks of May 2023 against KFOR soldiers, Kosovo police officers and journalists; calls on the relevant authorities to bring all the perpetrators of these deplorable attacks to justice;
8. Calls on KFOR to establish a containment plan in the north of Kosovo, incorporating robust elements that can act as a deterrent to further escalation; welcomes the UK's deployment of 200 soldiers to Kosovo to reinforce KFOR and strongly urges the EU Member States to deploy additional troops to the country without further delay; strongly welcomes NATO's decision to equip KFOR with heavier armament to give it more combat power; urges NATO to ensure that KFOR has the right capabilities to closely monitor the entire north of Kosovo and carry out constant surveillance of the region to ensure that any paramilitary incursion, attack or action or any attempted abduction of Kosovan law enforcement officers can be detected immediately, at a very early stage; calls for the EU and its Member States to increase EULEX's units on the ground even further, in particular in the north of Kosovo and, if necessary, to temporarily strengthen its role as a security responder in the north of Kosovo;
9. Takes note of the fact that Serbia observed a national day of mourning honouring all the victims; deeply regrets that the three dead terrorists were portrayed as heroes who fought for the cause of Serbs, which has greatly increased political tensions in the region;

10. Calls for an increase in international and cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Kosovo targeting organised crime; regrets that limited progress has been made in investigating and prosecuting such cases; expresses concern about the challenging situation regarding the fight against organised crime in the north of Kosovo, where criminal gangs continue to operate, adversely affecting the lives and future prospects of Kosovan citizens in the northern municipalities; is concerned by evidence linking violent criminal groups in the north of Kosovo and in Serbia with the Serbian State; calls for a thorough investigation to address these concerns; calls on KFOR and EULEX to conduct regular joint security assessments in the north of Kosovo to evaluate the security situation and to focus more on the significant role played by organised crime in developments in that region;
11. Deplores the fact that the Belgrade court rejected the call by the Belgrade Chief Public Prosecutor's Office for the detention of Milan Radoičić in view of the risk of his flight, given that Radoičić claimed responsibility for organising the attack of 24 September 2023; expresses deep concern that all those responsible for the attack in Banjska might not be brought to justice;
12. Calls on Serbia and Kosovo to denounce all forms of violence and acts of provocation, urging restraint and the immediate cessation of any actions that may further escalate tensions; calls on Serbia and Kosovo to refrain from unilateral actions that could undermine peace and stability in the region, and instead actively work towards a peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue facilitated by the EU; condemns and deplores the handling of the severe attack of 24 September 2023 by the Serbian authorities, including their reluctance to cooperate in the investigation, their role in spreading propaganda about the attack, glorifying the perpetrators and lending them political support, their lenient attitude towards the organisers and perpetrators of the attack, which even extended to providing them with shelter, the rhetoric used by Serbian leaders during this crisis and their attempts at destabilising Kosovo; calls for a proper investigation of all ethnic-related attacks throughout Kosovo, including the attacks on the Bistrica bridge and in Štrpce on Orthodox Christmas Eve;
13. Supports the normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia; reiterates its call on Serbia and Kosovo to participate in the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue in good faith and in a spirit of compromise in order to achieve a comprehensive, legally binding agreement on the normalisation of their relations without further delay, based on the principle of mutual recognition and in accordance with international law; calls on the relevant parties to make the dialogue more citizen-oriented; calls on the European External Action Service to allocate more resources to the EU-facilitated dialogue;
14. Calls for the EU to strengthen its role as a facilitator in the Serbia-Kosovo dialogue and in the Western Balkans in general and to propose a new, innovative and balanced approach to the mediation between the parties in order to overcome the current stalemate, given the watershed consequences of the 24 September 2023 attack and the fact that confidence in the process has to be restored;
15. Urges, in particular, VP/HR Borrell and EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-



Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues Miroslav Lajčák to facilitate the dialogue in a proactive manner and report to Parliament no later than the end of 2023 on their findings regarding Serbian and Kosovan engagement with, action on and delivery of the objectives of the dialogue; underlines that the normalisation of relations is essential for both countries' progress towards EU membership; recalls that the failure to act constructively and in good faith on the normalisation of relations will have consequences for the countries' accession to the EU; calls for the EU to take action in the framework of pre-accession assistance against those who do not comply with the agreements;

16. Calls on both Serbia and Kosovo to fully implement the Brussels Agreement of 27 February 2023 and the Ohrid Agreement of 18 March 2023, as well as all the previous agreements, and to do so genuinely and in good faith; regrets that Serbia has refused to sign the Brussels and Ohrid Agreements; calls on the European External Action Service and the Commission to maximise efforts to ensure the effective implementation of these agreements, including the return of Kosovo Serb representatives to Kosovan institutions; calls on Kosovo to establish the Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities without further delay, in line with the Brussels Agreements of 2013 and 2015, Kosovo's constitution and the 2015 judgment of the Constitutional Court of Kosovo; believes that a final and comprehensive settlement will enhance cooperation, stability and prosperity in the wider region; stresses that the attack of 24 September 2023 should not serve as an excuse to divert attention from the dialogue on normalisation; recognises that Serbia has to make an effort to regain its credibility in the dialogue, as a result of its harmful role in the events of 24 September 2023; emphasises the importance of the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue for the EU's role as a credible foreign policy player in the region;
17. Regrets that Serbia has resumed its Kosovo de-recognition campaign; calls on Serbia to refrain from attempts to isolate Kosovo from the international scene by campaigning against its recognition; deeply regrets Serbia's objection to Kosovo's membership of the Council of Europe, which clearly violates the Brussels Agreement of 27 February 2023; urges Serbia to refrain from the threat or use of force, in line with its international obligations;
18. Regrets the boycott of judicial institutions, encouraged by Serbian political parties; deplores the boycott of the municipal elections in northern Kosovo on 23 April 2023 by the main ethnic Serb political party in the north of Kosovo, *Srpska Lista*, and the intimidation of Serb opposition politicians; regrets the Kosovan Government's insistence on maintaining citizens of the Albanian Kosovan community as mayors in the northern municipalities despite very low electoral turnouts, as their low degree of legitimacy hampers the reconciliation and integration process of the Albanian Kosovan and Serbian communities in Kosovo;
19. Stresses that it remains crucial to hold early local elections in the four municipalities in the north of Kosovo to help defuse the tensions, and encourages the authorities to ensure the full participation of all political parties in free, fair, democratic and peaceful elections; reiterates that Serbia also needs to commit publicly to the participation of

Kosovo Serbs in the elections, since *Srpska Lista* has already announced its unconditional participation;

20. Calls on Kosovo Serbs to return to Kosovan institutions and refrain from further escalating tensions on the ground, and encourages the Kosovan Government to significantly step up its efforts to reintegrate them, as initiatives to involve the Serb community in Kosovo's political, social and economic structures remain very limited; reaffirms that reconciliation and the inclusion of the Serb community in Kosovo is essential for ensuring stability in the country and for moving forward in the normalisation of Pristina-Belgrade relations under the EU-facilitated dialogue; reiterates its call for the Kosovan authorities to improve the internal dialogue with independent civil society organisations in the northern municipalities with the aim of building trust and facilitating the daily life of Kosovo Serbs;
21. Regrets the negative measures the Council has taken against Kosovo and calls for them to be lifted as soon as possible; urges the Commission and the Council to resume their high-level contacts with the President and the Government of Kosovo; calls on the Commission to draw up and present a transparent and ambitious roadmap for Kosovo's path to integration by the end of the year;
22. Remains very concerned by the destabilising influence on the whole region of the Serbian authorities led by President Vučić; stresses its unwavering support for the citizens of Serbia in their fight for a European, democratic future; regrets that some of the Serbian leadership's policies stand in the way of Serbian citizens' desire for a European future;
23. Calls on the Commission to act as an honest broker in the normalisation process and to avoid any policy of appeasement towards Serbia; expresses concern regarding the lack of vocal criticism by the Commission, despite Serbia's non-alignment with EU sanctions against Russia, its leadership's continued and frequent high-level meetings with Russian authorities, including in Russia, its democratic backsliding and lack of progress on its EU-related reforms and the destabilising effect of Serbian policies for the whole region;
24. Calls on the Serbian authorities, high-ranking political representatives and officials to refrain from employing derogatory language in connection with the EU-facilitated negotiation process, EU policies in the Western Balkans and the overall EU enlargement process, as such conduct may lower public support for EU policies and EU enlargement in general;
25. Calls on the Serbian authorities and media to refrain from hate speech against Kosovans and the dissemination of lies about 'ethnic cleansing' and 'pogroms' in Kosovo, for which there is no evidence; calls on the National Assembly of Serbia to stop the use of inflammatory language; supports the European Parliament's co-facilitated Parliamentary Dialogue Process in Serbia as an instrument for dialogue and consensus-building on important reform-related issues;
26. Recalls that the agreement on visa liberalisation for Kosovo is not and should not be

linked to the dialogue and should enter into force on 1 January 2024 at the latest;

27. Condemns continuing Russian attempts to exert influence over the Western Balkans, and in particular in Serbia and Kosovo, by exploiting cultural, ethnic and religious divisions and by destabilising pro-democratic forces; calls for a full clarification of the potential role Russia played in the attack that took place in Banjska;
28. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the European Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the presidents, governments, parliaments of Kosovo and Serbia, and the NATO-led Kosovo Force.