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PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
TO THE INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS
VIENNA

**Statement by
H.E. Eglantina Gjermeni
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
1538th PC, agenda item: Report by the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosova**

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

My delegation thanks the Head of Mission, Ambassador McGruk, for his report and for his team's continued engagement across Kosova.

We acknowledge the Mission's professionalism and its steadfast efforts to uphold the OSCE's core principles of peace, stability, and human security in accordance with its mandate.

The reporting period has indeed been marked by institutional challenges and political complexities, both within Kosova and in its external relations. Following the February elections, the delayed formation of key institutions temporarily constrained legislative and oversight functions. Despite these difficulties, Kosova's democratic institutions ultimately demonstrated their resilience, reflecting the maturity of its democratic processes.

This democratic maturity was further illustrated by the local elections held on 12 October, conducted in a calm and orderly manner. Citizens participated actively in a free, fair, and competitive process across all municipalities.

The Mission also rightly notes that Kosova has taken steps to reassert the rule of law throughout its territory. These measures include the integration or closure of certain illegal structures operating outside the constitutional and legal framework of Kosova. Such "parallel structures," long financed and directed by Serbia, have perpetuated division, hindered local integration, and deprived citizens, including Kosova's Serbs, of the benefits of a unified legal and administrative system.

It is therefore essential to understand that these actions are not directed against any community, but rather serve the legitimate purpose of ensuring a single, accountable, and transparent system of governance under the law.

Kosova's institutions have consistently reaffirmed their readiness to engage constructively with all communities and have worked to safeguard continued access to essential services, including education and healthcare, throughout this transition.

Regrettably, Serbia's response to these lawful measures has once again relied on inflammatory rhetoric and deliberate tension-building. Its continued influence over the Serbian community in Kosova obstructs the integration of Kosova Serbs into Kosova's institutions, undermining both local development and regional stability.

We note with concern that Belgrade continues to maintain financial and operational control over structures in Kosova that report directly to its ministries, in open defiance of the Brussels and Ohrid Agreements.

At the same time, Serbia persists in disinformation campaigns and refuses to recognise the legitimacy of Kosova's elected authorities. President Vučić's recent remarks, suggesting that "everyone is preparing for war," are dangerous. Such statements sow fear among ordinary citizens and threaten the fragile stability of the entire region. They are also inconsistent with Serbia's obligations under the OSCE framework and the EU-facilitated Dialogue.

Albania calls on Serbia to refrain from provocation, to de-escalate its rhetoric, and to return to dialogue in good faith.

Mr. Chair,

The OSCE's presence remains a vital element in this regard, both as an impartial monitor and as a bridge fostering confidence between institutions and communities.

In this spirit, we commend OMiK's continued work in promoting inclusive local governance, inter-community dialogue, property rights, police training, gender equality and media freedom. These efforts strengthen democratic resilience and help counter misinformation, a challenge that is particularly acute in post-war societies.

Yesterday, during the informal meeting with beneficiaries, we heard first-hand about some of the challenges facing the media landscape in Kosova. Most of these challenges are not unique to Kosova, as all the countries of the Western Balkans confront similar issues. Nevertheless, it was encouraging to hear that the media relies on independent institutions and the judiciary to address its grievances. This fact speaks volumes about the consolidation of democratic institutions in Kosova.

Mr. Chair,

As the report rightly highlights, despite internal political challenges, Kosova has continued to make progress in achieving new external benchmarks that reflect tangible positive developments.

In July, Kosova was removed from the IMF's list of "Fragile and Conflict-Affected" countries and from the World Bank's "Fragility, Conflict and Violence" classification.

Last month, the 2025 Gallup Global Safety Report ranked Kosova among the top performers globally in its Law and Order Index, placing it first in Europe and third worldwide out of 144 countries. These findings clearly demonstrate growing public confidence in the security sector and constitute a tangible indicator of progress in strengthening democratic resilience.

Mr. Chair,

Albania supports the OSCE Mission in fulfilling its mandate to assist Kosova's institutions in promoting the rule of law, protecting human rights, and advancing inter-community trust.

We encourage the Mission to continue reporting with clarity and impartiality, and to include measurable indicators of progress in its future assessments.

In this regard, we reiterate our recommendation that the reporting practice of the Head of Mission be aligned with that of other OSCE field operations in the Western Balkans, so that future reporting to the Permanent Council is conducted on an annual basis.

The current biannual reporting format was introduced under different political and institutional circumstances that no longer reflect today's reality. The institutions of the Republic of Kosova have made impressive democratic and institutional progress, strengthening good governance, the rule of law, and regional cooperation. The Mission itself has evolved towards longer-term capacity-building and programmatic work, reflecting a more stable and consolidated context. Harmonising Kosova's reporting frequency with the rest of the region is a matter of fair treatment and non-discrimination. Annual reporting would also reduce administrative burden, allowing the Mission to focus more fully on substantive work, while ensuring consistency with OSCE-wide practices.

In conclusion, let me reiterate Albania's unwavering support for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Kosova. Albania firmly believes that stability in the region will be achieved not through parallel institutions, unlawful interference, or threats of conflict, but through dialogue, accountability, and genuine partnership.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.