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STATEMENT BY

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**SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM
ADMINISTRATION MISSION IN KOSOVO (UNMIK)**

New York

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Mr. President,

I wish to start by welcoming His Excellency Mr. Boris Tadic, President of the Republic of Serbia for this debate and to thank him for his statement. I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary General and Head of the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo, (UNMIK), Mr. Lamberto Zanic for his Report on the situation in Kosovo. I also thank Mr. Hyseni for his statement.

We have noted the successes scored so far in the reconfiguration process of UNMIK, and the eventual drawdown process of the UNMIK's forces as recommended by the Secretary General in his previous reports but we have also noted the challenges it faces in fulfilling its mandate as envisaged in resolution 1244 (1999). All efforts need to be undertaken so as to ensure that the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX)'s deployment goes on smoothly.

Mr President,

It is encouraging to note that in line with the Security Council's Presidential Statement of 26th November, EULEX assumed full operational responsibility in the area of rule of law within the framework of Resolution 1244(1999) and under the overall authority of the United Nations. In this regard the acceptance of EULEX deployment by the Government of Serbia and the cooperation between UNMIK Police and EULEX is encouraging.

My delegation appreciates the efforts by the Government of Serbia and the Kosovo authorities in maintaining a working relationship with the Secretary General's Special Representative. We are however concerned that, as pointed out in the report, the new laws passed by the Kosovo authorities make no reference to the powers of the Secretary General's Special Representative, and this further increases the challenge to the functioning of UNMIK. We therefore call upon both parties to offer un-hindered and full support to UNMIK in order to enable it fulfill its mandate as envisaged by Resolution 1244(1999).

Mr President,

Uganda commends UNMIK's continued efforts at working towards the advancement of regional stability and prosperity in close coordination and co-operation with the OSCE and the authorities in Pristina and Belgrade.

We commend them for proactive steps taken to facilitate dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade, and in this regard, we note that the best possible option of addressing the Kosovo issue is for both parties to pursue pacific methods characterized by continued engagement, mutual respect during negotiations and inter-party dialogue. We therefore call for both parties to abide by and respect the provisions of resolution 1244(1999).

Mr President,

Although it appears that the overall security situation in Kosovo during the reporting period remains stable, Uganda is particularly concerned about the inter-ethnic incidences of violence involving Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Albanians in the region of Mitrovica. We call upon both parties to exercise restraint, mutual respect and tolerance in order to harmoniously live together in the interest of peace. We salute the prompt intervention by UNMIK Formed Police Units, and the efforts they have made at improving the security in the region that will in the long term provide the stability needed for the next phase of post-conflict reconstruction.

Mr President,

Finally, we urge the Council and the International community to continue to lend the necessary support to UNMIK which is critical in ensuring that UNMIK is successful in implementing its reconfiguration and continues to play a positive role in maintaining peace and stability on the ground.

I thank you.