

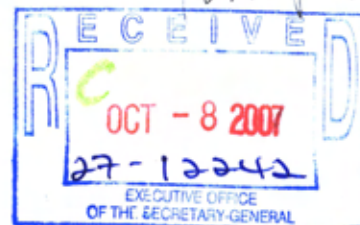
DPKO

Service

Strictly Confidential

Note to Ms. Ahlenius

Press report regarding UNMIK



1. SRSG Rücker has informed me about the attached article, under cover of code cable UNMIK-151 of 1 October 2007, attributing comments to you about UNMIK and reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council.
2. I should be grateful if you could indicate whether the article has quoted you correctly, whether in part or in whole.

J. M. Guéhenno

Jean-Marie Guéhenno
5 October 2007

cc: Mr. Nambiar ✓

OCT 23 2007

01-10 '07 11:52

ONLY

OUTGOING CODE CABLE

CKX-149

TO: GUEHENNO, UNATIONS, NEW YORK

FROM: RÜCKER, UNMIK, PRISTINA

DATE: 1 October 2007

NUMBER: UNMIK - 151

SUBJECT: Request for clarification in relation to statements attributed to USG Ahlenius

1. I attach an English translation of an article which recently appeared in the Kosovo newspaper *Epoka e Re*, reporting alleged comments made by a number of participants in a debate on Kosovo. The article reports that the USG for Internal Oversight Services, Ms. Inga-Britt Ahlenius, took an active part in this debate and attributes a number of statements to her. We have tried to obtain a transcript from the debate to verify whether USG Ahlenius actually made these statements but none apparently exists. In light of this, I would appreciate if you could confirm with her whether she made these statements or not.

Best regards.

94184, Bx 17)

Epoka e Re - 18 September 2007

"UNMIK has been destructive"

By Shqiptar Oseku

Not only has UNMIK been destructive for Kosovo, but the proposed elections neglect the needs of Kosovo and demonstrate ignorance for its history. The only solution is the empowerment of Kosovars and citizens' democracy. This was said in a closed debate on Kosovo organized by the Liberal People's Party in the Swedish Parliament, the Riksdagen.

Speakers such as Maciej Zaremba, a well-respected journalist and author of a widely-read series of articles on Kosovo published in the prestigious daily newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, Inga-Britt Ahlenius, who is a high-ranking employee of the United Nations, and the first chief auditor in the Kosovo Auditor General's Office were invited to this debate.

"It took me eight months to write articles on Kosovo because the system worked so slowly," said Zaremba. "After a multi-lateral assessment, I concluded that UNMIK is to blame for the failure in Kosovo."

The reasons are UNMIK's defects, which, according to Zaremba, are recruitment without any criteria, corruption in UNMIK, immunity of internationals, the rules for frequent rotations, and the limited funding from member states.

"Take any Swedish municipality and administer it the way Kosovo is being administered, and you will see that organized crime will rule the place," said Zaremba, who requested that the responsibility for running Kosovo should be urgently taken away from UNMIK and transferred to Kosovars.

"Maturity comes from deciding for oneself," he said. He criticised heads of UNMIK, without distinguishing between them, for not working for the country [Kosovo] first, but for their own careers.

Although the speaker Inga-Britt Ahlenius was invited to debate the opposite viewpoint, she astonished all present by completely agreeing with the previous speaker.

"I would like to say that Zaremba's comments do not stand up, but I am not accustomed to lying. Zaremba has faithfully reflected the reality in Kosovo. He placed names and faces to topics that we diplomats describe with terms that mean nothing, such as 'endemic corruption,'" said Inga-Britt Ahlenius. She supported the criticism against heads of UNMIK.

"Reports of the SRSGs, without directly lying, have misled the Security Council," said Inga-Britt Ahlenius. "I am not against Kosovo's independence."

On the contrary, I think responsibilities should have been transferred to Kosovars a long time ago. But I think UNMIK should have correctly analyzed the country's needs, and should have acted firmly to realize them."

Ms. Ahlenius identified three major problems in Kosovo. The first, the lack of ethnic reconciliation, comes from the fact that UNMIK bases itself on deliberate non-recognition of history. The second, the economic collapse, goes against trends in the region and beyond. And the third, the full collapse of the judiciary, is worth stating: it does not punish abuses of the authorities, and does not solve property disputes.

"Kosovo will continue to need international assistance in the future, mainly in security and judiciary. But assistance is one thing and responsibility is another. The responsibility should be transferred to the Kosovars," Inga-Britt Ahlenius said.

The participants, around 50 people, almost all of whom had previously worked in different UNMIK pillars, then engaged in the debate. All speakers without variation noted numerous abuses in the mission.

A woman spoke about a time when her boss sent a memo to all internationals saying that if they come out publicly with a critical view on anything, their contract would not be extended. Another person said he was surprised that statistics were blocked because they did not offer support for official UNMIK policies. A third person spoke about the insulting tone of his boss towards locals. Another spoke about Ahtisaari's package, which according to her, was a "can of problems. Anyone with any intelligence would not link municipalities to an enemy country. We don't even do this today with our Scandinavian neighbours, let alone if we had had your experience."

The episodes were so shocking that the journalist Maciej Zaremba had to react.

"We should have had this meeting before I sent my articles to print," he said, eliciting applause from the audience.

A group of Albanians also attended the debate: Avni Dervishi from the Swedish Liberal Party, an author of an article from the Vetëvendosja movement, and Qibrie Hoxha from the Kosovo parliament (LDK). The author remarked that the speakers had forgotten an invisible but powerful actor in Kosovo – Belgrade.

"Belgrade supports ethnic division from outside. It keeps the bodies of missing persons; closes Serbs into enclaves, where they are not supposed to vote, receive salaries or pay taxes; threatens Albanians violently; and labels directly on TV as traitors those Serbs who choose to work for the good of their community. Therefore the solution in Kosovo does not come from cementing

ethnic division, but from implementing without any compromise principles of liberal democracy, independently from whatever Belgrade requests.”

“A lot of people blame us, the Kosovars, but it’s not our fault. In four elections, the citizens of my country have given their trust to moderate forces, advocating compromise. We have cooperated with parties and offered painful compromises, offering to the minorities, not rights, but privileges that even the majority does not have. Also the fight against corruption is eliminating the local police witnesses. We at the Parliament are doing our job as much as we are allowed. It is time for you to trust us with independence. We deserve this,” said Kosovo Deputy Qibrie Hixha (LDK).

The debate in Riksdagen was the first of its kind on Kosovo since the end of the liberation war. On the insistence of the participants, the debate was closed to the media. This was because participants feared that if their names were published in the media, they would not be offered any more contracts with the various missions of the United Nations.