



Consulat Général de la République du Kosovo à Strasbourg

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NOTE VERBALE

The Consulate General of the Republic of Kosovo in Strasbourg expresses its compliments to the Head of Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs and has the honor to enclose herewith a Non Paper of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo.

The Consulate General of the Republic of Kosovo in Strasbourg avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Head of Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs the assurances of its highest consideration.

To: Head of Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs



F.K

NON PAPER

On May 28th, 2019 Kosovo Police successfully conducted a large scale operation aimed at tackling organized crime across several municipalities in the Republic of Kosovo. This operation followed a months-long investigation which began in April 2018 and examined several criminal groups involved in the misuse of official position, smuggling, bribery, and illegal trade.

Based on the evidence collected by the Office of the Special Prosecutor of the Republic of Kosovo as part of this investigation, the Basic Court of Prishtina authorized a request to raid a set of premises utilized by the suspected individuals. The targets were located in Zubin Potok, Leposavic, Vushtrri, the city of Mitrovica, Skenderaj, and Drenas.

In accordance with the court's request and under the direction of the office of the Special Prosecutor, Kosovo Police raided twelve premises, arrested nineteen Kosovo Police employees and nine civilians with outstanding arrest warrants. The arrested suspects are all Kosovo citizens and include eleven Kosovo-Serbs, four Kosovo- Albanians, and four Kosovo-Bosnians. This group consists of one commander of a police station, three sergeants, and seven police officers. All of them have since been suspended from duty.

Kosovo Police did not encounter any resistance during the implementation of their action plan across the different municipalities, with one major exception. In Zubin Potok, police officers were met with armed resistance, gunfire, and blocked by large barricades set up by violent gangs. During this segment of the action, Kosovo Police officers apprehended seven civilians who were actively engaged in creating barricades and obstructing the operation. Amongst them was a United Nations diplomat of Russian nationality named Mikhail Krasnoshchenkov. Mr. Krasnoshchenkov used an official United Nations vehicle with UNMIK license plates to erect a barricade with the sole purpose of preventing Kosovo Police from carrying out their mission.

Kosovo Police found evidence that Mr. Krasnoshchenkov used the UN vehicle to transport a chainsaw to the location where these events took place. This chainsaw was used to cut down trees which were thrown onto the highway to prevent the passage of Kosovo Police to Zubin Potok. Mr. Krasnoshchenkov placed the UN vehicle in front of these trees to bolster the barricades.

Mr. Krasnoshchenkov indicated that he could comprehend these requests. However, he refused to cooperate with the police and even denied to provide identification. After repeated refusals from Mr. Krasnoshchenkov to comply with the demands of the police and continued attempts by him to impede their movement, Kosovo Police proceeded to detain this individual. Mr. Krasnoshchenkov was subsequently escorted to the police station where he was held under custody and offered medical treatment before being transported to medical facilities. Upon his request and assertion of diplomatic immunity, Mr. Krasnoshchenkov was then released and transferred to Belgrade. In the following days, Kosovo authorities decided to deny Mr. Krasnoshchenkov future entry into the country.

The NATO military presence in Kosovo - KFOR confirmed that these raids were part of an operation executed exclusively by the Kosovo Police and that all relevant authorities were informed. Moreover, UNMIK personnel operating in the north of Kosovo were instructed not to be out on the ground. Three Kosovo Police officials were injured during the efforts to remove the barricades that obstructed this operation. Despite the obstacles, our officers were able to complete their mission.

The only intention of the Kosovo Police was to ensure the safety and security of the people of Kosovo. To protect them from the gangs and criminal groups who make the development of normal life very difficult.

Kosovo has been the host of countless UN diplomats during the past two decades. They are our friends, our mentors, our family. No UNMIK employee has ever come in harms way in Kosovo. They have never been targets of threats, violence, or attacks of any kind. To hear claims that the Kosovo Police deliberately targeted UN employees in Kosovo is beyond any comprehension to those of us who live in Kosovo.

Mr. Krasnoshchenkov became an obstacle to law enforcement in Kosovo of his own volition, or to put it frankly, Mr. Krasnoshchenkov willingly became a shield to criminal gangs attempting to inhibit an ongoing police operation. It has nothing to do with the mandate of Mr. Krasnoshchenkov or the mandate of the UN mission in Kosovo.

Therefore, it is in the interest of the Kosovo institutions to fight crime and corruption as a guaranty for better life for its citizens and commitment toward creating a country where the core values are the rule of law, respect for human rights and democracy.