

Press Office

PressRelease

UNMIK



United Nations Mission in Kosovo

UNMIK/PR/1158

Wednesday, 31 March 2004

SRSB'S REMARKS AT THE LAUNCH OF KOSOVO STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, PRISTINA 31 MARCH 2004

PRISTINA - SRSB Harri Holkeri made the following remarks at the launch of the standards implementation plan ceremony with Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi

“Kosovo is still a long way from recovering from the violence of two weeks ago. There is rebuilding to be done and repairs to be made. Above all, there is a huge amount to do to convince those pursued from their homes that they are safe and able to return.

“The violence has underlined the need for clear policy to make Kosovo a better place for everyone: safe, stable and prosperous.

“This goal is what the Kosovo Standards Implementation Plan is all about. It is a detailed policy plan to turn the goal of the standards, launched by the PM and me last December, into reality. It is like a government programme. The plan lists policies in all the eight standards, policies which have deadlines, with clear responsibilities assigned. The plan states clearly what the policy is, who is responsible to undertake it and when this must happen.

“I am pleased to launch the plan today with the PM, as his government and UNMIK have worked hard together to produce this plan over the last few months. The plan, and the policies within it, represent a genuine partnership between the PISG and UNMIK. Our partnership is not always easy, but it is essential. Although it is Kosovo and its institutions that are required to reach the standards, UNMIK is here to support and assist them to do so. We have a common goal.

“Not every community has participated in the production of this plan. I am sorry for that. But the plan nevertheless includes a huge range of policies, which, if effectively implemented, will help protect members of all communities and ensure that their rights are respected. In the light of what has happened, there is clearly a long way to go to reach this goal. The plan is not a panacea, but it is a start.

“The violence has caused all of us to reflect on what we can do better. We need to take more time to review policy with the PISG on two of the standards: returns and the rights

of communities and how to ensure freedom of movement. The need to do so is obvious. In these areas there need to be rapid steps by the PISG to rebuild and reach out to the Serb and other communities who suffered in the violence. Meanwhile, we will, with the PISG, begin urgent review of our plans with the PISG. This is so that we can produce policies that we are sure will help ensure the security of those who wish to return and the safety of members of all communities in Kosovo. The plan overall is a living document: it will be revised as time goes on. This makes sense, because some policies may not work and we may need new ones.

“The international community has made clear that the standards are more important than ever. The standards are not an obstacle to Kosovo’s progress; they are a tool for Kosovo’s progress. The Kosovo described in the standards is one that every good person in Kosovo must want – a peaceful, law-abiding place, where everyone is protected and safe, with incorrupt and effective institutions, a place on its way to meet the standards of the European family.

“This plan sets out how we can get there.”