



Republika e Kosovës  
Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo  
Qeveria - Vlada - Government

His Excellency, Mr. Hashim Thaçi, Prime  
Minister of the Republic of Kosovo

**(Speech to the United Nations Security Council)**

*New York February 10, 2014*

Honorable President,  
Distinguished members of the Security Council,

It is my special pleasure to address you today in the first session of 2014—to present to you the affirmative progress in Kosovo during the last three months. In particular, this includes the second round of the first local elections in the entire territory of the Republic of Kosovo, the establishment of local municipalities in northern Kosovo the European Union integration process, as well as recent results in the bilateral process to normalize relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

Let me start by highly praising the continued efforts of Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon for peace and progress in Kosovo and the Balkans. I would also like to congratulate the new members to the Security Council, namely: Chad, Chile, Jordan, Lithuania and Nigeria.

The holding of free elections in the entire territory of Kosovo and based on Kosovo legislation, organized in a fair and transparent manner—confirming the highest international standards—is the best signal that Kosovo could send to the democratic world. For the friends and the supporters of democracy in Kosovo.

The Kosovo Police, EULEX, KFOR, the OSCE Election Observation Mission of the European Union and local actors were in charge of the task. Their efforts brought noted results for Kosovar democracy.

In the inaugural meeting of the municipal assemblies in northern Kosovo the mayors were sworn in accordance with the laws and the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo. The electoral result and the will of the people was respected. This showed that this important stage of the functioning of municipal bodies was successfully completed. And that it was done in harmony with the laws and the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, as well as the Brussels Agreement of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Unfortunately the elected mayor of the municipality of the Northern Mitrovica failed to take the oath of office in accordance with the laws of Kosovo. Consequently, he has lost the mandate and in accordance with the law on local elections, the President of the Republic of Kosovo has called for extraordinary elections for mayor of Northern Mitrovica, which will be held on February 23<sup>rd</sup> of this year.

All preparations have been made for this process and we expect that the citizens of Northern Mitrovica will come out to vote and elect the local leader who will be ready to accept and respect the laws of Kosovo.

Distinguished members of the Security Council,

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, an unfortunate and tragic death left a shadow in the post-election process. The murder of Assemblyman Dimitrije Janicijevic, the candidate for mayor of North Mitrovica of the Serbian Independent Liberal Party, has shocked the people of Kosovo.

Without prejudging the outcome of the investigation, it is my belief that this may have been a premeditated murder by those circles that attempt to further hold hostage Kosovo Serb citizens, who want to become part of and contribute to the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo; an attack on those who recognize the reality and who strive to work for a better life.

The Kosovo Government and all relevant institutions have condemned this criminal act, the murder of the Assemblyman, and we have reached out to console the family in these difficult days.

This act of violence is intolerable for us and for this reason we have asked the relevant authorities to investigate the case and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Honorable President,

Positive trends of economic and financial stability have continued in the Republic of Kosovo, as they have been reflected in the budget of 2014. This budget accurately reflects our sustainable resources and goal of increasing societal welfare.

The budget of the Republic of Kosovo for 2014 is in line with the directives of the International Monetary Fund and it predicts economic growth of over 4%, which is one of the highest in the region. At the same time through membership in global financial

mechanisms, it has become possible to obtain development loans that are gradually opening the possibility for the private sector to take the lead in economic growth.

A series of agreements for the elimination of double taxation, the protection and promotion of investments, economic cooperation and customs have been or are expected to be signed this year with various countries. These achievements have been noted in their respective World Bank reports.

Political stability and the prospect of European integration have given their fruits to the economy. While I mention Kosovo's European agenda, let me thank here the European Parliament, which on January 16<sup>th</sup> of this year adopted a resolution introduced by the European Parliament's rapporteur for Kosovo, Mrs. Ulrike Lunacek. The resolution was passed overwhelmingly by MEPs of all political groupings.

This resolution welcomes the achievements and results that Kosovo has made in its six-year journey as an independent and sovereign country. It recognized the progress in building a state for all citizens regardless of their ethnicity or faith, on the path towards European integration.

Kosovo was also congratulated for achieving a number of important political reforms by administrative and economic authorities, as well as for the approximation of local legislation with the European Union. It is one of the criteria for meeting the conditions for visa liberalization and the capacity to address the priorities of the European integration process arising from the feasibility study to the European Commission.

As a result of these achievements, the European Parliament's resolution gives Kosovo great political support and calls on five EU countries—Spain, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Cyprus—to recognize the Republic of Kosovo as an independent and sovereign country.

This resolution also expresses support for the further advancement of the visa liberalization and negotiations on the Stabilization and Association Agreement process, urging the EU to open doors for full integration of Kosovo. The integration of the Republic of Kosovo in the European Union is our primary goal—it is the only way of modernizing and consolidating the region into the European family.

We are currently conducting negotiations with the European Commission to determine the content of the Stabilization and Association Agreement and ensure the free movement of our citizens in the European Union Schengen zone—as two complementary and contractual processes for Kosovo society. The successful development of negotiations with the European Union to achieve the Stabilization and Association Agreement, expected to finish by this spring, remain high in our governance agenda.

Distinguished members of the Security Council,

A few days after this session of the Security Council, the Republic of Kosovo will

celebrate the sixth anniversary of its Declaration of Independence, already recognized from 105 countries from all over the world. I would like to thank all the countries that have recognized Kosovo and I call on other countries, including members of the Council that have not yet recognized Kosovo, to take this step and join the democratic world in support of Kosovo as an equal and full member of the international community. This formal recognition of Kosovo would be a direct contribution to the strengthening of peace and stability in the region and beyond.

In this path of integration, the Kosovo Government wants to thank the Secretariat of the Regional School of Public Administration (RESPA) based in Montenegro and member states of this organization in the region for Kosovo's membership.

We recognize that Kosovo's membership in various regional and international level organizations will help in further strengthening regional cooperation, as an important precondition for EU membership.

Finally, the isolation of more than 2 decades of Kosovo athletes partially ended since the International Federation of Football Association (FIFA), after meetings with leaders of the Football Federations of Kosovo and Serbia has reached a consensus that enables the Republic of Kosovo to play international matches. We consider this as an important first step towards the full membership in sports mechanisms of European and world football. We have even better developments from the Executive Committee of the European Handball Federation, which allows Kosovo to play international matches without any conditions.

Honorable President,

The Agreement of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013 between Kosovo and Serbia has opened a new chapter of peace and mutual cooperation between our countries. The dialogue, which is still ongoing, has already produced tangible results for our country, both in improving the lives of citizens, as well as in the advancement of European integration. We remain committed to continue the dialogue with Serbia in 2014 through the opening of new issues, which are important for good neighborliness and the quality of life of citizens.

As for the Republic of Kosovo, we have respected all the agreements reached so far and we call on Serbia to increase its commitment to full implementation of these agreements. On December 14<sup>th</sup> of 2013 the implementation of the Agreement on collection of customs revenue begun by Kosovo Customs from the northern border points. Also the Management Board of the Fund for the Development of the north has begun to function, which is a mechanism created to advance the economic development of the northern municipalities.

Despite this success, Serbia unfortunately continues to impede the implementation of the agreement on Kosovo's representation in regional organizations and initiatives.

Comprehensive regional cooperation is highly necessary because there can be no

successful struggle against negative phenomena such as terrorism, organized crime, trafficking and corruption without open coordination and constructive cooperation.

Distinguished members of the Security Council

2014 is a good opportunity for the world to turn their eyes towards our region, which 100 years ago became the source of a war from which all of mankind greatly suffered. This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the last ghost that artificially separated the world.

In April of this year we will have the first anniversary of the Interstate Agreement between the Republic of Kosovo and Serbia.

The agreement of April 19<sup>th</sup> should serve as a model to solve disputes plaguing the region and beyond.

Honorable President,  
Distinguished members of the Security Council,

Let me reiterate that during these six years, the Republic of Kosovo as an independent and sovereign state has made important progress in domestic consolidation as well as in strengthening its international position. The Republic of Kosovo has built a multiethnic society and democratic, stable and sustainable institutions and as a result, Kosovo has become a factor of peace and exporter of stability in the region and beyond.

My country is grateful for the role and contribution of the United Nations during our country's state-building, however, given the course of developments in the country since the declaration of independence of Kosovo, the role of the UNMIK mission is noticeably minimized and now the role of UNMIK remains limited to reporting.

Kosovo is one of the most successful state building and peace building cases in the history of the UN and international governance and these efforts represent mutual success.

Given this and praising the achievements of the Republic of Kosovo in the field of security and economic stability, social and political progress, as well as highlighting the agreement reached between Kosovo and Serbia, Mr. President, it is time for the Security Council to consider UNMIK's transformation into a political office of the United Nations, in order to represent the Specialized Agencies and UN policies and help the Republic of Kosovo in realization of our country's aspirations to joining the community of free nations.

Thank you for your attention!

