



KOSOVO

COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

September 11, 2008

Washington opposes Serbian initiative at the UN General Assembly

KosovoCompromise Staff

US Ambassador to Belgrade Cameron Munter has said that his country does not agree with Serbia's initiative that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) gives its opinion on the legality of the unilaterally proclaimed Kosovo independence.

"Serbia has the right to its opinion, but we do not agree with the Serbian demand", Munter said.

"We hope that we will be able to persuade this government to focus on the future, and not on the past, and to work together with us on approaching the EU, since this is what the people of Serbia have voted for", the US ambassador said.

Commenting on the statement by former US envoy for the Balkans Richard Holbrooke that if Serbia wanted to join the EU, it should first recognise Kosovo independence, Munter said that Holbrooke was just an ordinary citizen and that his statement did not reflect the official policy of the United States, adding, however, that Holbrooke had the right to express his own opinions.

Meanwhile, in Vienna, at the session of the Permanent Council of the OSCE Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic said that predictions about the consequences of the unilateral declaration of the independence of Kosovo, about which he has warned previously, are now becoming true but that it is still not too late to prevent matters from spinning from beyond control.

"When we last met (February 19), I spoke of the precedent that could arise from the abject failure of the Kosovo Albanians to embrace the 21st century principles of Europe - namely compromise, concession, and consensus-building," Jeremic told the OSCE Permanent Council.

"I shared my fear with you that the unilateral imposition of outcomes to ethnic conflicts could create very troubling consequences to the community of democracies that is the OSCE, or even beyond. I spoke of what the fanning of secessionist flames could produce, and I expressed deep concern about what could result from the attempt to forcibly partition a sovereign, democratic state like Serbia," Jeremic pointed out.

He underscored: "It gives me no pleasure to conclude that some of what I had then laid before you as the likely consequences of Kosovo UDI, has come true."



KOSOVO

COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

"The fabric of security and cooperation in Europe has been damaged. The dominoes are starting to fall, but there is still time to prevent the worst of these from spinning beyond our control."

Jeremic set out that a part of Serbia's "diplomatic approach to securing peace and stability in the Western Balkans centers on an initiative we have put before the next General Assmebly of the United Nations."

"Serbia has submitted a draft resolution to be considered at the forthcoming 63rd Session. This document refrains from taking political positions on Kosovo's UDI. Rather, in simple and direct language, it asks the principal judicial organ of the United Nations - the International Court of Justice (ICJ) - to render an advisory opinion on the following question: Is the unilateral declaration of the independence by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government of Kosovo in accordance with international Law?" Jeremic asked, noting that "numerous benefits would result from referring this matter to the ICJ."

According to him "on the regional front, we believe that a number of relationships could begin to be restored to health". "From the perspective of the international system, sending the Kosovo question to the ICJ would prevent it from serving as a deeply problematic problem in any part of the globe where secessionist ambitions are harboured. It would provide politically neutral, yet judicially authoritative guidance to many countries still deliberating on how to approach Kosovo UDI in line with international law."

Jeremic spoke about the most important reason "why it is proper for the General Assembly to support Serbia's request to obtain an advisory opinion from the ICJ. It has to do with the vital international principle at stake: the right of any member State of the United Nations to pose a simple, elementary question - on a matter it considers vitally important - to the competent court. To vote against this resolution is in effect to vote to deny the right of any country to seek judicial recourse through the UN system."