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Russia's Troika envoy to insist on preserving UN SC resolution 1244

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Russia's envoy in the mediating troika Alexander Botsan-Kharchenko has announced that in the continuing talks on the status of Kosovo he will advocate the Belgrade authorities' proposal for the preservation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1244, stressing that Wolfgang Ischinger's proposal for "neutral status" is not the troika's joint proposal.

"The Contact Group's mediating troika still has no extensive proposal for the future status of Kosovo," ambassador Botsan-Kharchenko said before the next round of status talks, due to be held in Brussels on Tuesday. The third member of the troika is U.S. representative Frank Wisner.

According to Botsan-Kharchenko, "it would be good if an idea was reached by the end of the negotiations," but it would "have to be completely balanced," which is important "if we want to achieve compromise." Also, as he put it, such a proposal would in no way be imposed "because that is not the troika's mandate." Rather, it would serve only as a push for negotiations.

"I hope that the two sides will say something more in Brussels, and we will also have meetings in Vienna around the end of November. Maybe we will hold a sort of extended meeting that will stretch over a few days, if there is something to debate longer," he said, pointing out that the meeting would also be within the troika framework, not as an international conference.

"Brussels is the deciding phase for the continuation of the negotiations and there are things that should be discussed, given that the Belgrade delegation launched the Hong Kong idea," Botsan-Kharchenko highlighted, and added that he understood the Serbian proposal "not as a proposal for mechanical implementation, but as an example of the functionality of such a model" and that the proposal "should be taken into consideration."

Asked whether the Moscow government "has agreed" with the "14 points," including the ones that "Belgrade will not rule Kosovo" and "will not re-establish a physical presence in Kosovo," the Russian diplomat said that "none of the points is a provision and is not a position."

"These are a number of points that were reached during the talks and which serve as grounds for the continuation of discussion, in which the two sides will present their improvements and comments," the Russian envoy said.