



**Resolution 1839 (2011)<sup>1</sup>**

Final version

## The political situation in the Balkans

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly notes that, despite an overall positive assessment of the situation in the Balkans, the recent upsurge of tension and the political impasse in some parts of the region give rise to concern. It is in particular concerned by:

1.1. the violent clashes in North Kosovo at the administrative checkpoints with Serbia, which led to one death during the summer, and the continuing tension and recurrent outbreaks of violence even today, blocking progress in the European Union-mediated talks between Pristina and Belgrade;

1.2. the political stalemate in Bosnia and Herzegovina which, one year after the October 2010 general elections, is still without a state-level government, representing the longest political crisis in the country since the end of the war in 1995.

2. With regard to the growing tension and violence in North Kosovo, the Assembly:

2.1. deeply regrets the most recent acts of violence involving staff members of the Kosovo Peace Force (Kfor) who serve under NATO command;

2.2. demands an urgent and objective investigation into the incident at the Jarinje administrative checkpoint on 27 September 2011, when six individuals were shot;

2.3. calls upon the people in North Kosovo to act with restraint and to co-operate without delay and in a constructive manner with the Kfor and with the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX);

2.4. calls on the authorities in Pristina to respond positively and sensitively to any legitimate concerns of the minorities in the region;

2.5. urges the authorities in Belgrade and Pristina to resume the European Union-mediated dialogue on all outstanding issues, in a spirit of co-operation and reconciliation, including the situation in North Kosovo; everything must be done to ensure that North Kosovo does not remain a black hole in the Western Balkans outside the control of the authorities in both Pristina and Belgrade;

2.6. calls on the Council of Europe member states to urge the authorities in Belgrade and Pristina to seek a peaceful solution to the North Kosovo question;

2.7. invites its Presidential Committee to consider a mission in the region to intensify the dialogue and overcome the tensions;

2.8. points out that the priorities of the regional and international actors in the region must remain security, stability and respect for human rights in both Kosovo and the region, as well as the integrity of internationally recognised borders, in strict compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

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1. Throughout this text, all reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.



3. With regard to the political stalemate in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Assembly:
  - 3.1. notes that this stalemate, due mainly to the quarrel on political concepts concerning the distribution of ministerial posts in the 10-member Council of Ministers, has had dire consequences: the country has seen its credit ratings downgraded by international financial agencies, foreign direct investments have fallen 75% since 2009, unemployment is at over 43% of the working population and the state is functioning on temporary financing since no state budget has yet been adopted;
  - 3.2. regrets that the outgoing government has not been in a position to introduce the reforms necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to prepare to join the European Union with the result that the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, ratified by all European Union member states in October 2010, has still not been put into force;
  - 3.3. urges all party leaders to find a solution to the political impasse without delay, thereby opening up the prospects for European integration for the country and enhanced regional co-operation;
  - 3.4. urges once more the authorities to implement without delay the *Sejdić and Finci v. Bosnia and Herzegovina* judgment of the European Court of Human Rights by ensuring that minorities or the “others” that do not belong to the “three constituent peoples” (Bosniacs, Croats and Serbs) are able to stand for Bosnia and Herzegovina’s presidential elections;
  - 3.5. urges all Council of Europe member states to offer assistance to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to overcome the political stalemate and the deterioration of the economic situation, and to meet their obligations and commitments to the Organisation.
4. With regard to the situation in Albania, the Assembly:
  - 4.1. welcomes the fact that the 2011 local elections are now formally concluded and that their outcome has been accepted by the Albanian voters;
  - 4.2. takes note of the commitment of the leader of the Socialist Party to end his party’s boycott of the parliament;
  - 4.3. encourages all parties to strengthen, without delay, their internal democratic functioning, work towards normalising the political situation and start a political dialogue within the parliament on the priorities and necessary reforms to be carried out, also with a view to the European Union accession talks;
  - 4.4. welcomes the recent agreement reached between the Democratic Party and the Socialist Party to proceed with electoral reform; the Assembly calls on them to ensure that such a reform addresses the shortcomings encountered in both the parliamentary and local elections and increases the possibilities for smaller parties to enter the parliament; this should put an end to the political bipolarisation which has marked Albanian politics and frustrated the Albanian people in recent decades. The advice of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) in the process of electoral reform should be sought.
5. The Assembly resolves to continue to follow closely the situation in the Western Balkans and, in particular, the situation in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania.