

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

DATE: 06 April 2006

REFERENCE: PRIM/LCO/WR14/0604

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À:

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FROM: **Thomas Kontogeorgos, Nelson Bamson**
DE: Local Community Office, Prishtinë/Priština

SUBJECT: Weekly Report
: Covering the period from
OBJECT: **Friday, 31 March 2006 – Thursday, 06 April 2006**

I. Political Situation

Political affairs assistant from the office of the SRSG seeks information on the pilot unit of Gracanica/Gracanice

On 4 April, in Gracanica/Gracanice, the LCO discussed with the Political affairs assistant from the office of the SRSG the Municipal pilot unit of Gracanica/Gracanice, which was announced last summer. The aim of the visit was to get an updated population data and trends on the matter, which will be used on decentralization talks in Vienna by the team of the Special Envoy Maarti Ahtissari. The LCO provided a briefing on the last summer's different scenarios/plans and the proposed geographical delineation developments by the PISG and Kosovo Serbian leaders i.e. PISG plans A and B and the plan "C" proposed by Mr. Oliver Ivanovic. The awareness of the local population vis-à-vis the aforementioned plans was as well discussed, the inclusion or not of Slivovo/e in the new municipality and the suggestion of including into the plan parts from neighbouring municipalities like Dornja Gusterica from Lipljan/Lipjan Municipality and Batus/e from Fushe Kosovo/Kosovo Polje. The LCO proposed as a follow-up action a meeting with the Prishtinë/Priština Rural South village representatives.

MR represents SRSG at the multi-ethnic “Elena Gjika” School Anniversary Celebration in Prishtinë/Priština

On 3 April, the MR on behalf of SRSG attended the 61st Anniversary Celebrations on the establishment of the multi-ethnic primary school “Elena Gjika” in Prishtinë/Priština. After greeting the students, both in Albanian and Turkish languages, the MR addressed the guests stating that education, particularly the primary education, is the key that will pave the road for Kosovo’s integration into Europe. MAP, Ismet Beqiri, also attended the ceremony. “Elena Gjika” School is one of the oldest and biggest primary school in Prishtinë/Priština with 1.600 students of which 200 belong to the Turkish community.

PM Agim Ceku visits Prishtine/Pristina Municipality and meets all Municipal Presidents

On 5 April, in Pristina/e, at 12:30, the Kosovo PM, Mr. Agim Ceku and the DPM, Mr. Lutfi Haziri, met with the MAP and the MR. The PM called for Prishtina City to be allocated a special status, which in fact is already in progress, due to its being a capital city and the concentration of all international and local institutions are in the city. He further mentioned that there is significant progress in Standards implementation and that the Kosovo Government is working hard to ensure full compliance. Both the MAP and the CEO asked the PM to facilitate the issuance of an Administrative Instruction which would assist the Municipality in Procurement and Public Finances. The DPM Haziri expressed surprise that all Kosovo Serb teaching staff have resigned, since the Special Envoy Maarti Ahtissari had made it clear that Belgrade should not intervene on the issue of the PISG Education payroll. He further assessed this as a tactical move by Belgrade as part of the ongoing status/decentralization talks. Following this first meeting in the MAP's office, the PM and the DPM met with all Municipal Presidents and requested them to submit lists of their priorities to the Central Government, which will then be incorporated into a final report and be submitted to the Security Council in the first week of May.

II. Security and Rule of Law

Rural North Security Meeting

On 30 March, in Devet Jugovica/Nëntë Jugoviqët, during the regular biweekly Prishtinë/Priština Rural North security meeting, the Kosovo Serb village representatives informed that they are ready with their proposed list of committee members for the establishment of LPSC. They are however, waiting for the approval of their initial proposal by Pillar I on the location of the substation and geographical coverage. Their Kosovo Albanian counterparts are, however, still unresolved on the submission of names for the Committee. They complained about the non-inclusion of some villages in the proposal as well as the geographical location of the sub-station. They further request for some more days to deliberate on the proposal and the geographical location of the sub station before coming up with a decision. The Kosovo Serb representatives had proposed a multiethnic LPSC and Substation with a geographical coverage of four villages and the Police substation in Donja Brnjica/ Bernice e Poshtme.

UNMIK Police sets up a new Operations Unit in the minority areas

On 31 March, the Gračanica/Gračanice Police Commander accompanied by the UNMIK Police informed that a new Operations Unit will start functioning in the predominantly Kosovo Serbian inhabited areas of Prishtinë/Priština Region as of today, 31 March. The Unit is manned currently with 14 International Police Officers (PIOs) working on two shifts of 16

hours total. Soon the officers will be 40 and they will provide services on a 24 hour basis. They will work independently from the KPS setting up ad hoc VCPs, issuing traffic tickets and conducting house searches. They will also be involved in foot patrols and information gathering. The new scheme it is expected to improve the overall perception of the Kosovo Serb community with regards to security and freedom of movement. LCO invited the Team Leader of the new Unit at the next Prishtinë/Priština Rural South security meeting, scheduled for 5 April, to brief village leaders on the initiative.

Kosovo Albanians agree on the establishment of LPSC in Prishtinë/Priština Rural North

On 3 April, in Devet Jugovica/Nëntë Jugoviqët, during a meeting between LCO, LCA and Police, LCO was informed that the Kosovo Albanian village leaders have agreed on the proposed geographical coverage and geographical location of the Police sub-station and on the establishment of the Local Public Safety Committee (LPSC) in Prishtinë/Priština Rural North. They have also forwarded names for the proposed multiethnic LPSC. Kosovo Serb leaders had earlier proposed the creation of a Police sub-station in Donja Brnjica/Bernice e Poshtme, which would cover four villages, namely, Donja Brnjica/Bernice e Poshtme, Gornja Brnjica/Bernice e Eperme, Devet Jugovic/Nente Jugovic and Lebane/e. It was also agreed that the composition of the Committee should be multiethnic, with 5 members coming from the Kosovo Serbian villages and 3 more members coming from the mixed villages of Gornja Brnjica/Bernice e Preme, Devet Jugovica/Nente Jugovic and Lebane/e. The Kosovo Albanian representatives also stressed the importance of a multiethnic committee and sub-station which will further enhance the existing excellent cooperation between the Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs in Prishtinë/Priština Rural North. Pillar 1 is yet to give their feedback on the proposed geographical coverage and substation location. LCO will liaise with Pillar 1 as regards the feed back.

Orthodox Church in Podujevo/o vandalized for the second time in a week

On 3 April, the police informed UNMIK Podujevo/e that, during the weekend, 24 window-panes of the Church of St. Eliah, in Podujevo/o town, had been broken. Police patrols are now monitoring the church on a 24 hour basis and the case is being investigated. See Podujevo/e DR of 28 March in which it was reported that this same church had been daubed with graffiti which, *inter alia*, included the slogan 'UCK says no forever to this Government'. UNMIK Podujevo/e visited the church today and confirmed that approximately 80% of the window-panes have been broken. The OSCE MT informed UNMIK Podujevo/o that they have urged the Municipal Standards Coordinator to organise a public awareness campaign with clearly expressed condemnation of this vandalism and to appeal to the local population to protect all religious and cultural buildings.

Arrested attempted Arson perpetrator facilitated to Nis for medical attention

On 3 April, in Devet Jugovica/Nëntë Jugoviqët, the Rural North Sub station Commander informed LCO that the perpetrator of the three attempted arson cases in Rural North has been facilitated to Nis for medical attention. The Kosovo Serb mentally ill woman who also physically attacked a person causing body injuries was facilitated on the assistance of Gracanica/e Health Centre to Nis. The facilitation of the woman came on the heels of LCO meeting with the Director of the Health Centre in Gracanica/Gracanice, Rada Trajkovic, and demand for immediate measures.

Swedish KFOR embark on search operation following the discovery of a Serbian Police uniform in Slivovo.

On 4 April, in Gračanica/Gračanice, the MCO officer for Slivovo, informed LCO about a house search operation in the hamlet of Vidaci by Swedish KFOR. The search operation was carried out on 1 April, following the discovery of the uniform of Serbian Police within the hamlet. The operation resulted to significant damages to properties of three Kosovo Serbs who were not residing currently within the hamlet of Vidaci at this period. LCO will liaise with Swedish KFOR to verify the accuracy of the information.

III. Functioning Democratic Institutions

All Kosovo Serb Education workers in Prishtine/Pristina Municipality have now resigned and will no longer accept PISG salaries

On 31 March, in Gračanica/Gračanice, the MCO Education Officer informed that for March 279 Kosovo Serb education employees have requested official cancellation of contracts with the PISG structures of which 255 have not signed the payrolls for this month. Concerning the MCO staff one employee submitted his resignation and 4 more employees were taken off the payroll by the PISG. The Kosovo Serb education employees can not resign simply because they have never signed contracts with the PISG structures. The number of employees taken off from the payrolls by the PISG is expected to increase during the next month.

Consequently, LCO was informed by H/MCO that the Director of the Kosovo Serb Kindergarten has resigned from the PISG Education payroll. This means that 100% of the Kosovo Serb Education workers in Prishtine/Pristina Municipality have now resigned and will no longer accept PISG salaries. These resignations have effectively left the MCO Education Officer without a proper role to play, and the H/MCO will examine the possibility of reassigning him to other responsibilities within the MCO.

Communities Committee holds its regular meeting

On 3 April, in Prishtine/Pristina, the Communities Committee (CC) held its regular meeting, with the two MROs present and with representatives from OSCE and UNMIK. The Committee discussed the proposal to commence the third phase of catch-up classes for the Ashkalia children in the municipality. The CC Chairperson criticized the coordinator of this project for not attending meetings and for not performing other administrative tasks. The MCO reported on the multi ethnic meeting in Susica/e village, in which Prishtine/Pristina MAP, Ismet Beqiri, participated. The CC was informed that the Department of Youth, Culture and Sports of Prishtinë/Priština Municipality is organizing a multi ethnic camping for 50 minority children, to be held in the Prizren area from 28 April to 1 May.

IV. Freedom of Movement and Minority rights

Request for funding by Roma youth leaders for the Commemoration of World Roma Day rejected

On 5 April, in Gračanica/Gračanice, MCO informed LCO that the request for the funding on the commemoration of world Roma day, on 8 and 9 April, by Roma youth leaders from Gračanica/Gračanice, Caglavica/Cagllavice, Laplje Selo/Lapllaselle and Preoce/Preoc communities was rejected by the Procurement department of Pristina/e municipality. The Roma youth leaders requested financial assistance of 590 Euros for the purchase of sports equipment, payment of prize money and for other items. The Procurement department rejected the request on the opinion that the commemoration was not a regular activity. Despite the negative answer by the Procurement Department the Head of MCO decided to

donate the amount of 100 euros from the petty-cash. UNMIK will raise the issue with Pristina/e municipality.

V. Humanitarian Situation/ Access to Public Services

Village leaders discuss waste collection modalities with Pastrimi Company

On 30 April, in Laplje Selo/Laplasello, the MCO/LCO facilitated a meeting between the triad village leaders of Laplje Selo/Laplasello, Preocë/Preoc, Čaglavica/Caglavicë and the Prishtinë/Priština Regional Director of “Pastrimi” Company with the main point of discussion being waste collection service in the area. The Triad village leaders informed that the 700 households were ready to reach an agreement with the “Pastrimi” Company. The Director requested village leaders to collect signatures from all the houses ready to pay the monthly fee of 3 euros and he promised that, if necessary, additional employees would be recruited locally. Further, the two sides discussed waste collection and payment modalities. The meeting, held in a very constructive atmosphere, demonstrated yet another example of commitment by the Kosovo Serb community to solve everyday problems with the assistance of UNMIK, PISG and Kosovo Albanian Companies. The triad village leaders, after discussing “Pastrimi”’s proposal with their co-villagers, will address an official request to the Company.

Pillar I requested to establish a Minor Offences Court in Gracanica/Gracanice

On 30 April, in Gracanica/Gracanice, the LCO met with the representatives for the Department of Justice (DoJ) to discuss the establishment of a Minor Offences Court (MOC) in Gracanica/Gracanice, in addition to the existing Liaison Municipal Court, as a part of the ongoing judicial decentralization process undertaken by Pillar I. DoJ advised that under the applicable law only a Municipal Assembly can set up a MOC and suggested that actions on the stagnated municipal pilot project for Gracanica/Gracanice should be resumed. The new Department will employ 16 administrative staff and 2 judges and it could serve minority villages from neighboring municipalities. A Municipal Court Liaison Office was established in Gracanica/Gracanice in December 2004.

Head of Humanitarian and Transport services clarifies that no authorization was given to the Laplje Selo/Laplasello Kosovo Serb road contractor

On 31 March, in Prishtinë/Priština, a meeting was held between the Head of Humanitarian and Transport Services of the Field Operations Unit and Mr. Milija Popovic, a Kosovo Serb contractor. The meeting was facilitated by LCO following constant claims of Mr. Popovic that the Department of the Humanitarian and Transport Services (HHTS) failed to compensate him for a work done in Laplje Selo/Laplaselle in August 2005. The HHTS while stating his position clarified that there was never any authorization from the department expressly or by implication for the claimed construction work. Mr. Popovic agreed to this position informing that there was no such authorization, but the construction work was done on his initiative in order to avoid a threat from the inhabitants to mount a blockade if the additional requested asphaltting was not implemented. He, however, pleaded for compensation for the work done, as, according to him, it was in the interest of UNMIK. The Head of the Humanitarian Buses advised Mr. Popovic to direct his plea to the municipal authorities and see if the latter can compensate that segment of the road. Mr. Popovic was carrying out an authorized construction work when the threat to mount a blockade was issued. He was adequately paid for the authorized work.

VI. Returns and Integration

Prishtinë/Pristina MWGR unanimously approves the MRS for 2006

On 4 April, in Pristina, at the 3rd MWGR, co-chaired by the MAP and the MR Prishtine/Pristina today, the MRS, assessed by all participants as the best ever drafted by the Municipality of Prishtinë/Priština, was unanimously approved. The body also endorsed the establishment of three Task Force groups to work on Urban, Rural North and South returns. The MAP, Ismet Beqiri, informed the participants of his outreach meeting in the mixed village of Susica/e, and hoped that the multi ethnic project for the village could be implemented this year. UNHCR informed on this year's return figures with 3 families (2 Roma, 1 Croat) having so far returned and proposed the inclusion of a "Security Update" as an agenda point of any future MWGR. The meeting ended with the first MWGR joint presentation by the Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb village representatives of the Slivove/o multi ethnic project. After the meeting the MR discussed with UNHCR representatives ways to promote interaction of the MWG participants. UNHCR expressed readiness to be included in the meetings with the Slovi/Slovinje (Lipjan/Lipljan Municipality) families that are currently displaced in Gracanica/e. The MAP introduced the new Kosovo Serb female MRO to the MWGR participants and advised the MCO to prepare the technical documentation on the Slivovo/e multiethnic project and to seek assistance from donors, including the Ministry of Communities and Returns.

Kosovo Serb IDPs visit the village of Perane in Podujevo/e

On 3 April, in Podujevo/e, representatives of 11 Kosovo Serb families, who are currently displaced in Serbia, visited their properties and the cemetery in the village of Perane. Nine properties were found to have been completely destroyed and two are currently occupied. However, the occupants of the two houses promised to move out upon the return of their owners. On the following day, during a debriefing session, attended, *inter alia*, by the D/MAP, UNHCR, UNDP, DRC and UNMIK, all participants assessed the visit to have been successful, including the receiving community. KPA (HPD) was also present and said that KPA would now begin the process of receiving claims on agricultural and commercial property and KPA mobile teams will visit the IDPs in Serbia. UNDP explained the procedure for housing reconstruction. The IDPs complained that the allocation of 45 square metres, for families with up to five members, was not sufficient, when compared with the space that they had owned before the conflict. Most of the IDPs were visiting Podujevo/o for the first time since 1999. And they seemed to express disappointment when they learned that there were only 21 elderly Kosovo Serbs who are currently living in Podujevo/o municipality, in the hamlet of Sekiraca. However, there are two returns projects, currently in hand, for the villages of Livadice/a and Dumnice/Dubnica.

The new female Kosovo Serb MRO, Ms Slavisa Stolic, assumes her office in Prishtinë/Priština Municipal building

On 3 April, in Prishtinë/Priština, the new female Kosovo Serb MRO, Ms. Slavisa Stolic, assumed her office in Prishtinë/Priština Municipal building. The new MRO will attend the MWGR, which is scheduled for tomorrow, 4 April. UNMIK Prishtine/Pristina considers that the recruitment of a Kosovo Serb female MRO, particularly to operate from the Municipal building, during these sensitive political times, as a significant step ahead.

VII. Economic Development and Reconstruction

UNDP engineer assesses the residential premises of Mr. Stanisic

On 5 April, in Prishtinë/Priština, a UNDP engineer undertook a technical assessment of the residence of a Kosovo Serb businessman, Zoran Stanisic. Present during the assessment were representatives from OCRM, the LCO and the MRO of Prishtinë/Priština Municipality. Both the residential and the business premises bore damage as a result of illegal occupation by Kosovo Albanians, who last summer had been evicted by HPD. Mr. Stanisic also complained of further vandalism and looting, after this eviction. IOM is expected to prepare a feasibility business plan for presentation to potential donors.

VIII. Property Rights

KTA visits the Vocar Centre in Gracanica/a to examine the issue of privatization

On 5 April, in Gracanica/Gracanice, the MCO/LCO met with the Technical Support Officer (TSO) to the KTA to discuss the announced privatization of the “Vocar” Socially Owned Enterprise (SOE). The TSO said that the KTA is currently identifying the present usage of the premises and is preparing a plan of action that will enable the KTA to privatize the “Vocar” SOE. In addition to the IDP Collective Center, which is located on the parking lot of the SOE, there is also the Serbian Red Cross, the Ministry of Public Services, two commercial enterprises and the CCK Gracanica/Gracanice parallel structure offices which together comprise the Gracanica/Gracanice “Vocar” compound. The MCO/LCO provided information on those involved in the establishment and expansion of the March 2004 IDP Collective Center and it was agreed to organize a meeting between the MCO and CCK to explore possible ways to provide a sustainable long term accommodation solution for the IDPs.