



MISIONI I PËRHERSHËM I REPUBLIKËS SË SHQIPËRISË NË GJENEVË
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA IN GENEVA

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**Statement delivered by Ambassador Vasilika Hysi, Permanent Representative of
Republik of Albania**

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Albania aligns itself with the statement delivered by Denmark.

Albania expresses its gratitude to the High Commissioner as well as to the staff of UNHCR and all partners for their dedication and work in protecting refugees and displaced persons worldwide. We commend the UNCHR office in Albania for its contribution and fruitful cooperation with Albanian authorities.

Albania has started the process of opening negotiations with the European Union, and five clusters have been opened. In this context, our commitment is focused on aligning the country's legislation to meet EU standards. Albania has taken many important steps to strengthen and harmonize the legal framework of asylum in accordance with the commitments we have made. All this is being done in line with other ongoing international initiatives, including, among others, the Strategy for UNHCR's Engagement in Mixed Movements in the Western Balkans, cooperation agreements with Frontex, the UN Action Plan for the Western Balkans and the EU Strategy for the Western Balkans etc.

Distinguished delegates,

Albania reiterates its concern about the false information in the statement delivered by the Serbian delegation targeting Kosova, the youngest country in the Western Balkan. In the current situation, attempting to manipulate the international discourse goes against peaceful coexistence and regional stability.

The Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo is among the most comprehensive in the region in terms of protecting the rights of minority communities. It defines Kosovo as a multiethnic society, where all citizens are equal before the law, guaranteeing a clear framework for respecting non-majority rights.

Although the number of Serbs in Kosovo is small and constitutes 2.31% of the total population, the Constitution of Kosovo guarantees their rights, including political representation, local self-government, linguistic, cultural and religious rights.

The Serbian community enjoys constitutionally guaranteed representation in central and local institutions: out of 120 deputies of the Assembly, 10 seats are reserved for the Serbian community, one of the vice-presidents is from among the Serbian deputies. Serbian is an official language. The Serbian Orthodox Church enjoys a special legal status and laws affecting the vital interests of the Serbian community cannot be adopted without the consent of representatives of non-majority communities.

Dear participants,

Kosova is an independent state, recognized by 119 countries in the world. In July 2010, the International Court of Justice issued its favourable opinion on the legality of the decision of the proclamation of independence of Kosova, considering that the declaration of independence of Kosova did not violate international law.

The state of Kosova continues to bring stability to our region. Its people, including the Serbian community living in Kosova, want to prosper and look to the future.

Albania and Kosova are committed to strengthening of peace and stability at the region during this turbulent period around the world. All of us have the obligation to contribute to peace and stability at regional and international levels.

I thank you.