



Human Rights Advisory Panel

HRAP/PR/1

Wednesday, 21 November 2007

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY PANEL ESTABLISHED

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) established the Human Rights Advisory Panel (Advisory Panel) through UNMIK Regulation No. 2006/12 of 23 March 2006. On 12 January 2007 the SRSG appointed the following members: Mr. Paul Lemmens (Belgium), Judge in the Belgian Supreme Administrative Court and professor of human rights law at the University of Leuven; Mr. Marek Nowicki (Poland), President of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Warsaw, and former Ombudsman in Kosovo; Ms. Michèle Picard (France), Vice-President of the Paris First Instance Court and former President of the Human Rights Chamber for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Advisory Panel held its inaugural session in Pristina on 15 and 16 November 2007.

The Advisory Panel examines complaints from any person or group of persons claiming to be the victims of violations by UNMIK of the human rights as laid down in a number of international human rights instruments. It has jurisdiction throughout the entire territory of Kosovo. It can deal with complaints related to alleged violations of human rights that occurred since 23 April 2005 or arising from facts which occurred prior to this date where these facts give rise to a continuing violation of human rights.

The Advisory Panel may only deal with a matter after all other available remedies for the alleged violation have been pursued. Complaints must be filed within a period of six months from the date on which the final decision was taken. The Advisory Panel will first examine the admissibility of a complaint. If it considers that the complaint is admissible, it will examine the merits and adopt an opinion. The opinions of the Advisory Panel will contain a finding as to whether there has been a breach of human rights. They can also contain, where appropriate, recommendations.

The opinions of the Advisory Panel will be submitted to the SRSG. The SRSG then decides whether and how to act on the findings and recommendations of the Advisory Panel. The decisions and opinions of the Advisory Panel as well as the decisions of the SRSG will be made public.

At its first session, the Advisory Panel commenced its examination of the complaints that have been filed since 23 April 2006. It also discussed its rules of procedure, which will be adopted at a later session.

Complaints for the Advisory Panel should be sent to the Secretariat of the Human Rights Advisory Panel, Room 19, Second Floor, UNMIK Hotel Building, UNMIK HQ, Pristina, Kosovo.

For further information, please contact Mr. John J. Ryan, Executive Officer of the Secretariat of the Human Rights Advisory Panel, Tel: + 381 (0) 38 504 604 Ext 5847, Email: ryanj@un.org. Interested persons are also referred to the website of the Advisory Panel, at http://www.unmikonline.org/human_rights/index.htm.