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# Press Release



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## **SRSG's statement to the press on the occasion of the publication of the Final Report of the Human Rights Advisory Panel**

- I welcome the publication of the Final Report of the Human Rights Advisory Panel (HRAP), submitted upon the completion of its activities in June 2016, and I express appreciation for the work of the Panel, which has performed its functions in a challenging context.
- The HRAP was established as an advisory panel in 2006 by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Kosovo, to examine complaints, brought to it by any person or group of individuals, of alleged human rights violations by or attributable to the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), with effective coverage of the period 2005 to 2008, and to make recommendations to the SRSG for his or her action based on the HRAP's findings. During its tenure, the Panel provided its advisory opinions in the context of significant changes in its operating environment, including Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence in 2008, and, in the same year, the transfer of UNMIK's responsibilities in the areas of police and justice to the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX). The Panel was comprised of independent experts, who, upon completion of an examination of a complaint were required to submit their findings and recommendations to the SRSG for consideration. The recommendations of the Panel are of an advisory nature only.
- Occasionally, the Panel has expressed frustration with what it perceived to be a lack of action upon its recommendations. It is necessary to consider, however, that in all circumstances the Mission has an obligation to act in accordance with applicable United Nations regulations, rules and decisions by the United Nations General Assembly. These and other observations notwithstanding, the decisions issued by successive UNMIK SRSGs in response to HRAP's findings and recommendations, and the attention given to HRAP's work in the Secretary-

General's regular reporting on UNMIK to the Security Council, are testimony to the organization's support for this initiative.

- Most importantly, the decision to establish HRAP and to investigate complaints against the Mission and to engage in the process of reviewing UNMIK's compliance with human rights in an independent, transparent and public way demonstrates the commitment of the United Nations to human rights.
- With the completion of HRAP's work, the focus now shifts to the drawing of lessons learnt from HRAP's pioneering work. In this respect, the Final Report of the Panel is highly valued.

[Link to the Annual Report 2015 of the Human Rights Advisory Panel](#)

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