

**Remarks given by H.E. Mr. Paul Heinbecker
before the U.N. Security Council
Open briefing on Resolutions 1160 and 1244 (Kosovo)
December 19, 2000**

Monsieur le Président,

Je voudrais, au nom du Canada, saluer la nomination de M. Hans Haekkerup en tant que Représentant spécial du Secrétaire général au Kosovo.

M. Kouchner a établi une base solide pour les activités de la Mission des Nations Unies au Kosovo (MINUK), notamment par la façon dont il a présidé la mise en place des autorités locales démocratiquement élues pour la première fois au Kosovo.

Nous ne doutons pas que M. Haekkerup mettra à bon usage cet important héritage et continuera de mener le Kosovo vers plus de démocratie, plus de sécurité et plus de prospérité.

I would like now to turn to the pressing issue of the day, the ongoing security situation in the Presevo Valley.

Canada remains deeply concerned by the potentially destabilizing impact of violence by a marginal group of armed extremists.

We fully support the presidential statement issued today on this subject.

Canada welcome the efforts made to date by the international community to reduce tension in southern Serbia.

We strongly support the more stringent KFOR control of the administrative boundary between Kosovo and Serbia, including the efforts made to block the transit of recruits, supplies and weapons into the Presevo Valley.

We also support KFOR's ongoing political dialogue with Yugoslav and Serbian authorities and

welcome the use of the Joint Implementation Committee as a forum for this discussion.

Mr. President,

Canada appreciates the work done by international organizations, particularly UNHCR, in the Prasevo Valley which has assisted the return of refugees to the region .

The presence of international observers has had an important stabilizing effect.

We encourage the European Commission, perhaps in cooperation with other international organizations, to continue its monitoring missions.

We also applaud the moderate reaction of Yugoslav and Serbian authorities to the acts of violence in Southern Serbia.

Yugoslav army and Serbian police units have respected the terms of the Military Technical Agreement and avoided any escalation of violence.

We encourage Yugoslavia to continue its cooperation with the international community and urge the Kosovar Albanian leadership to do its part to prevent the support of armed groups.

Mr. President,

Canada believes that a lasting peace in southern Serbia requires an early constructive dialogue between Yugoslav and Serbian authorities and representatives of the local population.

Once the December 23rd elections in Serbia are completed, the international community should examine the possibility of greater cooperation for security in the Presevo Valley.