

**OPINION**

**Date of adoption: 16 October 2014**

**Case No. 147/09**

**Dobrila ANTIĆ-ŽIVKOVIć**

**against**

**UNMIK**

The Human Rights Advisory Panel, on 16 October 2014,

with the following members taking part:

Marek Nowicki, Presiding Member

Christine Chinkin

Françoise Tulkens

Assisted by

Andrey Antonov, Executive Officer

Having considered the aforementioned complaint, introduced pursuant to Section 1.2 of UNMIK Regulation No. 2006/12 of 23 March 2006 on the establishment of the Human Rights Advisory Panel,

Having deliberated, including through electronic means, in accordance with Rule 13 §

2 of its Rules of Procedure, makes the following findings and recommendations:

1. **PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE PANEL**
2. The complaint was introduced on 1 April 2009 and registered on 30 April 2009.
3. By letter dated 13 January 2010, the Panel requested additional information from the complainant. On 13 May 2010, the Panel received the complainant’s response.
4. On 4 March 2011, the Panel asked the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG)[[1]](#footnote-1), whether UNMIK could comment on information made publicly available, which could have some bearing on the case. The SRSG submitted UNMIK’s response on 24 March 2011.
5. On 19 April 2011, the Panel decided to communicate the case to the SRSG for UNMIK’s comments on the admissibility of the complaint. The SRSG provided UNMIK’s response on 15 June 2011.
6. On 15 September 2011, the Panel declared the complaint admissible.
7. On 19 September 2011, the Panel forwarded its decision to the SRSG requesting UNMIK’s comments on the merits of the complaint, as well as copies of the investigative files relevant to the case.
8. On 13 January 2012, the SRSG provided UNMIK’s comments on the merits of the complaint, together with the relevant documentation.
9. On 29 September 2014, the Panel requested UNMIK to confirm if the disclosure of files concerning the case could be considered final. On 6 October 2014, UNMIK provided its response.
10. **THE FACTS**
11. **General background[[2]](#footnote-2)**
12. The events at issue took place in the territory of Kosovo shortly after the establishment in June 1999 of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).
13. The armed conflict during 1998 and 1999 between the Serbian forces on one side and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and other Kosovo Albanian armed groups on the other is well documented. Following the failure of international efforts to resolve the conflict, on 23 March 1999, the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) announced the commencement of air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). The air strikes began on 24 March 1999 and ended on 8 June 1999 when the FRY agreed to withdraw its forces from Kosovo. On 9 June 1999, the International Security Force (KFOR), the FRY and the Republic of Serbia signed a “Military Technical Agreement” by which they agreed on FRY withdrawal from Kosovo and the presence of an international security force following an appropriate UN Security Council Resolution.
14. On 10 June 1999, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1244 (1999). Acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the UN Security Council decided upon the deployment of international security and civil presences - KFOR and UNMIK respectively - in the territory of Kosovo. Pursuant to Security Council Resolution No. 1244 (1999), the UN was vested with full legislative and executive powers for the interim administration of Kosovo, including the administration of justice. KFOR was tasked with establishing “a secure environment in which refugees and displaced persons can return home in safety” and temporarily ensuring “public safety and order” until the international civil presence could take over responsibility for this task. UNMIK comprised four main components or pillars led by the United Nations (civil administration), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (humanitarian assistance, which was phased out in June 2000), the OSCE (institution building) and the EU (reconstruction and economic development). Each pillar was placed under the authority of the SRSG. UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) mandated UNMIK to “promote and protect human rights” in Kosovo in accordance with internationally recognised human rights standards.
15. Estimates regarding the effect of the conflict on the displacement of the Kosovo Albanian population range from approximately 800,000 to 1.45 million. Following the adoption of Resolution 1244 (1999), the majority of Kosovo Albanians who had fled, or had been forcibly expelled from their houses by the Serbian forces during the conflict, returned to Kosovo.
16. Meanwhile, members of the non-Albanian community – mainly but not exclusively Serbs, Roma and Slavic Muslims – as well as Kosovo Albanians suspected of collaboration with the Serbian authorities, became the target of widespread attacks by Kosovo Albanian armed groups. Current estimates relating to the number of Kosovo Serbs displaced fall within the region of 200,000 to 210,000. Whereas most Kosovo Serbs and other non-Albanians fled to Serbia proper and the neighbouring countries, those remaining behind became victims of systematic killings, abductions, arbitrary detentions, sexual and gender based violence, beatings and harassment.
17. Although figures remain disputed, it is estimated that more than 15,000 deaths or disappearances occurred during and in the immediate aftermath of the Kosovo conflict (1998-2000). More than 3,000 ethnic Albanians, and about 800 Serbs, Roma and members of other minority communities went missing during this period. More than half of the missing persons had been located and their mortal remains identified by the end of 2010, while 1,766 are listed as still missing by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as of October 2012.
18. As of July 1999, as part of the efforts to restore law enforcement in Kosovo within the framework of the rule of law, the SRSG urged UN member States to support the deployment within the civilian component of UNMIK of 4,718 international police personnel. UNMIK Police were tasked with advising KFOR on policing matters until they themselves had sufficient numbers to take full responsibility for law enforcement and to work towards the development of a Kosovo police service. By September 1999, approximately 1,100 international police officers had been deployed to UNMIK.
19. By December 2000, the deployment of UNMIK Police was almost complete with 4,400 personnel from 53 different countries, and UNMIK had assumed primacy in law enforcement responsibility in all regions of Kosovo except for Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. According to the 2000 Annual Report of UNMIK Police, 351 kidnappings, 675 murders and 115 rapes had been reported to them in the period between June 1999 and December 2000.
20. Due to the collapse of the administration of justice in Kosovo, UNMIK established in June 1999 an Emergency Justice System. This was composed of a limited number of local judges and prosecutors and was operational until a regular justice system became operative in January 2000. In February 2000, UNMIK authorised the appointment of international judges and prosecutors, initially in the Mitrovicë/Mitrovica region and later across Kosovo, to strengthen the local justice system and to guarantee its impartiality. As of October 2002, the local justice system comprised 341 local and 24 international judges and prosecutors. In January 2003, the UN Secretary-General reporting to the Security Council on the implementation of Resolution 1244 (1999) defined the police and justice system in Kosovo at that moment as being “well-functioning” and “sustainable”.
21. In July 1999, the UN Secretary-General reported to the Security Council that UNMIK already considered the issue of missing persons as a particularly acute human rights concern in Kosovo. In November 1999, a Missing Persons Unit (MPU) was established within UNMIK Police, mandated to investigate with respect to either the possible location of missing persons and/or gravesites. The MPU, jointly with the Central Criminal Investigation Unit (CCIU) of UNMIK Police, and later a dedicated War Crimes Investigation Unit (WCIU), were responsible for the criminal aspects of missing persons cases in Kosovo. In May 2000, a Victim Recovery and Identification Commission (VRIC) chaired by UNMIK was created for the recovery, identification and disposition of mortal remains. On 5 November 2001, UNMIK signed the UNMIK-FRY Common Document, which among other things reiterated the commitment of solving the fate of missing persons from all communities and recognised that the exhumation and identification programme is only part of the activities related to missing persons. As of June 2002, the newly established Office on Missing Persons and Forensics (OMPF) in the UNMIK Department of Justice (DOJ) became the sole authority mandated to determine the whereabouts of missing persons, identify their mortal remains and return them to the family of the missing. Starting from 2001, based on a Memorandum of Understanding between UNMIK and the Sarajevo-based International Commission of Missing Persons (ICMP), supplemented by a further agreement in 2003, the identification of mortal remains was carried out by the ICMP through DNA testing.
22. On 9 December 2008, UNMIK’s responsibility with regard to police and justice in Kosovo ended with the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) assuming full operational control in the area of the rule of law, following the Statement made by the President of the United Nations Security Council on 26 November 2008 (S/PRST/2008/44), welcoming the continued engagement of the European Union in Kosovo.
23. On the same date, UNMIK and EULEX signed an agreement on the modalities, and the respective rights and obligations arising from the transfer from UNMIK to EULEX of cases and the related files which involved on-going investigations, prosecutions and other activities undertaken by UNMIK International Prosecutors. Shortly thereafter, similar agreements were signed with regard to the files handled by international judges and UNMIK Police. All agreements obliged EULEX to provide to UNMIK access to the documents related to the actions previously undertaken by UNMIK authorities. Between 9 December 2008 and 30 March 2009, all criminal case files held by the UNMIK DOJ and UNMIK Police were supposed to be handed over to EULEX.
24. **Circumstances surrounding the abduction and disappearance of Mr Zlatko Antić**
25. The complainant is the mother of Mr Zlatko Antić.
26. The complainant states that, on 28 July 1999, her son left Brezovicë/Brezovica. He stopped at the family apartment in Prizren, to check the situation and to determine whether it would be safe to return to the apartment. He went to his neighbours, to whom he had given the keys of his apartment. She states that a few minutes after he had entered the neighbours’ flat, six men in KLA uniform entered and forced Mr Zlatko Antić and one of the neighbours to leave with them.
27. The complainant states that at the time of the abduction, the KLA was occupying an apartment on the ground floor of the apartment building where the complainant’s family and the aforementioned neighbours lived. The complainant states that her son and the neighbour were taken to a student centre located behind the city cemetery of Prizren. While the neighbour was later released, the complainant’s son was held by the KLA. Since that time his whereabouts have remained unknown.
28. The complainant states that, upon her release, the neighbour out of fear chose not to report the abduction to the authorities. The complainant also believes that her neighbour recognised some of the kidnappers, although the latter did not want to confirm it.
29. The complainant states that she reported her son’s abduction the same day to the KFOR in Shtërpcë/Štrpce. The disappearance was also reported to the ICRC and to the Yugoslav Red Cross Society, which opened tracing requests on 9 November 1999 and 26 November 1999 respectively. The complainant further indicates that she reported her son’s abduction to the UNMIK Police MPU in Belgrade, in 2001, to the UNMIK Police War Crimes Unit in Belgrade in 2002 and to the UNMIK OMPF in Prishtinë/Priština in 2003. She states that a criminal report was also filed with the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs and the International Prosecutor’s Office in Kosovo.
30. The ICRC tracing request for Mr Zlatko Antić remains open[[3]](#footnote-3). The name of Mr Zlatko Antić appears in the database compiled by the UNMIK OMPF[[4]](#footnote-4). The entry in relation to Mr Zlatko Antić in the online database maintained by the ICMP reads in relevant fields: “Sufficient reference samples collected” and “DNA match not found.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

**C. The investigation**

*Disclosure of relevant files*

1. On 13 January 2012, UNMIK presented to the Panel “some of the documents” which were held previously by the UNMIK OMPF and documents from the EULEX WCIU. On 6 October 2014, UNMIK confirmed to the Panel that all the files in UNMIK’s possession have been disclosed.
2. Concerning disclosure of information contained in the files, the Panel recalls that UNMIK has made available investigative files for the Panel’s review under a pledge of confidentiality. In this regard, the Panel must clarify that although its assessment of the present case stems from a thorough examination of the available documentation, only limited information contained therein is disclosed. Hence a synopsis of relevant investigative steps taken by investigative authorities is provided in the paragraphs to follow.

*OMPF and WCIU investigative files concerning Mr Zlatko Antić*

1. The first document in the investigative file is an undated Victim Identification Form for Mr Zlatko Antić, which states 28 July 1999 as the date of his disappearance. Besides containing ante-mortem information concerning Mr Slatko Antić, the Form provides the full address and telephone number of Mr Zlatko Antić’s mother, the complainant, in Serbia proper.
2. Included in the file is also a Case Continuation Report of the UNMIK Police MPU concerning the case of Mr Zlatko Antić and affixed with case file no. 2002-000461. The Report contains two entries, both dated 17 May 2002, stating “input DB – ok” and “input DVI – ok”, suggesting that the ante-mortem information on Mr Zlatko Antić was inputted in the MPU database on that date.
3. The file also contains investigative documents issued by the UNMIK Police station in Prizren, after the complainant reported the abduction of Mr Zlatko Antić to them in November 2003. Among these documents is an Incident Report, dated 11 November 2003, which states that on this date the complainant submitted a written report to the UNMIK police station in Prizren concerning the abduction of her son. In this report, the complainant states that her whole family, including Mr Zlatko Antić, had left their house in Prizren after the end of the conflict, in July 1999. They had relocated to the village of Shterpce/Štrpce where Mr Zlatko Antić reportedly became very depressed. He decided to go to the family house in Prizren thinking that they would be able to return there. Afterwards, the complainant learnt from her neighbour by telephone that her son had been kidnapped by three persons wearing masks. The case had been reported to the ICRC. However, the complainant wanted to know if UNMIK Police “had received new information” and wanted “to make sure this case was not placed in an inactive file”. The Form provides the names and contact details of the complainant’s neighbour (the same person mentioned in § 22 above) as a witness to Mr Zlatko Antić’s abduction. Attached to the Form is a copy of a statement taken from the complainant on 12 November 2003. In addition to the information given in the Incident Report, the complainant’s statement contains details concerning the date of Mr Zlatko Antić’s disappearance, indicated as 28 July 1999, and the information that the complainant was informed of the occurrence by her neighbour in Prizren, V.N., when she called her five days after her son’s disappearance. The complainant also stated that she had reported the disappearance to the police in Shterpce/Štrpce, to the “Red Cross in Belgrade and the ICRC” in November 1999. The investigative documents indicate that two Kosovo Albanian police officers took this statement from the complainant.
4. The file further contains a copy of the statement of V.N. taken by the Kosovo Police Service in Prizren on 22 November 2003. According to this statement, Mr Zlatko Antić visited V.N. on 28 July 1999 in the afternoon. V.N. warned him that it was dangerous for him to return to his apartment after the whole of his family had left; he answered that he had not harmed anyone. Immediately after Mr Zlatko Antić arrived, a group of seven men in black uniform and carrying light weapons, three or four of them wearing masks, entered the apartment and took Mr Zlatko Antić away with them. V.N. stated that the kidnappers were mainly young boys, that she had not seen them before that day and had never seen them since, therefore she would not be able to recognise them. She did not know the direction in which they took Mr Zlatko Antić. Three days after this occurred, V.N. went to England to get medical treatment for three months and, upon her return, she received the telephone call of the complainant. V.N. stressed in her statement that it was “not true” that the complainant called her five days after Mr Zlatko Antić’s abduction because “it was post-war period and the lines were not functional”.
5. An Officer’s Report dated 15 January 2004 states that further investigations were conducted on the case. On 26 December 2003, the investigators contacted again the witness V.N., who informed them that X.G. had moved into Mr Zlatko Antić’s flat after the latter’s disappearance and was still living there. On the same day, 26 December 2003, the investigators took a statement from X.G. According to this statement, which is included in the investigative file, X.G. had moved into Mr Zlatko Antić’s flat on 20 September 1999. He had found the door broken and the furniture inside the apartment scattered. He did not know anything about Mr Zlatko Antić. Until before the war he had been living in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and had never met Mr Zlatko Antić, the complainant or anyone from their family. He knew that other persons had occupied the flat before him, but he did not know their identity. The conclusion in the Officer’s Report was that a copy of the case file should be handed over to the MPU in Prishtinë/Priština. The investigators noted “if we achieve to obtain any information regarding the missing person, we will reopen the case”.
6. The part of the file that was given to UNMIK by the EULEX WCIU contains the English translation of an undated criminal report filed by Mr Zlatko Antić’s wife with the International Prosecutor of the District Prosecutor’s Office in Prizren. The report is affixed with CCIU case no. 2005-00160.
7. The file further contains a Case Analysis Report of the UNMIK Police WCIU concerning case file no. 2005-00160, dated 21 October 2007. The Report provides an account of Mr Zlatko Antić’s abduction as described above. In the field “Brief description of evidence”, the Report reads “File has no mention of evidence”. Under “Investigator Recommendation/Opinion” the report states: “Due to the lack of evidence or investigative leads it is recommended this case be placed in a closed status. The file can be reopened upon discovery of new evidence or information”. A handwritten note on the Report indicates that it had been reviewed and approved by a police supervisor.
8. The last document in the file is a review by the EULEX WCIU of the UNMIK Police case no. 2005-00160, the case of Mr Zlatko Antić’, which bears the date of 9 July 2010. In the filed “Remarks” the document states in relevant parts: “No investigative measures have been taken regarding this case”. In the field “Recommendation” it is stated: “the eye witness [V.N.] should be interviewed. All available information should be obtained from KFOR … The general circumstances and according to the public perception it is more than highly justified to suspect that Zlatko ANTIĆ is a victim of homicide. It is recommended to consider the case as not a war crime because it happened after the end of the war, unless it can be clustered with other alleged similar crimes in order to make a major case. The case may be transferred to another unit for homicide investigation”.

*ICTY documents concerning Mr Zlatko Antić*

1. The name of Mr Zlatko Antić is mentioned in a document dating back to October 2003 prepared by the UNMIK DoJ for the ICTY, summarising information about a suspected ring of trafficking in human beings by the KLA between Kosovo and Albania for the purposes of forced prostitution and organ harvesting. Although not included in the documents provided by the SRSG with respect to the case of Mr Zlatko Antić, this document has already made publicly available (see § 3 above) and has been presented by the SRSG as part of the investigative files concerning other cases before the Panel (see HRAP, *L.V., M.Đ. and D.S.,* cases nos 291/09, 292/09 and 296/09, opinion of 24 June 2014). According to this document, Mr Zlatko Antić was in a group of “captives” taken to Albania and kept in a detention facility in Northern Albania in July or early August 1999 for the purpose of organ trafficking.
2. As mentioned above, there is no additional documentation in the investigative file concerning this matter. As far as the Panel is aware, no relevant indictments have been issued by the ICTY. However, in spring 2011, following the issuance of the Council of Europe report *“Inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo”*,the EU Special Investigative Task Force (SITF) was established with the mandate to investigate, among other matters, the allegations concerning organ harvesting. The Chief Prosecutor of the Task Force made a statement on the SITF findings on 29 July 2014.
3. **THE COMPLAINT**

1. The complainant complains about UNMIK’s alleged failure to properly investigate the abduction and disappearance of her son. In this regard, the Panel deems that the complainant invokes a violation of the procedural limb of Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).
2. The complainant also complains about the fear, pain and anguish suffered by herself because of the situation surrounding the disappearance of her son. In this regard, she relies on Article 3 of the ECHR.
3. **THE LAW**
4. **Alleged violation of the procedural obligation under Article 2 of the ECHR** 
   1. **The scope of the Panel’s review**
5. Before turning to the examination of the merits of the complaint, the Panel needs to clarify the scope of its review.
6. In determining whether it considers that there has been a violation of Article 2 (procedural limb) and of Article 3 of the ECHR, the Panel is mindful of the existing case-law, notably that of the European Court of Human Rights. However, the Panel is also aware that the complaints before it differ in some significant ways from those brought before that Court. First, the respondent is not a State but an interim international territorial administration mandated to exercise temporary responsibilities in Kosovo. No suspicion attaches to UNMIK with respect to the substantive obligations under Article 2 of the ECHR. Second, as in a limited number of cases before the European Court, those suspected of being responsible for the alleged killings and/or abductions are in all cases before the Panel non-state actors, mostly but not exclusively connected to the conflict. These are factors for the Panel to take into consideration as it assesses the procedural positive obligations of an intergovernmental organisation with respect to acts committed by third parties in a territory over which it has temporary legislative, executive and judicial control.
7. The Panel notes that with the adoption of the UNMIK Regulation No. 1999/1 on 25 July 1999 UNMIK undertook an obligation to observe internationally recognised human rights standards in exercising its functions. This undertaking was detailed in UNMIK Regulation No. 1999/24 of 12 December 1999, by which UNMIK assumed obligations under the following human rights instruments: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and Protocols thereto, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, [the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](http://untreaty.un.org/English/TreatyEvent2001/pdf/07e.pdf), the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
8. The Panel also notes that Section 1.2 of UNMIK Regulation No. 2006/12 of 23 March 2006 on the Establishment of the Human Rights Advisory Panel provides that the Panel “shall examine complaints from any person or group of individuals claiming to be the victim of a violation by UNMIK of (their) human rights”. It follows that only acts or omissions attributable to UNMIK fall within the jurisdiction *ratione personae* of the Panel. In this respect, it should be noted, as stated above, that as of 9 December 2008, UNMIK no longer exercises executive authority over the Kosovo judiciary and law enforcement machinery. Therefore UNMIK bears no responsibility for any violation of human rights allegedly committed by those bodies. Insofar as the complainants complain about acts that occurred after that date, they fall outside the jurisdiction *ratione personae* of the Panel.
9. Likewise, the Panel emphasises that, as far as its jurisdiction *ratione materiae* is concerned, as follows from Section 1.2 of UNMIK Regulation No. 2006/12, it can only examine complaints relating to an alleged violation of human rights. This means that it can only review acts or omissions complained of for their compatibility with the international human rights instruments referred to above (see § 43). In the particular case of killings and disappearances in life-threatening circumstances, it is not the Panel’s role to replace the competent authorities in the investigation of the case. Its task is limited to examining the effectiveness of the criminal investigation into such killings and disappearances, in the light of the procedural obligations flowing from Article 2 of the ECHR.
10. The Panel further notes that Section 2 of UNMIK Regulation No. 2006/12 provides that the Panel shall have jurisdiction over complaints relating to alleged violations of human rights “that had occurred not earlier than 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”. It follows that events that took place before 23 April 2005 generally fall outside the jurisdiction *ratione temporis* of the Panel. However, to the extent that such events gave rise to a continuing situation, the Panel has jurisdiction to examine complaints relating to that situation (see European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), Grand Chamber [GC], *Varnava and Others v. Turkey*, nos. 16064/90 and others, judgment of 18 September 2009, §§ 147-149; ECtHR, *Cyprus v. Turkey* [GC] no. 25781/94, judgment of 10 May 2001, § 136, ECHR 2001-IV).
    1. **The Parties’ submissions**
11. The complainant in substance alleges a violation concerning the lack of an adequate criminal investigation into the abduction and disappearance of Mr Zlatko Antić.
12. At the outset, the SRSG states that UNMIK has been able to obtain “some of the documents” which were held previously by the UNMIK OMPF and a summary of the case provided by the EULEX WCIU. In his comments, dated 13 January 2012, the SRSG stated that UNMIK was “still in the process of attempting to retrieve more documents, in particular from UNMIK Police or EULEX Police, to establish whether further any further investigation activity was carried out”. No additional documents have been provided; however, on 6 October 2014, UNMIK confirmed to the Panel that all the files in UNMIK’s possession have been disclosed.
13. In his comments on the merits of the complaint, the SRSG does not dispute that UNMIK had a responsibility to conduct an effective investigation into the abduction and disappearance in 1999 of Mr Zlatko Antić**,** in line with its general obligation to secure the effective implementation of the domestic laws which protect the right to life, given to it by UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) (see §11 above) and further defined by UNMIK Regulation No. 1999/1 *On the Authority of the Interim Administration in Kosovo* and subsequently, UNMIK Regulation 1999/24 *On the Law Applicable in Kosovo,* and Article 2 of the ECHR.
14. In this regard, the SRSG stresses that this responsibility stems from the procedural obligation under Article 2 of the ECHR to conduct an effective investigation where a disappearance occurs in suspicious circumstances not imputable to State agents. He argues that, in general, when considering whether UNMIK has satisfied its procedural obligations under Article 2 of the ECHR, the Panel must take into consideration the special circumstances in Kosovo at the time.
15. The SRSG considers that such an obligation is two-fold, including an obligation to determine through investigation the fate and/or whereabouts of the dead person; and an obligation to conduct an investigation capable of determining whether the death was caused unlawfully and leading to the identification and punishment of those responsible for the disappearance and/or death of the missing person.
16. The SRSG accepts that Mr Zlatko Antić disappeared in life-threatening circumstances. The SRSG adds that when Zlatko Antić disappeared, “the security situation in post-conflict Kosovo remained tense. KFOR was still in the process of reaching sufficient strength to maintain public safety and law and order and there were a number of serious criminal incidents targeting Kosovo-Serbs, including abductions and killings.”
17. The SRSG argues that in its case-law on Article 2, the European Court of Human Rights has stated that due consideration shall be given to the difficulties inherent to post-conflict situations and the problems limiting the ability of investigating authorities in investigating such cases. In this regard, the SRSG recalls the judgment of 15 February 2011 rendered by the European Court in the case *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina* stating at paragraph 70:

“The Court takes into account the complex situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, notably in the first ten years following the war. In such a post-conflict situation, what amounts to an impossible and/or disproportionate burden must be measured by the very particular facts and context. In this connection, the Court notes that more than 100,000 people were killed, almost 30,000 people went missing and more than two million people were displaced during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Inevitably choices had to be made in terms of post-war priorities and resources. Furthermore, after a long and brutal war, Bosnia and Herzegovina underwent fundamental overhaul of its internal structure and political system: Entities and Cantons were set up pursuant to the Dayton Peace Agreement, power-sharing arrangements were introduced in order to ensure effective equality between the “constituent peoples” in the post-conflict society (see *Sejdić and Finci v. Bosnia and Herzegovina* [GC], nos. 27996/06 and 34836/06, ECHR 2009 ...), new institutions had to be created and the existing ones had to be restructured. Some reluctance on the part of the former warring parties to work with those new institutions could be expected in the post-war period, as evidenced in the present case. While it is difficult to pinpoint when exactly this process ended, the Court considers that the domestic legal system should have become capable of dealing effectively with disappearances and other serious violations of international humanitarian law by 2005, following comprehensive vetting of the appointment of police and judiciary and the establishment of the War Crimes Sections within the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All this considered and since there has been no substantial period of inactivity post-2005 on the part of the domestic authorities in the present case, the Court concludes that, in the circumstances obtaining at the material time, the domestic criminal investigation can be considered to have been conducted with reasonable promptness and expedition”.

1. In the view of the SRSG, in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict, UNMIK was faced with a similar situation as the one in Bosnia and Herzegovina “from 1995”. Many of those persons who were unaccounted for were abducted, killed and buried in unmarked graves inside or outside of Kosovo, which made very difficult locating and recovering their mortal remains.
2. The SRSG explains that in June 2002, UNMIK created the OMPF with the mandate to determine the fate of the missing; however, its work was faced with many challenges at the beginning of the operations, due to the work previously done mostly by actors independent from UNMIK. In particular, the SRSG states that the collection of evidence of war crimes began with the arrival of NATO in 1999 with independent teams from several countries operating under the loose coordination of the ICTY. A lack of standard operating procedures or centralisation led to problems with the evidence gathered in this phase. In 2000, the ICTY launched a large, centralised forensic operation, based at the Rahovec/Orahovac mortuary, with standard operating procedures for all forensic teams except the British one, which operated independently out of Prishtinë/Priština. The SRSG states that, in the effort to demonstrate that crimes were systematic and widespread, the ICTY teams conducted autopsies on as many bodies as possible, carrying out little or no identification work; moreover, unidentified bodies exhumed in 1999 were reburied in locations still unknown to the OMPF. After the ICTY closed their operation in 2000, the UNMIK Police MPU continued small-scale investigations on missing persons “ex-officio, without any broader prosecutorial strategy”. As a consequence, a large amount of unstructured information was collected. The SRSG states that, taking into account the difficulties described above, the process “for establishing a system capable of dealing effectively with disappearances and other serious violations of international humanitarian law has been an understandably incremental one in the Kosovo context, and this principle has been reflected in the *Palić* case abovementioned.” The SRSG concludes that the process was reliant upon a number of actors other than just UNMIK, for example the ICMP, the ICRC and local missing persons organisations.
3. The SRSG further argues that fundamental to conducting effective investigations is a professional, well-trained and well-resourced police force and that such a force did not exist in Kosovo in the aftermath of the conflict. In the policing vacuum following the end of the conflict, UNMIK had to build a new Kosovo Police Service from scratch, a long and challenging task which, according to the SRSG, is still in progress. The SRSG also states that UNMIK Police faced numerous challenges in exercising law enforcement functions gradually transferred to it by KFOR in 1999-2000. In this regard, he refers to the UNMIK Police Annual Report of 2000 describing the situation as follows:

“UNMIK Police had to deal with the aftermath of war, with dead bodies and the looted and burned houses. Ethnic violence flared through illegal evictions, forcible takeovers of properties, the burning of houses and physical violence against communities all over Kosovo. Tempers and tensions were running high amongst all ethnic groups, exacerbated by reports of missing and dead persons. It became imperative for UNMIK Police to establish order and to quickly construct a framework to register and investigate crimes.

All of this had to be done, with limited physical and human resources. Being the first executive mission in the history of the UN, the concept, planning and implementation was being developed on the ground. With 20 different contributory nationalities at the beginning, it was very challenging task for police managers to establish common practices for optimum results in a high-risk environment.”

1. The SRSG states that UNMIK international police officers had to adjust to conducting investigations in a foreign territory and cultures, with limited support from the still developing Kosovo Police. He further states that these investigators were often faced with situations where individuals holding relevant knowledge on the whereabouts and fate of missing persons did not want to disclose this information. According to the SRSG, “such constraints inhibited the ability of […] UNMIK Police to conduct all investigations in a manner […] that may be demonstrated, or at least expected, in other States with more established institutions and without the surge in cases of this nature associated with a post-conflict situation.”
2. The SRSG states that, given the number of missing persons cases that had been resolved, it must be recognised that the work of the OMPF had contributed greatly to determining the fate and whereabouts of many of the missing persons in Kosovo. However “it was simply not possible to locate all those missing within the timeframe with the resources available at the time”.
3. With respect to the present case, the SRSG submits that it is evident that the UNMIK Police did open and pursue an investigation into the whereabouts of Mr Zlatko Antić. However, this investigation had not resulted in locating him or in determining his fate by the time the file was transferred to EULEX.
4. The SRSG states that, according to the information contained in the investigative documents received from EULEX, the UNMIK Police MPU opened a missing person file on Mr Zlatko Antić in 2002. The police collected ante-mortem data from the victim’s family and the matter was also registered by the UNMIK Police CCIU under case file no. 2005-00160.
5. The SRSG states that “protracted investigations were carried out as part of the efforts to locate Mr Zlatko Antić. On 12 November 2003, the UNMIK Police prepared a flash report on the incident and referred the matter to the Investigation Unit on the same day. On 22 December 2003, the police took a statement from the “sole known witness”. On 23 December 2003, the police also interviewed X.G., who had occupied the victim’s apartment since 20 September 1999. However, neither of them provided any information concerning the whereabouts of Mr Zlatko Antić. On 16 January 2004, the OMPF concluded that all leads had been exhausted and that the case shall be left pending until some “worthwhile information was received in the future”.
6. On 21 October 2007, investigators from the UNMIK WCIU recommended the case be closed due to lack of evidence or investigative leads and that the file could be reopened “on the discovery of new evidence or information”. On 28 December 2007, a final decision to that effect was taken by the WCIU. The case was afterwards transferred to EULEX where it remains open.
7. The SRSG concludes that it appears “from the documents available at this time” that “UNMIK Police did make all reasonable investigative efforts in accordance with Article 2 procedural requirements to determine the whereabouts of Mr Zlatko Antić”.
8. No comments have been provided by the SRSG with respect to the information made publicly available and appearing in other HRAP cases concerning the ICTY documents on Mr Zlatko Antić (see §§ 3 and 37-38 above).
   1. **The Panel’s assessment**
9. The Panel considers that the complainant invokes a violation of the procedural obligation stemming from the right to life, guaranteed by Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in that UNMIK did not conduct an effective investigation into the abduction and disappearance of Mr Zlatko Antić.

1. *Submission of relevant files*
2. At the Panel’s request, on 13 January 2012, the SRSG provided copies of the documents related to this investigation, which UNMIK was able to recover. The SRSG also suggested that there is a possibility more information, not contained in the presented documents, exists (see § 48 above) but provided no further details. On 6 October 2014, UNMIK confirmed to the Panel that no more files have been located, thus the disclosure may be considered complete (see § 8 above).
3. The Panel notes that Section 15 of UNMIK Regulation No. 2006/12 states that the Panel may request the submission from UNMIK of any documents and that the SRSG shall cooperate with the Panel and provide the necessary assistance including, in particular, in the release of documents and information relevant to the complaint. The Panel in this regard refers to the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights that inferences shall be drawn from the conduct of the respondent party during the proceedings, including from its failure “to submit information in their hands without a satisfactory explanation” (see ECtHR, *Çelikbilek v. Turkey*, no. 27693/95, judgment of 31 May 2005*,* § 56).
4. Furthermore, the Panel notes that the proper maintenance of investigative files concerning crimes such as killings and disappearances, from the opening of the investigations to their handing over, is crucial to the continuation of such investigations and failure to do so could thus raise *per se* issues under Article 2
5. The Panel itself is not in the position to verify the completeness of the investigative files received. The Panel will therefore assess the merits of the complaint on the basis of documents made available (in this sense, see ECtHR, *Tsechoyev v. Russia*, no. 39358/05, judgment of15 March 2011, § 146).
6. *General principles concerning the obligation to conduct an effective investigation under Article 2*
7. The Panel notes that the positive obligation to investigate disappearances is widely accepted in international human rights law since at least the case of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) *Velásquez-Rodríguez* (see IACtHR, *Velásquez-Rodríguez v. Honduras*, judgment of 29 July 1988, Series C No. 4). The positive obligation has also been stated by the United Nations Human Rights Committee (HRC) as stemming from Article 6 (right to life), Article 7 (prohibition of cruel and inhuman treatment) and Article 9 (right to liberty and security of person), read in conjunction with Articles 2 (3) (right to an effective remedy) of the ICCPR (see United Nations Human Rights Committee (HRC), General Comment No. 6, 30 April 1982, § 4; HRC, General Comment No. 31, 26 May 2004, §§ 8 and 18, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add. 13; see also, among others, HRC, *Mohamed El Awani, v. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya*, communication no. 1295/2004, views of 11 July 2007, CCPR/C/90/D/1295/2004). The obligation to investigate disappearances and killings is also asserted in the UN Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances (UN Document A/Res/47/133, 18 December 1992), and further detailed in UN guidelines such as the UN Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal Arbitrary and Summary Executions (1991) and the “Guidelines for the Conduct of United Nations Inquiries into Allegations of Massacres” (1995). The importance of the obligation is confirmed by the adoption of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2006, which entered into force on 23 December 2010.
8. In order to address the complainant’s allegations, the Panel refers to the well-established case-law of the European Court of Human Rights on the procedural obligation under Article 2 of the ECHR. The Court has held that “[The] obligation to protect the right to life under Article 2, read in conjunction with the State's general duty under Article 1 of the Convention to “secure to everyone within [its] jurisdiction the rights and freedoms defined in [the] Convention”, requires by implication that there should be some form of effective official investigation when individuals have been killed (see, *mutatis mutandis*, ECtHR, *McCann and Others v. the United Kingdom*, judgment of 27 September 1995, § 161, Series A no. 324; and ECtHR, *Kaya v. Turkey*, judgment of 19 February 1998, § 86, Reports 1998-I; see also ECtHR, *Jasinskis v. Latvia*, no. 45744/08, judgment of 21 December 2010, § 71). The duty to conduct such an investigation arises in all cases of killing and other suspicious death, whether the perpetrators were private persons or State agents or are unknown (see ECtHR, *Kolevi v. Bulgaria*, no. 1108/02, judgment of 5 November 2009, § 191).
9. The European Court has also stated that the procedural obligation to provide some form of effective official investigation exists also when an individual has gone missing in life-threatening circumstances and is not confined to cases where it is apparent that the disappearance was caused by an agent of the State (see ECtHR [GC], *Varnava and Others v. Turkey*, cited in § 46 above, at § 136; ECtHR [GC], *Mocanu and Others v. Romania*, nos 10865/09, 45886/07 and 32431/08, judgment of 17 September 2014, § 317).
10. The authorities must act of their own motion once the matter has come to their attention, and they cannot leave it to the initiative of the next-of-kin either to lodge a formal complaint or to take responsibility for the conduct of any investigative procedure (see ECtHR, *Ahmet Özkan and Others v. Turkey*, no. 21689/93, judgment of 6 April 2004, § 310, see also ECtHR, *Isayeva v. Russia*, no. 57950/00, judgment of 24 February 2005, § 210; ECtHR [GC], *Mocanu and Others v. Romania*, cited above § 321).
11. Setting out the standards of an effective investigation, the Court has stated that “besides being independent, accessible to the victim’s family, carried out with reasonable promptness and expedition and affording a sufficient element of public scrutiny of the investigation or its results, the investigation must also be effective in the sense that it is capable of leading to a determination of whether the death was caused unlawfully and if so, to the identification and punishment of those responsible” (see ECtHR [GC], *Varnava and Others v.* Turkey, cited in § 46 above, at § 191; see also ECtHR, *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina*, no. 4704/04, judgment of 15 February 2011, § 63). This is not an obligation of results but of means. The authorities must take whatever reasonable steps they can to secure the evidence concerning the incident, including, inter alia eye-witness testimony, forensic evidence and, where appropriate, an autopsy which provides a complete and accurate record of injury and an objective analysis of the clinical findings, including the cause of death. Any deficiency in the investigation which undermines its ability to establish the cause of death or the person or persons responsible will risk falling foul of this standard (see ECtHR, *Ahmet Özkan and Others v. Turkey*, cited above, at § 312, and ECtHR, *Isayeva v. Russia*, cited above, at § 212).
12. In particular, the investigation’s conclusion must be based on thorough, objective and impartial analysis of all relevant elements. Failing to follow an obvious line of enquiry undermines to a decisive extent the ability to establish the circumstances of the case and the identity of those responsible (see ECtHR, *Kolevi v. Bulgaria*, cited in § 71, at § 201). Nevertheless, the nature and degree of scrutiny which satisfy the minimum threshold of the investigation’s effectiveness depend on the circumstances of the particular case. They must be assessed on the basis of all relevant facts and with regard to the practical realities of the investigative work (see ECtHR, *Velcea and Mazăre v. Romania*, no. 64301/01, judgment of 1 December 2009, § 105). At the same time, “the authorities must always make a serious attempt to find out what happened and should not rely on hasty or ill-founded conclusions to close their investigation” (see ECtHR [GC], *El Masri v. “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”*, no. 39630/09, judgment of 13 December 2012, § 183; ECtHR [GC], *Mocanu and Others v. Romania*, cited above § 322).
13. A requirement of promptness and reasonable expedition is implicit in this context. Even where there may be obstacles or difficulties which prevent progress in an investigation in a particular situation, a prompt response by the authorities is vital in maintaining public confidence in their adherence to the rule of law and in preventing any appearance of collusion in or tolerance of unlawful acts (see ECtHR, *Paul and Audrey Edwards v. the United Kingdom*, no. 46477/99, judgment of 14 March 2002, § 72, ECHR 2002‑II; ECtHR [GC], *Mocanu and Others v. Romania*, cited in § 72 above, at § 323).
14. Specifically with regard to persons disappeared and later found dead, which is not the situation in this case, the Court has stated that the procedures of exhuming and identifying mortal remains do not exhaust the obligation under Article 2 of the ECHR. The Court holds that “the procedural obligation arising from a disappearance will generally remain as long as the whereabouts and fate of the person are unaccounted for, and it is thus of a continuing nature” (ECtHR, *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina*, cited in § 74 above, § 46; in the same sense ECtHR [GC], *Varnava and Others v. Turkey*, cited in § 45 above, § 148, *Aslakhanova and Others v. Russia*, nos. 2944/06 and others, judgment of 18 December 2012, § 122). However, the Court also stresses that this procedural obligation “does not come to an end even on discovery of the body .... This only casts light on one aspect of the fate of the missing person and the obligation to account for the disappearance and death, as well as to identify and prosecute any perpetrator of unlawful acts in that connection, will generally remain” (ECtHR, *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina*, cited above, § 55; in the same sense ECtHR [GC], *Varnava and Others v. Turkey*, cited above, § 145). While the location and the subsequent identification of the mortal remains of the victim may in themselves be significant achievements, the procedural obligation under Article 2 continues to exist (see ECtHR, *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina*, cited above, § 64).
15. On the requirement of public scrutiny, the Court has further stated that there must be a sufficient element of public scrutiny of the investigation or its results to secure accountability in practice as well as in theory. The degree of public scrutiny required may well vary from case to case. In all cases, however, the victim's next-of-kin must be involved in the procedure to the extent necessary to safeguard his or her legitimate interests (see *Ahmet Özkan and Others v. Turkey*, cited in § 73 above, at §§ 311‑314; *Isayeva v. Russia*, cited in § 72 above, §§ 211-214 and the cases cited therein).” ECtHR [GC], *Al-Skeini and Others v. United Kingdom*, no. 55721/07, judgment of 7 July 2011, § 167, ECHR 2011; ECtHR [GC], *Mocanu and Others v. Romania*, cited in § 72 above, at § 324).
16. The Court has also underlined the great importance of an effective investigation in establishing the truth of what transpired thereby satisfying the right to truth not only for the families of victims, but also for other victims of similar crimes, as well as the general public, who have the right to know what occurred (ECtHR [GC], *El-Masri v. “The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”*, cited in § 75 above, at § 191; ECtHR, *Al Nashiri v. Poland*, no. 28761/11, judgment of 24 July 2014, §§ 495-496). United Nations bodies also recognise the importance of the right to truth. In the words of the United Nations Secretary-General, “the right to truth implies knowing the full and complete truth about the violations and the events that transpired, their specific circumstances and who participated in them. In the case of missing persons … it also implies the right to know the fate and whereabouts of the victim” (see Report of the UN Secretary-General, Missing Persons, UN Document A/67/267, 8 August 2012, § 5;see also HRC,  *Schedko and Bondarenko v. Belarus*, Communication no. 886/1999, views of 3 April 2003, § 10.2, CCPR/C/77/D/886/1999; HRC, *Mariam, Philippe, Auguste and Thomas Sankara v. Burkina Faso*, Communication no. 1159/2003, views of 8 March 2006, § 10.2, CCPR/C/86/D/1159/2003; UN Human Rights Council, Resolutions 9/11 and 12/12: Right to the Truth, 24 September 2008 and 12 October 2009; Preamble and Article 24 (2) of the Convention for the Protection of All People from Enforced Disappearance, cited in § 106 above; see also Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Mr Ben Emmerson, *Framework Principles for securing the accountability of public officials for gross and systematic human rights violations committed in the context of State counter-terrorist initiatives*, UN Document A/HRC/22/52, 1 March 2013, § 23-26).
17. *Applicability of Article 2 to the Kosovo context*
18. The Panel is conscious that Mr Zlatko Antić was abducted shortly after the deployment of UNMIK in Kosovo in the aftermath of the armed conflict, when crime, violence and insecurity were rife.
19. On his part, the SRSG does not contest that UNMIK had a duty to investigate the present case under ECHR Article 2. However, according to the SRSG, the unique circumstances pertaining to the Kosovo context and to UNMIK’s deployment in the first phase of its mission shall be taken into account when assessing whether this investigation is in compliance with Article 2 of the ECHR. In substance, the SRSG argues that it is not possible to apply to UNMIK the same standards applicable to a State in a normal situation.
20. The Panel considers that this raises two main questions: first, whether the standards of Article 2 continue to apply in situation of conflict or generalised violence and, second, whether such standards shall be considered fully applicable to UNMIK.
21. As regards the applicability of Article 2 to UNMIK, the Panel recalls that with the adoption of the UNMIK Regulation No. 1999/1 on 25 July 1999 UNMIK undertook an obligation to observe internationally recognised human rights standards in exercising its functions. This undertaking was detailed in UNMIK Regulation No. 1999/24 of 12 December 1999, by which UNMIK assumed obligations under certain international human rights instruments, including the ECHR. In this respect, the Panel has already found that it is true that UNMIK’s interim character and related difficulties must be duly taken into account with regard to a number of situations, but under no circumstances could these elements be taken as a justification for diminishing standards of respect for human rights, which were duly incorporated into UNMIK’s mandate (see HRAP, *Milogorić and Others,* nos. 38/08 and others, opinion of 24 March 2011, § 44; *Berisha and Others,* nos. 27/08 and others, opinion of 23 February 2011,§ 25; *Lalić and Others*, nos. 09/08 and others, opinion of 9 June 2012, § 22).
22. Concerning the applicability of Article 2 to situations of conflict or generalised violence, the Panel recalls that the European Court of Human Rights has established the applicability of Article 2 to post-conflict situations, including in countries of the former Yugoslavia (see, among other examples, ECtHR, *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina,* cited in § 74 above, and ECtHR, *Jularić v. Croatia*, no. 20106/06, judgment of 20 January 2011). The Court has further held that that the procedural obligation under Article 2 continues to apply in “difficult security conditions, including in a context of armed conflict” (see ECtHR [GC], *Al-Skeini and Others v. the United Kingdom*, cited in § 77 above, at § 164; see also ECtHR, *Güleç v. Turkey*, judgment of 27 July 1998, § 81, Reports 1998-IV; ECtHR, *Ergi v. Turkey*, judgment of 28 July 1998, §§ 79 and 82, Reports 1998-IV; ECtHR, *Ahmet Özkan and Others v. Turkey*, cited in § 72 above, at §§ 85-90, 309-320 and 326-330; *Isayeva v. Russia*, cited in § 72 above, at §§ 180 and 210; ECtHR, *Kanlibaş v. Turkey*, no. 32444/96, judgment of 8 December 2005, §§ 39-51).
23. The Court has acknowledged that “where the death to be investigated under Article 2 occurs in circumstances of generalised violence, armed conflict or insurgency, obstacles may be placed in the way of investigators and […] concrete constraints may compel the use of less effective measures of investigation or may cause an investigation to be delayed” (see, ECtHR [GC], *Al-Skeini and Others v. the United Kingdom,* cited above, at §164; ECtHR, *Bazorkina v. Russia*, no. 69481/01, judgment of 27 July 2006, § 121). Nonetheless, the Court has held that “the obligation under Article 2 to safeguard life entails that, even in difficult security conditions, all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that an effective, independent investigation is conducted into alleged breaches of the right to life (see, amongst many other examples, ECtHR, *Kaya v. Turkey*, cited in § 78 above, at §§ 86‑92; ECtHR, *Ergi v Turkey,* cited above, at §§ 82-85; ECtHR [GC], *Tanrıkulu v. Turkey*, no. 23763/94, judgment of 8 July 1999, §§ 101-110, ECHR 1999-IV; ECtHR, *Khashiyev and Akayeva v. Russia*, nos. 57942/00 and 57945/00, judgment of 24 February 2005, §§ 156-166; ECtHR, *Isayeva v. Russia*, cited above, at §§ 215‑224; ECtHR, *Musayev and Others v. Russia*, nos. 57941/00 and others, judgment of 26 July 2007, §§ 158-165).
24. Similarly, the HRC has held that the right to life, including its procedural guarantees, shall be considered as the supreme right from which no derogation is permitted even in time of public emergency which threatens the life of the nation (see, HRC, General Comment No. 6, cited in § 69above, at § 1; HRC, *Abubakar Amirov and Aïzan Amirova v. Russian Federation*, communication no. 1447/2006, views of 22 April 2009, § 11.2, CCPR/C/95/D/1447/2006). Further, the HRC has stated the applicability of Article 2 (3), 6 and 7 of the ICCPR with specific reference to UNMIK’s obligation to conduct proper investigations on disappearances and abductions in Kosovo (see HRC, Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee: Kosovo (Serbia), 14 August 2006, §§ 12-13, CCPR/C/UNK/CO/1).
25. The Panel appreciates the difficulties encountered by UNMIK during the first phase of its deployment. The Panel notes that the appropriate importance attached to the issue of missing persons in Kosovo meant that UNMIK had to take into account both the humanitarian and criminal dimensions of the situation. In particular, the Panel considers that the importance attached to the criminal investigations and the difficulties in Kosovo that limited the abilities of investigating authorities to conduct such investigations, as described by the SRSG, made it crucial that UNMIK establish from the outset an environment conducive to the performance of meaningful investigations. This would involve putting in place a system that would include such elements as the allocation of overall responsibility for the supervision and monitoring of progress in investigations, provision for the regular review of the status of investigations, and a process for the proper handover of cases between different officers or units of UNMIK Police. Such a system should also take account of the protection needs of victims and witnesses (see, *mutatis mutandis*, ECtHR, *R.R. and Others v. Hungary*, no. 19400/11, judgment of 4 December 2012, §§ 28-32), as well as to consider the special vulnerability of displaced persons in post-conflict situations (see ECtHR [GC], *Sargsyan v. Azerbaijan,* no. 40167/06, decision of 14 December 2011, § 145; and ECtHR [GC], *Chiragov and Others v. Armenia*, no. 13216/05, decision of 14 December 2011, § 146). While understanding that the deployment and the organisation of the police and justice apparatus occurred gradually, the Panel deems that this process was completed in 2003 when the police and justice system in Kosovo was described as being “well-functioning” and “sustainable” by the UN Secretary-General (see § 17 above).
26. The Panel further notes that its task is not to review relevant practices or alleged obstacles to the conduct of effective investigations *in abstracto*, but only in relation to their specific application to the particular circumstances of a situation subject of a complaint before it (see, ECtHR, *Brogan and Others v. the United Kingdom*, judgment of 29 November 1988,§ 53, Series A no. 145-B). The Panel thus agrees with the SRSG that the nature and degree of scrutiny to determine whether the effectiveness of the investigation satisfies the minimum threshold depends on the circumstances of the particular case. For these reasons, the Panel considers that it will establish with regard to each case if all reasonable steps were taken to conduct an effective investigation as prescribed by Article 2,having regard to the realities of the investigative work in Kosovo.
27. Lastly, in response to the SRSG’s objection that Article 2 must be interpreted in a way which does not impose an impossible or disproportionate burden on the authorities, either in the context of policingg activities or that of priorities and resources, the Panel takes into account that the European Court has established that what amounts to an impossible and/or disproportionate burden must be measured by the very particular facts and contexts (see ECtHR, *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina,* cited in § 74 above, at § 70; *Brecknell v. The United Kingdom,* no. 32457/04, judgment of 27 November 2007, § 62).
28. *Compliance with Article 2 in the present case*
29. The Panel notes that there were obvious shortcomings in the conduct of both investigations from their commencement. However, in light of the considerations developed above concerning its limited temporal jurisdiction (see § 46 above), the Panel recalls that it is competent *ratione temporis* to evaluate the compliance of the investigations with Article 2 of the ECHR only for the period after 23 April 2005, while taking into consideration the state of the cases at that date (see ECtHR, *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina,* cited in § 74 above, at § 70). The period under review ends on 9 December 2008, with EULEX taking over responsibility in the area of administration of justice (see § 19 above).
30. The Panel notes that the complainant’s submission that she reported Mr Zlatko Antić’s abduction for the first time in 2001 to the UNMIK MPU in Belgrade. Lacking specific documentation in this respect, the Panel considers that UNMIK became aware of the matter at the latest in May 2002, when the MPU opened a missing person file on Mr Zlatko Antić (see § 30 above). The Panel notes that no action whatsoever was taken by the UNMIK Police at this time, apart from registering the case and recording the ante-mortem information on Mr Zlatko Antić.
31. The Panel notes that, after the complainant had also reported her son’s abduction to the UNMIK Police in Prizren, between November and December 2003, some basic investigative steps were taken by the investigators, such as interviewing and recording the statements of the complainant, of V.N., the only known eye witness to the abduction, and of X.G., the person occupying Mr Zlatko Antić’s flat. Recalling the SRSG’s submission that as no apparent investigative leads had emerged from these interviews, the Panel notes that, unlike in other disappearances cases, there was an eye witness to Mr Zlatko Antić’s abduction, and that, under these circumstances, an effective investigation should have also proceeded with analysing and resolving the discrepancies in the accounts provided by the complainant and V.N. respectively (for example about the date on which V.N. informed the complainant of the abduction), interviewing other members of V.N.’s family as well as canvassing the area, including the location where the KLA had established its office, and verifying the information provided by X.G. Instead of proactively pursuing such leads, in January 2004, UNMIK Police made the assessment that no evidence was available and decided to leave the case pending.
32. The Panel also notes with concern that, based on the document mentioned above, at the latest by October 2003, the UNMIK DoJ had received information from eye-witnesses, all former KLA members, that Mr Zlatko Antić was probably among those captives who had been taken to illegal detention centres in Albania, reportedly for the purpose of having their organs harvested (see §§ 37-38). However, there is no indication in the file that this important piece of information was provided to those investigating the case of Mr Zlatko Antić or that any action was taken by UNMIK to further investigate these most serious allegations apart from transmitting the information to the ICTY in 2003. As noted in other similar cases, the Panel is extremely concerned that so little effort was made to investigate and give effect to the right to truth with respect to these shocking allegations (see HRAP, *L.V., M.Đ. and D.S.,* cited above, § 124).
33. Coming to the period within its jurisdiction, starting from 23 April 2005, the Panel notes that after that critical date the failure to conduct the necessary investigative actions, including those at the initial stage, persisted. Accordingly, inadequacies existing up until that date were not addressed. Thus, in accordance with the continuing obligation to investigate (see § 46 above), the assessment of the whole investigation is brought within the period of the Panel’s jurisdiction.
34. The Panel notes that the case of Mr Zlatko Antić was recorded also with the UNMIK Police CCIU in 2005, probably following the filing of a criminal report by his wife with the District Public Prosecutor Office (DPPO) in Prizren. There is no record in the file of any investigative activity undertaken by the CCIU after the registration of the case. In October 2007, the UNMIK WCIU reviewed the case. The Panel notes that, based on the WCIU Case Analysis Report of 21 October 2007 and on the EULEX document dated 9 July 2010 (see §§ 35 and 36 respectively) the reviewing investigators were not aware about the investigations conducted thus far and of the statements already taken by the MPU in 2003. Nonetheless, they recommended the case be closed without undertaking any further investigative activity.
35. The apparent lack of an adequate reaction from UNMIK Police, and of any adequate action at later stages, may have suggested to the perpetrators that the authorities were either not able, or not willing to investigate such criminal acts. Such an attitude of the authorities towards the gravest crimes in any society, and especially in post-conflict circumstances, inevitably creates a culture of impunity among the criminals and can only lead to a worsening of the situation. The problems that UNMIK had encountered at the beginning of its mission, which were discussed above, do not justify such inaction, either at the outset or subsequently.
36. The Panel is also aware that the duty to investigate is not breached merely because the investigation does not produce a satisfactory result. Nevertheless, such an investigation must be undertaken in a serious manner and not be a mere formality. The Panel considers that, having regard to all the circumstances of the particular case, not all reasonable steps were taken by UNMIK towards identifying the perpetrators and bringing them to justice. In this sense the Panel considers that the investigation was not adequate and did not comply with the requirements of promptness, expedition and effectiveness (see § 74 above), as required by Article 2 of the ECHR.
37. As concerns the requirement of public scrutiny, the Panel recalls that Article 2 also requires the victims’ next-of-kin to be involved in the investigation to the extent necessary to safeguard his or her legitimate interests.
38. In this respect, the Panel notes that the interview of the complainant which took place in November 2003, one year after UNMIK first became aware of Mr Zlatko Antić’s abduction, is the only documented contact between the complainant and UNMIK investigators. The Panel notes that there is no evidence in the file of any further contact with the complainant to keep her abreast of the status of the investigation. The Panel therefore considers that the investigation was not open to any public scrutiny, as required by Article 2 of the ECHR.
39. In light of the deficiencies and shortcomings described above, the Panel concludes that UNMIK failed to carry out an effective investigation into the abduction and disappearance of Mr Zlatko Antić. There has accordingly been a violation of Article 2, procedural limb, of the ECHR.
40. **Alleged violation of Article 3 of the ECHR**
41. The Panel considers that the complainant invokes, in substance, a violation of the right to be free from inhumane or degrading treatment, guaranteed by Article 3 of the ECHR.
42. **The scope of the Panel’s review**
43. The Panel will consider the allegations under Article 3 of the ECHR, applying the same scope of review as was set out with regard to Article 2 (see §§ 42 - 46 above).
44. The Panel recalls that the European Court of Human Rights has found on many occasions that a situation of enforced disappearance gives rise to a violation of Article 3 in respect of close relatives of the victim. It emphasises that, concerning Article 3, “the essence of such a violation does not so much lie in the fact of the ‘disappearance’ of the family member but rather concerns the authorities’ reactions and attitudes to the situation when it is brought to their attention” (see, e.g., ECtHR [GC], *Çakici v. Turkey*, no. 23657/94, judgment of 8 July 1999, § 98, *ECHR*, 1999-IV; ECtHR [GC], *Cyprus v. Turkey*, no. 25781/94, judgment of 10 May 2001, § 156, *ECHR*, 2001-IV; ECtHR, *Orhan v. Turkey*, no. 25656/94, judgment of 18 June 2002, § 358; ECtHR, *Bazorkina v. Russia*, cited in § 84 above, at § 139; ECtHR, *Palić v. Bosnia and Herzegovina,* cited in § 74 above, at § 74; ECtHR, *Alpatu Israilova v. Russia*, no. 15438/05, judgment of 14 March 2013, § 69; see also HRAP, *Zdravković*, no. 46/08, decision of 17 April 2009, § 41). “It is especially in respect of the latter that a relative may claim directly to be a victim of the authorities’ conduct” (see, among others, ECtHR, *Er and Others v. Turkey*, no. 23016/04, judgment of 31 July 2012, § 94).
45. Lastly, where mental suffering caused by the authorities’ reactions to the disappearance is at stake, the alleged violation is contrary to the substantive element of Article 3 of the ECHR, not its procedural element, as is the case with regard to Article 2 (ECtHR, *Gelayevy v. Russia*, no. 20216/07, judgment of 15 July 2010, §§ 147-148).
46. **The Parties’ submissions**
47. The complainant alleges that the lack of information and certainty surrounding the disappearance of Mr Zlatko Antić, particularly because of UNMIK’s failure to properly investigate his disappearance, caused mental suffering to herself and her family.
48. With respect to Article 3, the SRSG states that while most of the jurisprudence on Article 3 has developed in relation to disappearances attributable to the State or its agents, the European Court has also determined that a violation of Article 3 can also arise “where the failure of the authorities to respond to the quest for information by the relatives or the obstacles placed in their way, leaving them to bear the brunt of the efforts to uncover any facts, may be regarded as disclosing a flagrant, continuous and callous disregard of an obligation to account for the whereabouts and fate of a missing person”.
49. Concerning the case at issue, the SRSG acknowledges the existence of a close relationship between the complainant and Mr Zlatko Antić, the complainant being his mother. He further acknowledges the involvement of the complainant in the attempts to obtain information about Mr Zlatko Antić and states that “it is clear that UNMIK investigators were in contact with the complainant for the purpose of following up on the investigation and obtaining relevant information”. He further states that, therefore, “the complainant appears to have been involved … in reporting information about Mr Zlatko Antić and during UNMIK’s investigative efforts into the matter”.
50. With respect to the conduct of the authorities in response to enquiries by the family, the SRSG submits that a violation may be found depending on the reaction of the authorities and the attitude shown when the situation is brought to their attention. The SRSG states that “it is clear that UNMIK remained seized of this matter, and on more than one occasion and at different intervals” in the course of the investigation “contacted and engaged” with Mr Zlatko Antić’s family members. The SRSG further argues that no allegations have been made by the complainant “of any bad faith on the part of the UNMIK personnel involved in the matter, nor of any attitude by UNMIK that would have evidenced disregard for the seriousness of the matter or the emotions of the complainant and her family emanating from the continued missing status of the victim”. The SRSG also states that there is no evidence that, when responding to the complainant’s enquiries, UNMIK acted “inappropriately” with “an attitude of the type required to find a violation of Article 3”.
51. The SRSG does not dispute the mental anguish and suffering of the complainant; however he argues that this is not attributable to UNMIK as it is rather “a result of the inherent suffering that results from the disappearance of a close family member and the unfortunate fact that, to date, despite efforts, the authorities have been unable to determine the whereabouts of Mr Zlatko Antić”. He states that, in this sense, the European Court has held that the suffering family members must have a “character distinct” from the emotional distress which may be regarded as inevitably caused to the relatives of a victim of a serious human rights violation.

1. The SRSG therefore argues that there has been no violation of Article 3.
2. **The Panel’s assessment**
3. *General principles concerning the obligation under Article 3*
4. Like Article 2, Article 3 of the ECHR enshrines one of the most fundamental values in democratic societies (ECtHR, *Talat Tepe v. Turkey*, no. 31247/96, 21 December 2004, § 47; ECtHR [GC], *Ilaşcu and Others v. Moldova and Russia*, no. 48787/99, judgment of 8 July 2004, ECHR, 2004-VII, § 424). As confirmed by the absolute nature conferred on it by Article 15 § 2 of the ECHR, the prohibition of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment still applies even in most difficult circumstances.
5. Setting out the general principles applicable to situations where violations of the obligation under Article 3 of the ECHR are alleged, the Panel notes that the phenomenon of disappearance constitutes a complex form of human rights violation that must be understood and confronted in an integral fashion (see IACtHR, *Velásquez-Rodríguez v. Honduras*, cited in § 70 above, at § 150).
6. The Panel observes that the obligation under Article 3 of the ECHR differs from the procedural obligation on the authorities under Article 2. Whereas the latter requires the authorities to take specific legal action capable of leading to identification and punishment of those responsible, the former is more general and humanitarian and relates to their reaction to the plight of the relatives of those who have disappeared or died.
7. The HRC has also recognised disappearances as a serious violation of human rights. In its decision of 21 July 1983, in the case *Quinteros v. Urugay*, it stated that disappearances constitute serious violations of the rights of the disappeared person’s relatives, who suffer from deep anguish which persists for as long as the uncertainty concerning the fate of their loved one continues, often for many years (see HRC, Communication No. 107/1981, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/OP/2 at 138 (1990), § 14). Moreover, in its decision of 15 July 1994 in the case *Mojica v. Dominican Republic*, the HRC has deemed that “the disappearance of persons is inseparably linked to treatment that amounts to a violation of article 7 [of the Covenant]”, also prohibiting torture, inhumane or degrading treatment and punishment (see HRC, Communication No. 449/1991, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/51/D/449/1991 (1994), § 5.7).
8. With respect to the question whether a member of the family of a disappeared person can be considered the victim of a treatment contrary to Article 3 of the ECHR, the Panel refers to the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and to its own case law. The European Court accepts that this may be the case, depending on the existence of “special factors which give the suffering of the [family member] a dimension and character distinct from the emotional distress which may be regarded as inevitably caused to relatives of a victim of a serious human rights violation”. The Court further holds that “relevant elements will include the proximity of the family tie, the particular circumstances of the relationship, the extent to which the family member witnessed the events in question, the involvement of the family member in the attempts to obtain information about the disappeared person and the way in which the authorities responded to those enquiries” (see ECtHR, *Basayeva and Others v. Russia*, nos. 15441/05 and 20731/04, judgment of 28 May 2009, § 159; ECtHR, *Er and Others v. Turkey*, cited in § 103 above, at § 94).
9. The Panel takes note that, when assessing the emotional suffering of the victims, the European Court also considers the following circumstances: the length of the disappearance itself and of the period with no information on the fate of the missing person and on the investigation undertaken by the authorities; the delay in initiation of criminal investigation into the disappearance; the absence of any “meaningful” action by the authorities, despite the fact that the complainants approached them to report the disappearance of their relative and to share with them the information they had; lack of any plausible explanation or information as to the fate of their missing relatives despite personal or written inquiries with official bodies (see, among others, ECtHR, *Er and Others v. Turkey,* cited above, § 96; ECtHR, *Osmanoğlu v. Turkey,* no. 48804/99, judgment of 24 January 2008, § 97). Another factor leading to a finding of violation of Article 3 of the ECHR is the continuous nature of the psychological suffering of relatives of a victim of a disappearance (ECtHR, *Salakhov and Islyamova v. Ukraine,* no. 28005/08, judgment of 14 March 2013, § 201).
10. The HRC has also considered the issue and recognised family members of disappeared or missing persons as victims of a violation of Article 7 of the Covenant: parents (*Boucherf v. Algeria*, Communication No. 1196/2003, views of 30 March 2006, § 9.7, CCPR/C/86/D/1196/2003), children (*Zarzi v. Algeria*, Communication No. 1780/2008, views of 22 March 2011, § 7.6, CCPR/C/101/D/1780/2008), siblings (*El Abani v. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,* Communication No. 1640/2007, views of 26 July 2010, § 7.5, CCPR/C/99/D/1640/2007), spouses (*Bousroual v. Algeria*, Communication No. 992/2001, views of 30 March 2006, § 9.8, CCPR/C/86/D/992/2001), aunts and uncles (*Benaniza v Algeria,* views of 26 July 2010, § 9.4, CCPR/C/99/D/1588/2007) (*Bashasha v. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya*, views of 20 October 2010, § 7.2, CCPR/C/100/D/1776/2008). It justifies this broad understanding of victim status by the suffering and distress that is caused to family members by the disappearance of an individual, which is often exacerbated by the authorities’ insufficient efforts to investigate the disappearance in order to establish the fate of the victim and to bring perpetrators to justice (*Aboussedra v. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya*, Communication No. 1751/2008, views of 25 October 2010, § 7.5, CCPR/C/100/D/1751/2008). In the case *Amirov v. Russian Federation* the Committee observed that “[w]ithout wishing to spell out all the circumstances of indirect victimisation, the Committee considers that the failure of a State party responsibly to discharge its obligations to investigate and clarify the circumstances of the harm suffered by the direct victim will be usually be a factor. Additional factors may be necessary. In the present case, the Committee notes the horrific conditions in which the author came to find his wife's mutilated remains (…), followed by the dilatory, sporadic measures undertaken to investigate the circumstances that have led to the above findings of violations of articles 6 and 7, read together with article 2, paragraph 3. The Committee considers that, taken together, the circumstances require the Committee to conclude that the author's own rights under article 7 have also been violated” (HRC, *Amirov v. Russian Federation*, cited in § 86 above, at § 11.7).
11. The Panel also takes into account that according to the European Court, the analysis of the authorities’ reaction should not be confined to any specific manifestation of the authorities’ attitudes, isolated incidents or procedural acts; on the contrary, in the Court’s view, an assessment of the way in which the authorities of the respondent State reacted to the applicants’ enquiries should be global and continuous (see ECtHR, *Açiș v. Turkey*, no. 7050/05, judgment of 1 February 2011, § 45).
12. In this respect, it is the position of the European Court that findings under the procedural limb of Article 2 would also be of direct relevance in considering the existence of a violation of Article 3 (see ECtHR, *Basayeva and Others v. Russia*, cited in § 115 above, at § 109; ECtHR, *Gelayevy v. Russia*, cited in § 104 above, at § 147; ECtHR, *Bazorkina v. Russia*, cited in § 85 above, at § 140).
13. The Panel observes that the European Court has already found violations of Article 3 of the ECHR in relation to disappearances in which the State itself was found to be responsible for the abduction (see ECtHR, *Luluyev and Others v. Russia*, no. 69480/01, judgment of 9 November 2006, §§ 117 - 118; ECtHR, *Kukayev v. Russia*, no. 29361/02, judgment of 15 November 2007, §§ 107 - 110). However, in contrast, in the case under the Panel’s consideration, in no way is UNMIK implicated in the actual disappearance and UNMIK cannot be held responsible for the applicant’s mental distress caused by the commission of the crime itself.
14. The Panel is mindful that in the absence of a finding of State responsibility for the disappearance, the European Court has ruled that it is not persuaded that the authorities’ conduct, albeit negligent to the extent that it has breached Article 2 in its procedural aspect, could have in itself caused the applicant mental distress in excess of the minimum level of severity, which is necessary in order to consider treatment as falling within the scope of Article 3 (see, among others, ECtHR, *Tovsultanova v. Russia*, no. 26974/06, judgment of 17 June 2010, § 104; ECtHR, *Shafiyeva v. Russia*, no. 49379/09, judgment of 3 May 2012, § 103).
15. *Applicability of Article 3 to the Kosovo context*
16. With regard to the applicability of the above standards to the Kosovo context, the Panel first refers to its view on the same issue with regard to Article 2, developed above (see §§ 80 - 89 above).
17. The Panel reiterates that a normally functioning law enforcement system should take into account the protection needs of victims and witnesses, as well as to consider the special vulnerability of displaced persons in post-conflict situations. The Panel has already considered the fact that by 2003 the police and justice system in Kosovo was described by the UN Secretary-General as being “well-functioning” and “sustainable” (see § 17 above).
18. The Panel again notes that it will not review relevant practices or alleged obstacles to the conduct of effective investigations *in abstracto*, but only in relation to their specific application to the complaint before it, considering the particular circumstances of the case.
19. For these reasons, the Panel considers that it has to establish with regard to each case whether the attitude and reactions of UNMIK authorities to the disappearance itself and to the complainants’ quest for information with regard to the fate of their relatives and the criminal investigation, would amount to a violation of the obligation under Article 3, having regard to the realities in Kosovo at the relevant time.
20. *Compliance with Article 3 in the present case*
21. Against this background, the Panel discerns a number of factors in the present case which, taken together, raise the question of violation of Article 3 of the ECHR.
22. The Panel notes the proximity of the family ties between the complainant and Mr Zlatko Antić, as she is his mother. Accordingly, the Panel has no doubt that the complainant has indeed suffered serious emotional distress since the abduction, which took place in July 1999.
23. The Panel likewise notes the complainant’s submission that she reported Mr Zlatko Antić’s abduction to the UNMIK Police on several occasions. The Panel also notes that, again in November 2003, the complainant reported the case to the UNMIK Police in Prizren to make sure that the case was not “kept inactive” (see § 31 above). In 2005, a criminal report was filed by Mr Zlatko Antić’s wife with the DPPO in Prizren. The Panel notes, however, that despite these enquiries, the complainant and her family have never received any explanation or information as to what became of Mr Zlatko Antić following his abduction and that the only documented contact between the UNMIK Police and Mr Zlatko Antić’s family was the complainant’s interview taken from the Prizren police in November 2003. There is no evidence in the file that the complainant and her family were contacted by UNMIK investigators or prosecutors in order to receive updates on the progress of the investigation.
24. The Panel cannot overlook the possibility that, despite the information received by UNMIK DoJ that Mr Zlatko Antić could have possibly become a victim of organ trafficking, no investigation was undertaken by UNMIK and no information was provided to the complainant and her family accordingly. In this respect, the Panel reiterates that from the standpoint of Article 3 it may examine UNMIK’s reactions and attitudes to the complainants in its entirety.
25. Drawing inferences from UNMIK’s failure to provide any plausible explanation for the failure to keep the complainant properly informed, the Panel considers that this situation, which continued into the period of the Panel’s temporal jurisdiction, caused grave uncertainty to the complainant and her family about Mr Zlatko Antić’s fate and the status of the investigation. Additional weight must also be attached to the fact that Mr Zlatko Antić’s whereaboutswere never located.
26. In view of the above, the Panel concludes that the complainant suffered severe distress for a prolonged and continuing period of time on account of the way the authorities of UNMIK have dealt with her complaints and as a result of her inability to find out what happened to her family member. In this respect, it is obvious that, in any situation, the pain of a mother who has to live in uncertainty about the fate of a son must be unbearable.
27. For the aforementioned reasons, the Panel concludes that, by its behaviour, UNMIK contributed to the complainant’s distress and mental suffering in violation of Article 3 of the ECHR.

**V. CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. In light of the Panel’s findings in this case, the Panel is of the opinion that some form of reparation is necessary.
2. The Panel notes that enforced disappearances and arbitrary executions constitute serious violations of human rights which, shall be investigated and prosecuted under any circumstances. The Panel also notes that UNMIK as the territorial administration of Kosovo from 1999 to 2008 had the primary responsibility to effectively investigate and prosecute those responsible for killings, abductions or disappearances in life threatening circumstances. Its failure to do so constitutes a further serious violation of the rights of the victims and their next-of-kin, in particular the right to have the truth of the matter determined.
3. The Panel notes the SRSG’s own concerns that the inadequate resources, especially at the outset of UNMIK’s submission, made compliance with UNMIK’s human rights obligations difficult to achieve.
4. It would normally be for UNMIK to take the appropriate measures in order to put an end to the violation noted and to redress as far as possible the effects thereof. However, as the Panel noted above (see § 19), UNMIK’s responsibility with regard to the administration of justice in Kosovo ended on 9 December 2008. UNMIK therefore is no longer in a position to take measures that will have a direct impact on the investigations that are still pending before EULEX or local authorities. Likewise, following the unilateral declaration of independence by the Kosovo Provisional Institutions of Self-Government on 17 February 2008 and subsequently, the entry into force of the Kosovo Constitution on 15 June 2008, UNMIK ceased to perform executive functions in Kosovo, this fact limiting its ability to provide full and effective reparation of the violation committed, as required by established principles of international human rights law.
5. The Panel considers that this factual situation does not relieve UNMIK from its obligation to redress as far as possible the effects of the violations for which it is responsible.

**With respect to the complainant and the case the Panel considers appropriate that UNMIK:**

* + - In line with the case law of the European Court of Human Rights on situations of limited State jurisdiction (see ECtHR [GC], *Ilaşcu and Others v. Moldova and Russia*, cited in § 111 above, at § 333; ECtHR, *Al-Saadoon and Mufdhi v. United Kingdom*, no. 61498/08, judgment of 2 March 2010, § 171; ECtHR [GC]), *Catan and Others v. Moldova and Russia*, nos. 43370/04, 8252/05 and 18454/06, judgment of 19 October 2012, § 109), must endeavour, with all the means available to it *vis-à-vis* competent authorities in Kosovo, to obtain assurances that the investigations concerning the case at issue will be continued in compliance with the requirements of an effective investigation as envisaged by Article 2, that the circumstances surrounding the abduction and disappearance of Mr Zlatko Antić will be established and that perpetrators will be brought to justice. The complainant and/or other next-of-kin shall be informed of such proceedings and relevant documents shall be disclosed to them, as necessary;
    - Publicly acknowledges, within a reasonable time, responsibility with respect to UNMIK’s failure to adequately investigate the abduction and disappearance of Mr Zlatko Antić, as well as the distress and mental suffering subsequently incurred by the complainant and makes a public apology to the complainant and her family in this regard;
* Takes appropriate steps towards payment of adequate compensation to the complainant for the moral damage suffered due to UNMIK’s failure to conduct an effective investigation, as well as for distress and mental suffering incurred by the complainant as a consequence of UNMIK’s behaviour with respect to the case of Mr Zlatko Antić.

**The Panel also considers appropriate that UNMIK:**

* In line with the UN General Assembly Resolution on “Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law” (A/Res/60/147, 21 March 2006), takes appropriate steps, through other UN affiliated entities operating in Kosovo, local bodies and non-governmental organisations, for the realisation of a full and comprehensive reparation programme, including restitution compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition, for the victims from all communities of serious violations of human rights which occurred during and in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict;
* Takes appropriate steps before competent bodies of the United Nations, including the UN Secretary-General, towards the allocation of adequate human and financial resources to ensure that international human rights standards are upheld at all times by the United Nations, including when performing administrative and executive functions over a territory, and to make provision for effective and independent monitoring;

**FOR THESE REASONS,**

The Panel, unanimously,

1. **FINDS THAT THERE HAS BEEN A VIOLATION OF THE PROCEDURAL OBLIGATION UNDER ARTICLE 2 OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS;**
2. **FINDS THAT THERE HAS BEEN A VIOLATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE OBLIGATION UNDER ARTICLE 3 OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS;**
3. **RECOMMENDS THAT UNMIK:**
4. **URGES COMPETENT AUTHORITIES IN KOSOVO TO TAKE ALL POSSIBLE STEPS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE ABDUCTION AND DISAPPEARANCE OF MR ZLATKO ANTIĆ IS CONTINUED IN COMPLIANCE WITH ARTICLE 2 OF THE ECHR AND THAT THE PERPETRATORS ARE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE;**
5. **PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGES RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS FAILURE TO CONDUCT AN EFFECTIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE ABDUCTION AND DISAPPEARANCE OF MR ZLATKO ANTIĆ, AS WELL AS FOR DISTRESS AND MENTAL SUFFERING INCURRED WITH RESPECT TO THE CASE OF MR ZLATKO ANTIĆ, AND MAKES A PUBLIC APOLOGY TO THE COMPLAINANT;**
6. **TAKES APPROPRIATE STEPS TOWARDS PAYMENT OF ADEQUATE COMPENSATION FOR MORAL DAMAGE IN RELATION TO THE FINDING OF VIOLATIONS OF ARTICLE 2 AND ARTICLE 3 OF THE ECHR TO THE COMPLAINANT;**
7. **TAKES APPROPRIATE STEPS TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF A FULL AND COMPREHENSIVE REPARATION PROGRAMME;**
8. **TAKES APPROPRIATE STEPS AT THE UNITED NATIONS AS A GUARANTEE OF NON REPETITION;**
9. **TAKES IMMEDIATE AND EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL AND TO INFORM THE COMPLAINANT AND THE PANEL ABOUT FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS CASE.**

Andrey Antonov Marek Nowicki

Executive Officer Presiding Member

*Annex*

**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

**CCIU** - Central Criminal Investigation Unit

**CCPR –** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

**DOJ** - Department of Justice

**ECHR** - European Convention on Human Rights

**ECtHR** - European Court of Human Rights

**EU** – European Union

**EULEX** - European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo

**FRY** - Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

**FYROM** - Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

**HRAP** - Human Rights Advisory Panel

**HRC** - United Nation Human Rights Committee

**HQ** - Headquarters

**IACtHR** – Inter-American Court of Human Rights

**ICMP** - International Commission of Missing Persons

**ICRC** - International Committee of the Red Cross

**ICTY** - International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia

**IPO –** International Police Officer

**KFOR** - International Security Force (commonly known as Kosovo Force)

**KLA** - Kosovo Liberation Army

**KPS-** Kosovo Police Service

**MPU** - Missing Persons Unit

**NATO** - North Atlantic Treaty Organization

**OMPF** - Office on Missing Persons and Forensics

**OSCE** - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

**SRSG** - Special Representative of the Secretary-General

**UN** - United Nations

**UNHCR** - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**UNMIK** - United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

**VRIC** - Victim Recovery and Identification Commission

**WCIU** - War Crimes Investigation Unit

1. A list of abbreviations and acronyms contained in the text can be found in the attached Annex. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The references drawn upon by the Panel in setting out this general background include: OSCE, “As Seen, as Told”, Vol. 1 (October 1998 – June 1999) and Vol. II (14 June – 31 October 1999); quarterly reports of the UN Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo; UNMIK Police Annual Reports (2000, 2001); Humanitarian Law Centre, “Abductions and Disappearances of non-Albanians in Kosovo” (2001); Humanitarian Law Centre, “Kosovo Memory Book” (htpp://www.kosovomemorybook.org); UNMIK Office on Missing Persons and Forensics, Activity Report 2002-2004; European Court of Human Rights, *Behrami and Behrami v. France* and *Saramati v. France, Germany and Norway*, nos. 71412/01 and78166/01, decision of 2 May 2007; International Commission on Missing Persons, “The Situation in Kosovo: a Stock Taking” (2010); data issued by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, (available at [www.unhchr.org](http://www.unhchr.org)) and by the International Committee of the Red Cross (available at <http://familylinks.icrc.org/kosovo/en>). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The ICRC database is available at: http://familylinks.icrc.org/kosovo/en/pages/search-persons.aspx (accessed on 15 October 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The OMPF database is not open to public. The Panel accessed it with regard to this case on 15October 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The ICMP database is available at: http://www.ic mp.org/fdmsweb/index.php?w=mp\_details&l=en (accessed on 29 September 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)