

Rule of Law in North Mitrovica and UNMIK's Failure to Dismantle the Serbian Parallel Structures

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Abstract

This article explores the main reasons why UNMIK failed to dismantle the parallel structures in Mitrovica north during its mandate in Kosovo, illustrating the difficulties it has encountered in attempting to expand its administration and the rule of law. The Serbian parallel structures supported by Belgrade functioned in violation with the Resolution 1244 of UN and applicable law in Kosovo. The paper analyzes illegal formations such as the "Bridge Watchers", the Serbian MUP officers in the security sector and parallel Serbian courts. The main reason for the poor results was the lack of determination of UNMIK to fulfill its mandate; the lack of necessary security on the ground; the delays in the deployment of international police; the tolerance for the parallel trials. The paper examines various organizations' reports and documents; as well as interviews with senior Kosovo officials, analyzing in depth the causes of failure. By exploring UNMIK's performance in northern Mitrovica, the paper brings an empirical contribution to UN missions in areas of post-conflict societies.

Keywords: Justice, Mitrovica North, Parallel Structure, Rule of Law, Security, UNMIK.

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