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Housing and Property Directorate Begins Evictions

On June 13, the Housing and Property Directorate (HPD) executed its first two cases of evictions in Kosovo. HPD staff carried out both evictions in the Obilic/Obiliq Municipality with the assistance of UNMIK Police and KFOR. The operation went smoothly, without any resistance from the illegal occupants.

Both apartments were allocated by HPD to families in humanitarian need of temporary accommodation. One apartment was allocated to a widower with five children from the municipality. The family was given a six months permit to stay in the apartment, which can be renewed. The second apartment was also allocated to a family in need after first being rejected by another applicant to temporary humanitarian accommodation.

HPD announces that more evictions will follow these first cases, and advises the population of Kosovo to see this activity as a necessary step to regularize the housing sector in Kosovo. An HPD decision to evict someone is based on the result of careful verification and evaluation of all available facts in each individual case. All illegal occupants, when evicted, have either alternative housing or financial means to rent or buy alternative accommodation.

The Housing and Property Claims Commission has also completed its regular session on June 16, continuing the process of resolution of residential property disputes in Kosovo.

Of the 21 cases decided this session, 14 were decided in favour of claimants whose apartments were illegally occupied. The Commission ordered these apartments to be vacated within 30 days of notification by the Housing and Property Directorate. One claim was referred to local court since the matter falls outside the HPCC's jurisdiction. Five claims were refused and two reconsideration requests were also rejected. One case was referred back to HPD for additional investigation.

The Commission and the Housing and Property Directorate were established by UNMIK to help to set up and implement the rule of law in Kosovo. Their activities are not ethnically motivated or biased but are carried out in accordance with the rule of law. UNMIK Regulation 1999/23 gives HPD/HPCC the mandate to regularize housing and property rights and to receive and settle residential property claims. All persons are being treated without discrimination and are guaranteed equal protection of their housing and property rights under law.