

U.S. panel to discuss Kosovo independence

by UPI

UNITED NATIONS -- The U.N. Security Council agreed with a request from Serbia to have a closed meeting regarding Kosovo and the province's expected declaration of independence. The Security Council "must remain a part of ... the mechanism handling the crisis and must be aware of what is going on, because after all, a unilateral declaration of independence will bring about the partition of Serbia," Serbia's U.N. Ambassador Pavle Jevremovic said. "No country can accept so lightly dismemberment." However, Jevremovic said Serbia, which opposes Kosovo's independence, the country wouldn't retaliate against Kosovo. Kosovo is expected to make an independence declaration either Sunday or Monday. The United States and many EU countries have said they would recognize an independent Kosovo. The United Nations has administered Kosovo since a 1999 NATO bombing campaign pushed back Serbian troops accused of persecuting the province's ethnic Albanians. EU members are expected to approve a civilian police and judicial mission for Kosovo by the end of the week, the BBC said. One official said the deployment of the 1,800 people would be staged over four months.

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