



Kosovo Property Claims Commission  
Komisioni i Kërkesave Pronësorete Kosovës  
Komisija Kosovske Agencijeza Imovinu

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## DECISION

PANEL NO: 1

DECISION NO: KPCC/D/R/151/2012  
DECISION DATE: 19/04/2012

Commissioners Heiskanen (Chairperson),  
Vokshi and Wühler

## ORDER

*(1) In each of the 86 (eighty six) claims identified in parts A, B and C of the attached Schedule, the Commission*

*decides that*

*As at the date of the destruction of the residential property, the claimant or the property right holder, as the case may be, satisfied the requirements for establishing ownership over the claimed property and the associated land parcel, or such part thereof as specified in the respective individual decision;*

*(2) In the 43 (forty three) claims identified in part D of the attached Schedule, the Commission*

*decides that*

*As at the date of the destruction of the residential property, the claimant satisfied the requirements for establishing ownership of the deceased property right holder over the claimed property and the associated land parcel, or such part thereof as specified in the respective individual decision;*

*(3) In each of the 129 (one hundred twenty nine) claims referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) above, except for Claim No. 35121, the Commission*

*orders that*

*(a) The claimant or the property right holder, as the case may be, be given possession of the associated land parcel on which the residential property stood;*

*(b) Any person unlawfully occupying the property vacate the same within 30 (thirty) days of the delivery of this order; and*

- (c) *Should any other person occupying the property fail to comply with the order to vacate within the time stated, they be evicted from the property;*
- (4) *In each of the claims identified in the relevant columns of parts A, B, C and D of the attached Schedule, the Commission additionally decides that the claims be dismissed insofar as the claimants seek compensation for physical damage to, or for loss of use of, the claimed property; and*
- (5) *In cases in which there is more than one owner, the above decisions and order do not affect the rights of any respective co-owners.*

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1. On 13 June 2008, Law No. 03/L-079 adopting and amending UNMIK Regulation 2006/50 (“UNMIK/REG/2006/50”) on the resolution of claims relating to private immovable property, including agricultural and commercial property entered into force in Kosovo. The Law included an annex (“Annex F”) adopting and amending UNMIK Administrative Direction No. 2007/5 (“UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5”), which implements UNMIK/REG/2006/50. Law No. 03/L-079 and Annex I established the Kosovo Property Agency (“KPA”) as an independent agency and amended certain provisions of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 and UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 as necessary to effect the change in the applicable legal framework. In accordance with their terms, Law No. 03/L-079 and Annex I entered into force upon their publication in the Official Gazette.
2. Pursuant to section 22 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 the Regulation ceased to be in force after 31 December 2008. Accordingly, Law No. 03/L-079 is presently the sole source of the Commission’s statutory authority. The provisions of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 remain relevant to the extent that they have been incorporated by reference to Law No. 03/L-079.

## REASONS FOR THE DECISION

3. A claimant or the property right holder, as the case may be, is entitled to an order from the Commission for repossession of the property, if the claimant proves:
- (a) ownership of private immovable property, including agricultural and commercial property; or
  - (b) a use right in respect of private immovable property, including agricultural and commercial property,

where the claimant or the property right holder, as the case may be, is not now able to exercise such property rights, and where the claim involves circumstances directly related to or resulting from the armed conflict that occurred in Kosovo between 27 February 1998 and 20 June 1999. (See section 3.1 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079.)

4. Where the claimant makes an ownership claim pursuant to section 3.1(a) of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079, the Commission must resolve the issue of ownership and, if ownership is proven to the satisfaction of the Commission and the claimant does not indicate otherwise, make an order for repossession in favour of the claimant or the property right holder, as the case may be. Where the claimant makes a claim for a property use right pursuant to section 3.1(b) of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079, the Commission may consider the claim in a summary procedure and make an

order for recovery of possession. (See section 3.1 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 read together with section 9 of Annex III of UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079.)<sup>1</sup>

5. The Commission held its twenty-eighth session from 17 to 19 April 2012 in Prishtinë/Pristina. A total of 231 residential property claims were submitted by the Executive Secretariat of the KPA (the "Executive Secretariat") to the Commission at its twenty-eighth session, together with supporting documentation, claims processing reports, verification reports and other relevant information. One residential property claim which had been presented to the Commission was referred by the Commission back to the Executive Secretariat for further verification. The Commission suspended the consideration of three residential property claims pending the holding of an oral hearing. In sum, a total of 227 residential property claims were resolved by the Commission during the session.

6. At the Commission's session, the Executive Secretariat presented the claims to the Commission and reported on the processing of and the legal and evidentiary issues raised by the claims. At the Commission's request, the Executive Secretariat provided additional information and explanations, as required.

*A. Ownership claims*

7. In all of the claims covered by the present decision the claimants seek the resolution of an ownership claim, and all of them relate to residential properties, including the associated land. The present decision deals with claims for residential properties which, at the time of their notification, were found to be entirely destroyed.

8. The present decision applies to the 129 claims which are listed in parts A, B, C and D of the attached Schedule. The remaining 98 residential property claims are covered by KPCC/D/R/150/2012 and KPCC/D/R/152/2012.

9. A total of 58 of the 129 claims covered by this decision have not previously been considered by the Commission, while 71 of the claims covered by this decision were the subject of an earlier Commission decision. However the earlier decisions in these 71 claims were overturned by the Commission either on account of an incorrect notification of the claimed properties during claims processing by the Executive Secretariat or on account of other processing errors by the Executive Secretariat which were identified after the decision had been taken. These claims consequently stand to be re-determined following correct notification of the claimed property and correction of the other processing errors. Evidence and information provided by any respondents to the claim or any current occupants of the claimed properties is taken into account by the Commission in the re-determination of the claims. In the claims in which previous decisions have been overturned by the Commission, the Executive Secretariat has written to each claimant advising them of the notification error and informing them that their claims will be re-determined following correct notification of the claimed property. The claimants, as well as the relevant cadastral authorities, have been advised that the previous Commission decisions are invalid and cannot be used for the purposes of any legal transaction.

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<sup>1</sup>There appears to be a technical error in Annex I. While Annex I clearly appears to be intended to replace UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 in its entirety, including its all three annexes, Article 26 of Annex I provides that the title of Annex III of UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 shall be replaced by a title referring to Annex II. However, there is neither specific provision nor any other indication in Law 03/L-079 or its Annexes that the intention of this particular amendment was to delete Annex I or Annex II of UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5. Accordingly the Commission considers that all three Annexes of UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 are included in the legislative package and will be referred to by the Commission in this decision as Sub-Annexes I, II and III, respectively.

10. All claims covered by this decision are uncontested in the sense that at the time the claimed properties were notified there was no evidence of illegal occupation or use of these properties by any person or, even if there was such evidence, no party has contested the validity of the claim within the 30-day period prescribed in section 10.2 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079, or at any later stage during the proceedings, pursuant to section 10.3 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079. Decisions taken in claims that were incorrectly notified have been overturned by the Commission to ensure correct notification of the property and provide any persons who may have a legal interest in the property with an opportunity to respond to the claim pursuant to section 10.1 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079. These claims are identified in the relevant columns in parts A, B, C and D of the Schedule to this decision. The Executive Secretariat has notified claims in a variety of ways including through the physical notification of the property and through notification of the property via publication in a gazette and in newspapers, through local municipal authorities, municipal courts, local village leaders and through other relevant institutions in Kosovo and Serbia. Based on the information provided by the Executive Secretariat, the Commission is satisfied that the Executive Secretariat has made reasonable efforts to notify the claimed properties, the persons who may be currently occupying the properties, and any other persons who may have a legal interest in such properties, as required by section 10.1 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079. Accordingly these claims must be considered uncontested.

11. The Commission notes that the claimants have submitted various types of documents in support of the ownership claims, including possession lists, contracts on gift, inheritance decisions, and certificates of immovable property rights. The Commission is satisfied that the certificates of immovable property rights confirming an ownership interest and inheritance decisions indeed constitute proof of ownership. The other documents submitted by claimants, including possession lists and contracts involving property transactions, create a rebuttable presumption of ownership. All claims identified in parts A, B, C and D of the attached Schedule are uncontested and no evidence has been received or obtained by the Secretariat *ex officio* which would rebut the presumption of ownership. Consequently the Commission is satisfied that the documents submitted prove the claimants' ownership over the claimed properties. The documents have been verified as being valid by the Executive Secretariat, as relevant. Many claimants have also submitted additional supporting documents, including tax decisions, witness statements, copies of plans and cadastral decisions.

12. In the 39 claims identified in part A of the attached Schedule the claimants have filed the claim in the capacity of the property right holder. Claim No. 41538 is filed by the brother of the Claimant in Claim No. 41455, which is covered by the Commission's decision KPCC/D/R/152/2012 dated 19 April 2012. Both claims have been filed on behalf of the Claimants' father and relate to the same house and associated land. The Claimants confirm that the brother, namely the Claimant in Claim No. 41538, is the property right holder based on a contract on division dated 9 February 1986 between the Claimant in Claim No. 41538 and his father, the previous property right holder. The Claimant in Claim No. 41455 confirms that her brother, the Claimant in Claim No. 41538, is the property right holder and that she does not wish to pursue her claim any longer.

13. In light of the Commission's findings in paragraphs 10 and 11 above, the claims identified in part A of the attached Schedule, stand to be granted.

14. In the 26 claims identified in part B of the attached Schedule, the claimants have filed claims in the capacity of a family household member of the property right holder pursuant to section 1.2 of Annex II of UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079. Section 1 of the Administrative Direction as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079 defines "Member

of Family Household” to include “the spouse, children (born in and out of wedlock or adopted) and other persons whom the property right holder is obliged to support in accordance with the applicable law, or the persons who are obliged to support the property right holder in accordance with the applicable law, regardless of whether or not that person resided in the property together with the property right holder.” The Commission has determined that, under the applicable law, this definition covers, in addition to spouses and children, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents and grandchildren of the property right holder. All of the claimants in the claims identified in part B of the attached Schedule fall within the definition of family household member. In Claim No. 08403 the Claimant is the nephew of the property right holder. Based on the evidence submitted by the Claimant, the Commission is satisfied that the property right holder has been a missing person since the conflict, and that the Claimant is the closest living relative of the property right holder. In these circumstances it would be impossible for the Claimant, and therefore unreasonable to require him, to provide a power of attorney to represent his aunt. Accordingly a decision confirming the property right in favour of the property right holder stands to be granted in each of these claims, as set out above.

15. In the twenty one claims identified in part C of the attached Schedule, the claimants were not the property right holder at the date of loss of possession of the claimed property, but have adduced evidence of having subsequently succeeded to the respective ownership right by virtue of inheritance. The claimants must be considered as having succeeded to all the rights belonging to an owner, including the right to claim for confirmation of ownership and for repossession in the present proceedings. The claims therefore stand to be granted, as set out above.

16. In the 43 claims identified in part D of the attached Schedule, the claimant was not the property right holder at the date of loss of possession of the claimed property but asserts to having succeeded to the property by virtue of inheritance. In each of these claims the claimant has established that she or he is a family household member of the deceased property right holder. However, no valid inheritance decision or other documentary evidence has been submitted by the claimants that would establish any of the claimants as being an heir to the claimed property, nor has the Executive Secretariat been able to locate any such documents. Some claimants have submitted as evidence “inheritance decisions” purportedly issued by parallel courts in Serbia. The Commission does not consider that such documents establish entitlement to inheritance. The Commission has no jurisdiction to resolve issues relating to inheritance. A decision confirming the property right in favour of the deceased property right holder stands to be granted in these claims, as set out above. In Claim No. 35121 the current occupant is using the property with the permission of the Claimant’s brother, and the Claimant confirms that he does not seek the eviction of the current occupant. In Claim No. 45473 the claimed property has not been physically notified as the villagers and leadership of Mala Krusa/Krushe e Vogel refused to cooperate with the staff of the Executive Secretariat and physically threatened the Secretariat’s notification officials should they attempt to conduct the physical notification. Consequently, the claimed property has been notified via publication in a gazette and in newspapers, through local municipal authorities and municipal courts. The Commission is satisfied that the claimed property has been adequately notified in the given circumstances. The Commission’s decision with respect to all of the claims identified in this part D of the attached Schedule is without prejudice to the determination by the competent court as to how the heirs will succeed to the property right of the deceased.

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17. The various types of documents relied upon by the claimants in support of the claims referred to in paragraphs 12 to 15 above are listed in the relevant parts of the attached Schedule.

18. In a number of claims the claimants or the property right holders, as the case may be, left the property outside the period 27 February 1998 and 20 June 1999, referred to in section 3 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079. The Commission has determined that, even though the date of loss in these claims fell outside the above period, the loss of property right in each case occurred in circumstances directly related to or resulting from the armed conflict that occurred in Kosovo between 27 February 1998 and 20 June 1999, as required by section 3 of UNMIK/REG/2006/50 and section 3 of Law No. 03/L-079.

19. In view of the foregoing, the Commission is satisfied, based on the evidence before it, that in each of the claims covered by the present decision:

- (a) the claimant or the property right holder, as the case may be, had an ownership right in respect of the claimed property, or such part thereof as specified in the respective individual decision;
- (b) each claim is uncontested in that no person has contested the validity of the claim;
- (c) the claimant or the property right holder, as the case may be, in each case is not now able to exercise his or her ownership right; and
- (d) the claim in each case involves circumstances directly related to or resulting from the armed conflict that occurred in Kosovo between 27 February 1998 and 20 June 1999.

20. The Commission concludes that the claimants or the property right holders in all claims identified in parts A, B, C and D of the attached Schedule, as the case may be, have shown that they satisfied the requirements for an order establishing ownership over the claimed property and the associated land parcel as at the date of destruction of the residential property. The fact that the property has been destroyed does not affect the claimants' right to obtain a declaratory decision from the Commission, confirming, as at the date of destruction of the claimed property, the claimants' ownership over such property.

#### *B. Claims for compensation*

21. In the claims identified in the relevant columns of parts A, B, C and D of the attached Schedule, the claimants also seek, in addition to ownership, compensation for physical damage to, or for loss of use of, the claimed property. Under UNMIK/REG/2006/50 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079 the Commission has no jurisdiction over such claims. Accordingly this aspect of the claims must be dismissed.

#### *C. Concluding remarks*

22. In view of the foregoing, the Commission finds that the claims listed in parts A, B, C and D of the attached Schedule succeed and directs that an order be made in respect of each claim as set out above.

23. In a number of claims, the claimant had filed a claim for repossession of the same property with the Housing and Property Directorate, which claim had subsequently been granted by the Housing and Property Claims Commission ("HPCC"). The Commission notes

that the causes of action available for claimants before the present Commission and the HPCC, respectively, and accordingly the jurisdiction of the two Commissions, are not identical. Thus the decisions of the HPCC do not necessarily constitute *res judicata* before the present Commission, although in certain circumstances this may be the case. Moreover, in cases where the HPCC granted an eviction order in favour of the Claimant, the Commission does not consider that such an order constitutes a bar for this Commission to issue a fresh eviction order in cases where the property is unlawfully occupied.

24. The Commission's above decisions and order also apply, where appropriate, to any associated property, *i.e.* any land or buildings owned or used by the claimant or the property right holder, as the case may be, which form a unit with the claimed residential property.

25. Pursuant to section 8.5 of Annex III of UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079, the Commission may in its decision determine any property right in the name of the property right holder and make an order for possession in favour of the claimant. When the property right holder is alive, the Commission grants the right of possession in the name of the property right holder. When the property right holder is deceased and the death is proven but no valid inheritance decision has been provided, the Commission grants possession to the claimant as a family household member of the property right holder. In cases where the property right holder dies after filing the claim and there is no family household member claimant, the Commission grants the right to possession in the name of the deceased property right holder. The right to possession is granted pursuant to the applicable provisions of the law governing family relations in Kosovo, which includes the administration of family property. The Commission's decision on the entitlement to possession of property by the family household member claimant is without prejudice to the rights of other family household members or other heirs of the property right holder who have not filed claims with the KPA but who may have a joint right to possession of the property pursuant to the applicable law or as a consequence of future inheritance proceedings (section 8.5 of Annex III of UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079).

26. Section 8.8 of Annex III of UNMIK/ADM/DIR/2007/5 as adopted by Law No. 03/L-079 allows the Chairperson of the Commission to sign a cover decision approving all individual claims identified in the cover decision, if the number of claims decided in a session is high. The Commission considers that this is appropriate in the present case.



Chairperson

**APPEALS**

UNMIK/REG/2006/50 and the Law No. 03/L-079 provide that:

12.1 Within thirty (30) days of the notification to the parties by the Kosovo Property Agency of a decision of the Commission on a claim, a party may submit through the Executive Secretariat of the Kosovo Property Agency to the Supreme Court of Kosovo an appeal against such decision.

12.3 The appeal may be filed on the grounds that:

- (a) The decision involves a fundamental error or serious misapplication of the applicable material or procedural law; or
- (b) The decision rests upon an erroneous or incomplete determination of the facts.

Further information on the appeals procedure is contained in the separate Appeals Information Sheet provided to parties with this decision

**\* The English version is the official of all Property Claims Commission decisions. In case of conflict between the English language version and the Albanian or Serbian language version, then the meaning in the English language shall prevail.**



Spreadsheet /Lista /Prilog  
Part A/Pjesa A/Deo A

KPA14144	KPA28842	KPA47770	KPA54167	KPA90507	KPA90595	KPA08355
KPA33689	KPA50112	KPA01056	KPA34233	KPA41538	KPA48805	KPA07233
KPA08438	KPA10060	KPA14291	KPA21590	KPA23301	KPA23883	KPA30934
KPA31606	KPA33853	KPA33857	KPA35424	KPA37045	KPA37375	KPA38362
KPA40247	KPA40501	KPA41021	KPA43379	KPA44943	KPA45088	KPA47865
KPA48038	KPA49544	KPA53072	KPA53839			

Spreadsheet /Lista /Prilog  
Part B/Pjesa B/Deo B

KPA08403	KPA21096	KPA23599	KPA28696	KPA33403	KPA35769	KPA35793
KPA51144	KPA39703	KPA42244	KPA46224	KPA46226	KPA07001	KPA08001
KPA08005	KPA27437	KPA27782	KPA31291	KPA33435	KPA33600	KPA36482
KPA44976	KPA45083	KPA47834	KPA49620	KPA56430		

Spreadsheet /Lista /Prilog  
Part C/Pjesa C/Deo C

KPA52191	KPA92192	KPA92193	KPA92194	KPA92038	KPA92327	KPA92328
KPA92329	KPA92330	KPA92331	KPA39987	KPA50701	KPA92293	KPA92294
KPA50623	KPA28076	KPA27689	KPA13754	KPA45084	KPA20202	KPA23529

Spreadsheet /Lista /Prilog  
Part D/Pjesa D/Deo D

KPA17889	KPA35110	KPA36531	KPA42268	KPA91579	KPA91853	KPA11489
KPA11491	KPA17519	KPA21933	KPA24166	KPA28690	KPA30760	KPA35121
KPA45473	KPA91295	KPA91323	KPA92324	KPA18289	KPA49755	KPA92426
KPA00575	KPA07449	KPA08590	KPA13822	KPA22302	KPA24024	KPA25452
KPA27721	KPA27977	KPA31487	KPA31948	KPA33833	KPA36333	KPA36334
KPA36335	KPA40901	KPA44584	KPA47102	KPA47669	KPA47938	KPA50259
KPA51574						