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Serbia takes Kosovo status to court

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Serbia has argued that Kosovo's declaration of independence was a "flagrant violation" of its territorial integrity as hearings into the legality of the province's secession opened at a UN court.

Belgrade, which rejected Pristina's February 2008 declaration, has called on the International Court of Justice in the Netherlands to give an "advisory opinion" on its legality.

Dusan Batakovic, Serbian ambassador to France and head of the Serbian delegation at the court, told the hearing that "Kosovo is the historic cradle of Serbia and ... one of the essential pillars of its identity".

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