



**Annual Press Conference  
by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro  
Ambassador Janina Hřebičkova**

Podgorica  
Press Center, 17 December 2015

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Ladies and gentleman,  
Dear colleagues journalists,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you here today, and present to you some of our activities, results achieved in this year, as well as plans for the next year, based on our new approach and strategy.

I say "our", because these are the activities that we have carried out together with our partners, and at the very beginning of my today's address, I would like to thank them on behalf of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro and on my personal behalf for the excellent cooperation that we have had with all of them - with the Montenegrin authorities, institutions, civil society organizations, and, of course, media.

I would also like to thank the international community in Montenegro, embassies and diplomatic missions, as well as our missions in the region, OSCE institutions and the participating states of the large OSCE family.

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As Montenegro demonstrates progress in a number of policy areas, our long-term programmatic strategies have and will be even more adjusted in order to adapt to the changing external environment in the country, in the region in the geopolitical sense with the aim our value to the host country to be clearer.

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In particular, as the parliamentary elections are due next year our priority will be to provide technical assistance to the State Elections Commission.

In this sense, a higher level of cross party consensus via political dialogue and on the reform will be needed in order to reach political consensus, and create conditions for the credible elections. And for the country to achieve better results in the democratization process.

Gender equality is a priority of our and all other field operation's activities, within the regional focus of the OSCE.

In the upcoming period, we will be particularly devoted to the regional cooperation.

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Because, the number of activities implemented this year is too high, let me now summarize the key examples of the activities the Mission has implemented this year:

- Organization of the 17th Cetinje Parliamentary Forum, "Human rights and gender equality in the sector of security and defence" with the participation of many parliamentarians of the countries from the region. As a result of this meeting, a joint declaration was adopted with a series of recommendations, and willingness was expressed to comply with the accepted international obligations related to implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
- 18th Annual Cetinje Parliamentary Forum on Women in Business also brought together parliamentarians from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. The Forum sent a clear message that it is necessary to invest further efforts in changing and reinforcing the mind-set on this issue, since women and men have to be equal on all levels, including the right to work, the right to economic independence, as well as the right of women to be protected from labour or any other kind of discrimination.
- The Mission, in cooperation with the US Embassy in Montenegro and the Judicial Training Center, also organized a conference on fight against cyber-crime, within the activities stemming from the OSCE's Resolution on cyber security.
- As regards the promotion of the Law on free access to information, we worked together with the Agency for Personal Data Protection and Free Access to Information, as well as with NGOs MANS and CDT, and implemented a number of activities, of which I would particularly like to mention the regional conference which was aimed at sharing experiences and best practices in the implementation and importance of this law, which belongs to the important set of anti-corruption laws.
- When it comes to activities related to supporting the work of local self-administrations, the Mission has, among other, been active in promoting the ethical committees at the local level, and thanks to those activities codes of ethics and the decision on the establishment of ethics commission was adopted in all municipalities in Montenegro, including the guide book for their

work. Also, in cooperation with the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, memorandum of understanding with all municipalities in Montenegro was signed, which aims to strengthen cooperation in the area of gender equality at the local level.

- With the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Montenegro we had a series of activities, of which I would like to particularly emphasize the support in developing the Police strategy 2016-2020 and respective Action Plan, also activities aimed at strengthening the police integrity, a conference on the fight against trafficking in human beings, and we have also been a part of a very important public campaign "Respect Life - Return Weapons", together with UNDP, and with the support of the German Government, including the NGO CDT, as an implementing partner in this project.
- Our aim is to assist more institutions in a holistic approach, and to reach out for broader audience. That is why we work on strengthening the co-operation between the rule of law and law enforcement institutions and media.

Through our two year-long cross dimensional project of raising the accountability of both the institutions and the media the aim is to help raise accountability in their work, respect for individual rights and strengthening of their communication skills, while trying to achieve a multifold effect. In that respect we organized trainings for representatives of those institutions within their area of work, while also a new communication strategy for the Prosecution, as well as the manual for its implementation, were developed.

- Within the same project, training for media professionals was held, with the aim of improving their understanding and quality of their reporting on the work of the rule of law and law enforcement institutions. Attention was also given to the issue of finding the right balance between the public's right to know and the presumption of innocence, protection of human and individual rights and freedom of expression.
- Within this big project, I also wish to mention our TV programme 'Reaching the Trust Together', aired on the Radio Television of Montenegro, objective of which is to serve as a platform for dialogue between the representatives of institutions, media and civil society, with the participation of citizens, on the issues related to the transparency of institutions, and with the aim to encourage the dialogue on the topics of public and societal importance. By these shows, the diversity of the programme of the Montenegrin public service broadcaster was also enhanced.
- One of the activities that has been launched this year and successfully implemented by the Office of the OSCE's Representative for Freedom of the Media, and supported by the Council of Europe and the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, is the adoption of the new Journalistic code of ethics, which is certainly a huge step in the improvement of media self-regulation in Montenegro. The Code will be presented to the Montenegrin media scene and general public beginning of next year.

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During the year 2016 we will continue to focus on the process of reforms, raising accountability, transparency and efficiency of institutions, their co-operation with the civil society organizations and the media, as well as promotion of fundamental rights and freedoms.

I would like to underline that in all of the OSCE's activities, particular attention is paid to gender equality, tolerance and dialogue, which are our some of the core values of our work, in general. As always, we will take care of the promotion and protection of human rights of all citizens, with a special focus on vulnerable groups.

One of the key events that we are planning to organize next year is a regional conference on the role of women and men in peace and security, conflict prevention, fight against TNT and terrorism, migration and respect for human rights, reflecting the cooperation between OSCE and UN via the Resolution 1325.

And, as I mentioned already in my introduction, one of our priorities in the coming year will be to provide technical assistance to the State Election Commission.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All of the activities that I have mentioned, those I haven't mentioned on this occasion, as well as those we plan to implement in the period to come, are aimed at strengthening Montenegrin public institutions and civil society organizations, and increasing further the citizens' confidence in institutions of the system. All these are preconditions for development of a democratic society that respects the rule of law and rights of all citizens of this country.

Respected media representatives,

I would like to express once more my sincere gratitude for all your support and co-operation we have had so far and I do hope that we will continue in the same spirit next year.

In the end, I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year 2016!