

**Donor Coordination Meeting Serbia and Montenegro
Brussels, 18 November 2003**

**Statement by Ambassador Maurizio Massari
OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro**

The OSCE and the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro (SCG) have been all along and will continue to be supportive of the reform process in SCG.

The outcome of November 16 presidential elections in Serbia should not divert the attention and focus of Serbia's political forces and international community from reforms and positive action. If anything, the presidential elections demonstrated the need for all democratic forces to unite, to put aside differences and personal animosities and to work together on reforms.

The main challenge for SCG, from an OSCE perspective, remains the consolidation of democratic institutions, political rules of the democratic game and the rule of law.

There is no doubt that significant progress has been achieved by SCG in these sectors since October 2000. Among those achievements one should mention the adoption of new legislation on minorities, including a Constitutional Charter on Human and Minorities Rights; new legislation on local self government; civilian control over military structures; cooperation with ICTY; as well as the adoption of key pieces of legislation in different areas (for instance, in Serbia, the adoption of legislation on public procurement; on funding of political parties; on domestic capacity to deal with war crimes).

However a lot remains to be done to consolidate democracy and rule of law in SCG. In particular, there is a need to create functional parliaments and political institutions, including the adoption of new constitutions in both republics; to consolidate an independent and functional judiciary and an accountable police; to complete the legislative framework for independent and professional media (in particular for the electronic media); to deepen anti-corruption and anti-trafficking strategies; to develop human rights institutions such as the ombudsman (particularly in Serbia); to empower the civil society and more actively engage it in the reform process.

In order to be successful reforms in SCG cannot be only a top-down exercise, let alone an exclusively externally driven process. Public debate and active engagement of society on key pieces of legislation, as well as new efforts to improve the communication between institutions and civil society will be crucial to the success of reforms. In that framework the OSCE Mission to SCG, through its outreach campaign, has been engaging itself in promoting capacity building activities in different regions and municipalities of SCG.

In Montenegro, in addition to the above mentioned challenges, there is also an urgent need to create normal conditions to allow the political opposition to work constructively within the parliament and institutions.

The OSCE, together with other international partners and donors, stands ready to continue to assist constructively the reform process in the areas of its mandate and it will continue to support all democratic and reformist forces in SCG.