

ENGLISH only

ADDRESS BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF MONTENEGRO

H.E. MR. MILAN ROCEN

OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL, MADRID, NOVEMBER 29 - 30, 2007

Mr. Chairman
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address you on behalf of Montenegro, briefly inform you on current processes in Montenegro and share with you our views on the current state of affairs within the Organization.

First of all, I would like to thank the Chairman-in-Office, Spain, on successful organization of this event and its efforts to efficiently lead the Organization in the course of the year. This is so much more important since there were many challenges, and the goals set in the previous years were demanding.

Mr. Chairman,

Montenegro is fully committed to goals and standards of the OSCE set out in the Helsinki Final Act. Though the youngest OSCE participating state, as a member of former Yugoslavia, Montenegro built itself into the core postulates of the Document. We are a small country and active and responsible OSCE participating state. We achieved this by working on two tracks. At home, by adopting and implementing the OSCE basic principles in system laws and practice and on the other side, by promoting these principles, values and standards within the OSCE bodies and forums.

The democratic character of the process in which the independence of Montenegro was renewed had crucial influence on our results afterwards. It enabled the creation of stable political and economic conditions and was a further impetus for the continuation and acceleration of the reform processes. We have recently signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU. We have reached a political consensus and adopted first Constitution on the independent Montenegro in the Parliament with two thirds majority. The Constitution is based on basic principles of the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

The positive trends in Montenegro are no doubt the confirmation of the rightness of our policy so far and stem from our inspiration by Euro-Atlantic integration, principles and values of modern Europe, respect for human and minority rights,

advancement of democratic freedoms and strengthening of institutions. In a word, from the principles that are the driving force and the very essence of the Organization.

The stability of our Region and regional cooperation are complementary with our strategic goals. We believe that the remaining open issues in the Region, including the Kosovo issue, should be resolved in the spirit of cooperation and respecting the differences. In this context, the OSCE has played and has the developed mechanisms to continue to play a positive role in the future.

The OSCE has been our constructive partner in all processes significant for Montenegro. We believe that the OSCE can play a positive role in our aspiration to join the EU and NATO as soon as possible. It includes the successful OSCE Mission in Montenegro.

We highly appreciate the ODIHR assistance in election processes and the role it played in the referendum process. We believe this shows that the role of ODIHR is particularly important for countries in transition that are making democratic progress.

Mr. Chairman,

We are convinced that the OSCE basic principles and values developed for three decades are still equally relevant, modern and binding. After all, we have all voluntarily accepted and agreed upon them. This is true for all three dimensions. The challenges modern world is facing now require measures for building trust and cooperation in security area, as well as the OSCE activities in human dimension.

In our opinion, the OSCE remains to be one of the most important international actors in conflict prevention and their solution through different mechanisms we developed together. It has rich and successful experience in post-conflict society building. We support the idea of the OSCE engagement in Afghanistan. The OSCE has also developed numerous mechanisms for cooperation in fight against modern security threats such as terrorism and organized crime. We therefore hope that, guided by these principles and the logic of compromise, we will succeed in reaching consensus and adopt the Ministerial Declaration.

For the sake of future efficiency of the Organization, as well as for the sake of strengthening collective spirit and compromise, we expect that here in Madrid we will pass a decision on the OSCE Chairman in Office in 2009, 2010 and 2011, with consensus of all interested parties.

We would also like to emphasize the importance of decision that further strengthens the OSCE capacities in fight against new security threats, as well as those that seem a logical continuation of our overall efforts to fight successfully different forms of discrimination and non-tolerance and further strengthen the capacities for respect for human rights and freedoms.

Finally, I would like to thank to Chairman in Office, minister Moratinos for success and efforts made in leading the Organization in past year. At the same time, I wish success to upcoming Chairman in Office in next year in fulfilling numerous obligations and meeting challenges that lie ahead. Montenegro on its part will continue to be a reliable partner in furthering the goals of the Organization.

Thank you.