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ENGLISH only

## **STATEMENT**

***On the 10 September elections in Montenegro,  
Delivered by Ambassador of the Republic of Montenegro to OSCE,  
HE Vesko Garcevic  
At the 625<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Permanent Council, 14 September 2006***

Mr. Chairman,

Parliamentary elections held in Montenegro on September 10, 2006, were the first democratic test for our newly independent state, which we have passed, I dare say, with flying colors, having in mind that they were widely recognized as “largely in line with OSCE commitments and Council of Europe standards”. Four months after the referendum, the elections took place in a significantly changed political ambient and with the new political groupings and coalitions on the Montenegrin political scene. We believe that the election process confirmed increasing democratic maturity and capacity of Montenegro, especially since all the political parties accepted the results, which represents a further step forward in overcoming political divisions in Montenegro that were present on the status issue.

Further more, these elections have once again proved the multiethnic character of the Montenegrin society, additionally confirmed by the fact that national minorities and various ethnical groups living in Montenegro voted for civil parties rather than for national ones.

OSCE/ODIHR Monitoring Mission, as before, played an important and positive role in the election process. As the OSCE youngest participating state, we are pleased with the OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe observers’ preliminary findings that the elections were held in accordance with the international standards and guiding OSCE principles. We are also pleased to note that the EU commanded the way in which elections were conducted. We are of course well aware that there is always a room for further improvement of our election legislation, proceedings and general atmosphere, and we are therefore fully prepared to work closely with the OSCE/ODIHR to overcome challenges and improve our election system. We are confident that although some shortcomings and problems were noted in the OSCE/ODIHR monitoring, they did not impede or affect electoral process or endanger the democratic character and transparency of the procedure.

In the post-electoral period, the top priority for the new Assembly is to draft and pass a new Constitution, by which the legislative framework for an independent state will be set. In these endeavors, we continue to welcome and count on the OSCE support. At the same time, the results of the elections provided for a clear and stable majority in the Montenegrin political scene which is a guarantee for the stability, continuation and acceleration of the overall reforms in Montenegro. The ruling coalition, which has once again gained majority of votes at these elections, reiterated that ultimate goals of Montenegro stayed unchanged - European and Euro-Atlantic integrations. Undoubtedly, on that path a hard work remains to be done but with due respect for the challenges laying ahead, Montenegro has a reason to believe that years to come can be marked by economic and democratic progress.