



STALNA MISIJA CRNE GORE PRI UJEDINJENIM NACIJAMA
PERMANENT MISSION OF MONTENEGRO TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT

BY H.E. MR. IGOR LUKŠIĆ
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AT THE

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 66TH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Please check against delivery

Mr. Secretary General,

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is truly an honor for me to address you at this global forum on behalf of Montenegro and to reiterate our commitment to the principles and purposes of the Organization of the United Nations and its Charter.

Your Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, I hereby wish to congratulate you on your election as President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly, which is a rather demanding task, and to emphasize full support of the Montenegrin delegation throughout this session. I also wish to thank H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss for valuable contribution and for strengthening the central role of the UN in the global system during his Presidency of the General Assembly.

I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, on his re-election, which will, I am certain, result in continuation of reforms, with an aim to build a more efficient and coherent UN system, thus, a safer and more prosperous world.

Mr. President,

Two months ago Montenegro was replaced by South Sudan as the youngest member of our organization. I hereby wish to congratulate South Sudan on its independence and full-fledged membership in this august body. I truly believe that this milestone will contribute to security and serve as a good starting point for development of good neighborly relations.

We also support democratization processes in the North Africa, as well as the actions taken by the UN and the African Union in Ivory Coast, Somalia, Congo and other parts of Africa, aimed at further overall progress of the whole continent.

In the context of regional cooperation, Montenegro gave its contribution to the overall stability in South-East Europe by chairing the most important regional initiatives, which was a unique and rather challenging experience for our administration. Further improvements in the development of mutual understanding and strengthening of all forms of cooperation represent continuous commitments of Montenegro for the period to come. Our success and success of the countries of this region represent the success of Europe, too.

There is full consensus on the issue of EU integration in Montenegro. We are aware of the fact that this is a process that requires continuous contribution of all stakeholders in the society, and I am convinced that we will have enough will, enthusiasm, capacity and energy to tackle it in forthcoming period.

I hope and believe that persistent and committed work on the implementation of the overall internal reforms, based on seven key recommendations underlined by the European Commission, accompanied by the policy of good neighborly relations and regional and international cooperation, represent a solid foundation for the European Commission to recommend in the Progress Report to the European Council to open the EU accession negotiations with Montenegro.

We are firmly moving forward in the Euro-Atlantic path – currently preparing the second Annual National Plan - ANP for NATO membership.

Progress of the Western Balkan countries in the process of European and Euro Atlantic integration is a key factor for regional stability, and it sets ground for the long-term economic prosperity.

Mr. President,

As a UN member state and a reliable international partner, Montenegro is committed to the maintenance of international peace and security. Based on its capacities, Montenegro actively participates in the UN peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Cyprus, while also keeping in mind the regional security aspects.

Through our participation in the NATO ISAF Mission, we directly contribute to the efforts of the international community to provide continuous peace in Afghanistan, while, at the same time, supporting global efforts in the fight against terrorism; in the EU ATALANTA Mission we have joined fight against piracy, the consequences of which were also suffered by Montenegrin sailors.

Nevertheless, in order to prevent new conflicts that have the potential to cause humanitarian disasters and put additional pressure on the already burdened peacekeeping mission contingents, it is necessary to strengthen the preventive diplomacy and mediation activities in cases of potential and initiated conflicts. Further development of UN capacities in this domain will contribute to timely and peaceful conflict resolution, before their complexities result in serious international repercussions.

In accordance with that, Montenegro strongly supports peaceful resolution of all existing conflicts, especially the ones in the wider region of the Middle East and North Africa. Priority should be given to urgent signing of the peace agreement between Israel and Palestine that is in their mutual interest.

Only if both sides refrain from violent actions, room will be created for confidence building and a comprehensive solution to the Middle East issue, making Israel a safe country, to the benefit of both internationally recognised sides, and creating prerequisites for Palestine to establish a stable state. Montenegro also supports all the Security Council resolutions and actions taken by the international community, aimed at stopping human rights violations and fulfilling legitimate aspirations of the population, primarily in Libya and Syria.

Mr. President,

Montenegro supports the principles of universality and inadmissibility of all human rights, including resolutions promoting their protection and enhancement, as well as the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Human Rights Council, to which we have announced to stand as candidate for the period 2013-2015. Experience that Montenegro gained in the turbulent past, when it provided shelter to the refugees, can serve as a basis for achievement of long-lasting political compromises aimed at securing peace in the region. To that end, strengthening the role of the Universal Periodic Review in assessing the status of human rights in the world represents an important instrument in our view.

I hereby wish to emphasize the importance of the role and the support we offer to the work of the International Criminal Tribunal, as well as the established tribunals, especially when it comes to systematic violations of the fundamental human rights and freedoms. This institution should not only serve as an example and a guide to the national courts, but also be a clear deterrent and an unavoidable destination for the individuals who ignore the rules established by the Geneva Conventions.

Montenegro, as an ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse society, is an active member of the Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilizations, and is committed to the fundamental principles of integration and strengthening of the civil society, tolerance, fight against all forms of discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. We are determined and committed to preserving the fundamental values that civil society is based upon, no matter what the challenges are, and no matter what the challenges that we, as a society and a state, will have to face in the future.

Mr President, Ladies and Gentleman,

Let me also briefly point out current economic developments. The fact that we are a small and open economy, thus prone to be affected by changes taking place in the global economic market, has resulted in the fact that, at one point, global economic and financial crisis harmed our positive economic progress.

Nevertheless with the implementation of the anti-crisis economic policy we have weakened the impact of the global crisis and stopped the downward trend in the Montenegrin economy.

This crisis confirmed that the basic directions in the economic policy of Montenegro, focusing on further stabilization of public finances, business environment improvements and structural reforms, with the aim to establish a stable, dynamic and competitive economy in the long run, and to improve the quality of life of all citizens of Montenegro, are well set.

Despite being fully aware of the fact that in seeking adequate response to this crisis we will have to make some difficult and unpopular cuts, in order to enable creation of new and sound basis for further strengthening of the economy, we received another confirmation that actions taken by one stakeholder only, no matter how successfully, are insufficient. We all have to play a positive role, in order to strike the right balance of success, sustainability, as well as social responsibility and solidarity in this complex process.

Accordingly, we must not stop the progress in achieving MDGs, the realization of which creates the basis for further development of human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world. Fight against poverty and diseases, gender equality, protection of mothers and children, education, environmental protection and sustainable development represent the main prerequisites for progress and prosperity of our societies and are set high in the Government agenda.

Mr President,

Montenegro supports pragmatic reform trends in the UN. As a small country, it is especially interested in strengthening the authority and role of the General Assembly, its efficiency and operational improvements, as well as of other main UN bodies. Enhancing representation of the Security Council, and in that respect granting another seat to the Eastern European Group in the category of non-permanent members, must result in functional strengthening of this body, and its efficiency, accountability and credibility improvements, in accordance with the UN Charter. A modern reform process, open to the member states individually, or to a group of countries, must take place based on a wide consensus regarding all of the five key aspects of the Security Council reform. I am sure there is a modality to make a bridge between these goals and other structures, such as G-20 for instance.

In its further democratization, improvement of efficiency and judiciary, strengthening of the administrative system, fight against corruption and organized crime, and creation of an inclusive society, Montenegro and the resident and non-resident UN agencies represent partners in achieving the strategic goals of our common policy.

The position of the UN System Resident Representative and the *One UN* program gave an opportunity both to the UN agencies and state partners in the process, to create and monitor program activities directly and on equal footing, and to adapt program activities to the development needs of our country.

At the same time, the *One UN* program is an opportunity for gradual reform in the operations of the UN system, thus creating a simultaneous and well-coordinated approach that will result, among others, in avoiding overlaps between UN agencies and in achieving more efficient results in the area of implementation of the national priorities.

Mr. President,

Montenegro supports nuclear non-proliferation and objects further expansion in the number of countries that possess nuclear weapons. Moreover, we support all agreements of the nuclear powers on mutual reduction in the nuclear capacities, thus creating a safer world for the existing and future generations. To that end, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for the appeal he sent late last month, requesting all countries that have nuclear technology to adhere to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

I wish to emphasize that Montenegro has ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions and that a bit less than one year since it came into effect, it destroyed all reserves of this type of weapons, thus confirming again its commitment to the principles of non-proliferation.

Montenegro is an ecological state, a bedrock principle of our Constitution. Based on that commitment we have an additional incentive to find solutions that are compatible with the sustainable development policy.

Strategic direction in the development of Montenegro is to achieve synergy between growth and employment on one hand, and social equality, environment and natural resources on the other.

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development, which will take place in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, represents an important opportunity to promote international cooperation in the area of sustainable development, and an opportunity to make a comprehensive evaluation of the progress made in the past two decades.

Montenegro, as a member of the UN Sustainable Development Commission in the period 2011-2014 is committed to contribute to the success of this Conference with its constructive actions.

Montenegro is especially sensitive to climate change issues. There are numerous potential negative effects of climate change on Montenegro: increase in sea level, temperature and impact on biological diversity.

I thus believe that fight against climate change requires a global, coordinated and decisive international agreement, based on the principles defined in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol. UNFCCC represents a key multilateral forum for global action in the area of climate change, and the COP 16 Conference in Cancun confirms that multilateral approach and climate change management process under the UN auspices can give concrete results.

Mr. President,

Allow me to reiterate once again how honored I am to participate in the general debate of this global forum, on behalf of Montenegro, and together with the representatives of 192 countries, to contribute directly to the promotion of our mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence, to the benefit of all of our nations.

Thank you for your attention.