

# NEWSLETTER OPEN PARLIAMENT



Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ No. 102 ♦ March 2020

## CONTENTS

<b>Legislative and oversight activity.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>News from Parliament .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Exhibition under the title "Montenegro and Bulgaria on the Map of Europe", IV-XX centuries opened.....	4
12th session of the Women's Parliament held.....	4
<b>Parliamentary glossary.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>In Focus.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>From the Catalogue of Received Presents.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Calendar.....</b>	<b>6</b>

## IN FOCUS

*President of the Parliament a signatory to the regional initiative – Appeal for Assistance to the Region of the Western Balkans in Combating the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19)*

p.5



## PARLIAMENTARY GLOSSARY

**Do you know...**  
*what is a Collegium of the President of the Parliament?*

p.4

## PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO - FROM THE CATALOGUE OF RECEIVED PRESENTS

*Presents extended by the President of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China and the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of the Republic of Turkey*

p.5

# OPEN PARLIAMENT



Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ Electronic format ♦ Release: monthly ♦ Year X ♦ No. 102 ♦ March 2020

## FOREWORD

*Dear readers,*

We present to you the key information on activities of the Parliament of Montenegro in the period from 1 to 31 March, which is, in the form of monthly newsletter "Open Parliament", prepared by Parliamentary Service.

During March, the First Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session in 2020 took place, during which two laws were adopted and the President of the State Election Commission was appointed.

Committees considered seven proposals for a law, one proposal for a decision and performed other activities within their oversight role.

In focus of this month's newsletter is the following: *President of the Parliament a signatory to the regional initiative – Appeal for Assistance to the Region of the Western Balkans in Combating the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19).*

The newsletter is published monthly through which the Parliament endeavours to bring its work closer to Montenegrin citizens.

We consider this publication to be very significant as a reliable source of information regarding the work of the Parliament and we hope that you will find it useful.

We remain open to your comments and suggestions, as well as criticism, which can help us bring more quality to our work.

**Respectfully,  
Parliamentary Service**



## LEGISLATIVE AND OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

**At the First Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020**, the MPs adopted the Law on Ratification of the Status Agreement between Montenegro and the European Union on actions carried out by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in Montenegro and the Law on Ratification of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Within item Elections and appointments, the Parliament appointed Aleksa Ivanović as President of the State Election Commission.

### Proposals for law deliberated in committees

- **Proposal for a Law on Roads** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Bankruptcy Law** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Ratifying the Agreement between Montenegro and Principality of Monaco on Double Taxation Avoidance and Prevention of Income Tax Evasion** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants.
- **Proposal for a Law on Ratifying the Agreement between Montenegro and the Republic of Macedonia on regulating mutual property and legal relations** was

considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants.

- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Game and Hunting** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Transport of Hazardous Substance** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning.
- **Proposal for a Law on Protection from the Ionising Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning.

#### *Proposals for other acts deliberated in committees*

- **Proposal for a Decision on appointing a member of the Steering Committee of the Fund for Protection and Exercising of Minority Rights** was determined by the Administrative Committee who decided to propose to the Parliament to elect Suad Begović as a member of the Steering Committee of the Fund for Protection and Exercising of Minority Rights on behalf of the Muslim Council of Montenegro.

#### *Other activities of working bodies*

- At the 102<sup>nd</sup> meeting, held on 5 March, the **Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration** considered and unanimously supported the 2019 Performance Report of the Committee and supported the 2020 Work Plan of the Committee. The Committee also drafted the List of applicants to the Public Vacancy Notice for the election of four members of the Prosecutorial Council from among prominent lawyers.
- At the 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting, held on 9 March, members of the **Security and Defence Committee** adopted the 2019 Performance Report of the Security and Defence Committee and the 2020 Plan of Parliamentary Oversight.
- At the 37<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 6 March, members of the **Committee on European Integration**, in the presence of the Deputy Chief Negotiator, discussed Montenegro's Programme of Accession to the European Union for the period 2020 -2022.
- At the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 6 March, the **Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports** considered and unanimously adopted the 2019 Performance Report of the Committee and 2020 Work Plan of the Committee.
- At its 47<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 10 March, the Committee held a consultative hearing on the topic: "Role of the Ministry

of Science in promoting scientific research projects of national importance".

- At the 80<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning**, held on 5 March, the Committee adopted the 2020 Work Plan of the Committee.
- At the 81<sup>st</sup> meeting, consultative hearing (discussion) was held on the topic: "Monitoring the implementation of conclusions on the topic - Revitalisation and protection of Maslinada and Valdanos Cove".
- At the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 11 March, the **Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare** considered and adopted the 2019 Performance Report and the 2020 Work Plan of the Committee.
- At the 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, the **Anti-corruption Committee** considered the Information Paper of the Police Administration on the fight against corruption and organised crime in 2019, which is a classified document, therefore the meeting was closed to the public.
- At the 83<sup>rd</sup> meeting, held on 4 March, within the continuation of the procedure for appointing President of the State Election Commission, the **Administrative Committee** drafted the Proposal for a decision on appointing the President of the State Election Commission. The Committee decided to propose to the Parliament to appoint Aleksa Ivanović for the President of the State Election Commission.
- At the 84<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Administrative Committee launched the procedure for drafting a List of Candidates for two members of the Commission for Concessions of Montenegro from among prominent experts. The Committee also considered the initiative of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights to launch the procedure for amending the Decision on the amount of allowance for a member of the Evaluation Committee and decided to adopt the Decision on the amount of allowance for a member of the Evaluation Committee. The Committee considered and unanimously adopted the Committee's 2019 Performance Report and determined the Committee's Work Plan for 2020.
- At the First Joint Meeting of the **Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms and Security and Defence Committee** held on 6 March, a consultative hearing of the following was held: Supreme Public Prosecutor Ivica Stanković, Director of the Police Administration Veselin Veljović and President of the Commission for monitoring actions of the competent authorities in the investigation of cases of threats and violence against journalists, murders of journalists and attacks on media property Nikola Marković on the topic: "Actions of the competent authorities in the investigation of cases of threats and violence against journalists".

## NEWS FROM PARLIAMENT



### *Exhibition under the title “Montenegro and Bulgaria on the Map of Europe”, IV-XX centuries opened*

President Brajović and the Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to Montenegro Meglena Plugtschieva opened on 2 March an exhibition entitled "Montenegro and Bulgaria on the Map of Europe" (IV-XX centuries). In the Hall of the Parliament, a selection of 15 maps from the national archives of Montenegro and Bulgaria have been displayed. President of the Parliament emphasised with satisfaction the opportunity to present with the exhibition in an unusual way the history of our countries and the Western Balkans, as well as to affirm the good relations between Montenegro and Bulgaria. He said, among other things, that graphic historical depictions in which Montenegro had been increasingly visible particularly since the 19th century, testify not only of its geographically important position, but also of one historical constant factor: the struggle to confirm its identity and independence. President Brajović said that Montenegro and Bulgaria have had excellent friendly political, economic, cultural and other relations and also gave credit to Bulgaria

that during its Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the importance of the Union's enlargement policy was brought back into focus. The Ambassador stressed that the aim of this exhibition was to express the long-term interest of the European world for Montenegro and Bulgaria, as well as to gradually enrich the knowledge and the idea thereof through cartography. Speaking about Bulgaria, the Ambassador said, among other things, that Bulgaria's geographical position as part of a "unique land passage" between Europe, Asia and Africa, calls for a constant interest in European geographical science. Speaking about relations between Montenegro and Bulgaria, Plugtschieva named the organisation of the exhibition in the Parliament, as well as the recent successful and fruitful official visit of the Prime Minister of Montenegro to Bulgaria. The Ambassador suggested that the two countries should organise the presentation of this exhibition in Brussels, in order to enable our partners to enrich and improve knowledge about Montenegro and the region.

### *12<sup>th</sup> session of the Women's Parliament held*

President Brajović opened the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the Women's Parliament, which addressed the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality 13 years after its adoption. He emphasised the importance of both adopting good laws, and analysing and implementing them, to improve them if we find that they are not effective enough. An example of such improvement is the Law on the Election of Councillors and MPs, which has been amended several times in a decade, and thanks to this, we have almost 30% of women in the Parliament today. Brajović also expressed his respect for the anti-fascist movement on whose values modern Montenegro is based and brought forth the commitment of creating a society where modern day democratic achievements and values made women and men essentially equal by jointly

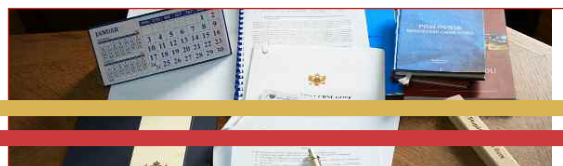
sharing the responsibility in creating a democratic, progressive, civic, anti-fascist and European Montenegro. Chair of the Gender Equality Committee Nada Drobnjak said that the topic of the Women's Parliament was precisely the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and the changes happening in the field of gender equality in Montenegro. When it comes to the Gender Equality Index of the Statistical Office, which was first calculated for Montenegro at the initiative of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, it shows that we are halfway to what Montenegro aspires to, Drobnjak concluded. Ministers and representatives of ministries in the Government of Montenegro spoke during the 12<sup>th</sup> session, as well as representatives of Women's groups of parties represented in the Parliament, representatives of NGOs and academia.

## PARLIAMENTARY GLOSSARY

**Collegium of the President of Parliament.** In the majority of parliaments there exists an internal parliamentary body that has a political role related to the organization of the legislative schedule, the planning of work, establishing the course of debates and so on. In parliamentary practice, this body exists under different names like "Advisory Board", "Presidency", "Presidium", or "Conference of the President" and it usually comprises of the president, the vice-presidents, the heads of MP groups and in some cases committee chairs. The Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro is a body composed of the President of the Parliament, the vice-presidents of the Parliament and the presidents of MP groups. The Secretary General of the Parliament participates in the work of the Collegium, as well as the committee chairs if needed. Further information regarding the activities of the respective body is available in the Parliamentary lexicon.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Doc. dr Komar, Olivera, Prof. dr Ivana Jelić, Nataša Komnenić, Irena Mijanović, Jelena Radonjić, Vlatko Šćepanović, Parlamentarni leksikon, Podgorica, Skupština Crne Gore 2016, p184

## IN FOCUS



### *President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović is a signatory to the regional initiative – Appeal for Assistance to the Region of the Western Balkans in Combating the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19)*

President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović, is a signatory to the regional initiative – Appeal for Assistance to the Region of the Western Balkans in Combating the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19). The letter addressed to the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli and the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, was sent by the presidents of parliaments of Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Northern Macedonia and Serbia.

The letter states, among other things, that the Western Balkans, which has always clearly and unequivocally emphasised that it belonged to the European family, should be exempted from the decision to restrict the export of medical equipment from the European Union in order to become, through the transfer of experience gained and the necessary equipment and medical supplies, part of a common European response to coping with the coronavirus pandemic.

Stressing that now, when we need more than ever the solidarity, a coordinated approach and joint action, president of parliaments of the Western Balkans propose that the EU institutions provide support for a

number concrete measures, such as to consider including this region in the EU + export license scheme, acceding to the Joint Procurement Agreement of medical countermeasures, as well as the possibility of allowing the Western Balkans region to divert unspent funds from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

With sincere belief in European solidarity and common European future, the presidents of parliaments of the region expressed hope that the appeal will have a positive outcome.



## PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO-FROM CATALOGUE OF RECEIVED PRESENTS

Title: SET OF PORCELAIN CUPS  
Country of origin: CHINA  
Extended by: PRESIDENT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA  
Recipient: PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO  
Date of receipt: 3. 11. 2014.



Title: A PAINTING WITH ISTANBUL MOTIFS  
Country of origin: TURKEY  
Extended by: MINISTER OF ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
Recipient: PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO  
Date of receipt: 5. 12. 2014.



# CALENDAR



## 2 March

- President of the Parliament Ivan Brajović and the Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to Montenegro Meglena Plugchieva opened an exhibition under the title "Montenegro and Bulgaria on the Map of Europe" (IV-XX centuries).
- Vice-President of the Parliament Branimir Gvozdenović met with the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro and Ambassador Maryse Daviet. Vice-President Gvozdenović expressed gratitude for the support provided by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) so far in the work of the Committee on Comprehensive Reform of Election and Other Legislation, which he chaired, and recalled that at the last session of the Parliament the laws that were the subject of the Committee's work were adopted. In this regard, the interlocutors noted that it was necessary to continue the joint work on these solutions, including the organisation of activities to monitor their implementation.
- Members of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms of the Parliament of Montenegro visited the Administration for Enforcement of Criminal Sanctions - juvenile detention and Women Department. The visit was carried out in accordance with the Committee's Action Plan for 2019 on monitoring the rights of persons deprived of their liberty, with a particular focus on minors, as particularly vulnerable group. These topics are continuously addressed by the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms both within its legislative framework and supervisory and control role. Chair of the Committee Halil Duković referred to the numerous activities carried out by the Committee aimed at monitoring the rights of persons deprived of their liberty. Continuous progress in the field was noted, to which additionally contributed the continuous training of servants in handling the persons deprived of their liberty. Chair Duković announced that this year, the Committee would, upon considering the Annual Report of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture, organise a control hearing of representatives of competent institutions in order to address the issue in a detailed manner.

## 4 March

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović hosted Minister of Defence of the Italian Republic Lorenzo Guerini, who was paying an official visit to Montenegro. President Brajović expressed pleasure with

the high level of the overall relations between Montenegro and the Italian Republic, whereby parliamentary cooperation with the Senate and House of Representatives occupied a significant place. The cooperation of parliamentary working bodies on the European path of our country was emphasised, as well as the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in the shared visions of the two countries. Guerini emphasised that Italy greatly appreciated our country's role in NATO and its contribution to regional stability, recognising



everything that Montenegro has done on its path to the European Union. The meeting discussed economic cooperation as well as the challenges facing the two countries, the region and the European Union. The interlocutors acknowledged that false news and misinformation, which by their influence on the rise of populism and even the electoral processes, were a danger to democratic countries, should not be taken lightly, to which NATO attaches great importance. The meeting was also attended by Vice President of the Parliament of Montenegro Genci Nimanbegu.

## 5 March

- President of the Parliament delivered a speech at thematic meeting of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms, on the topic "Equality before the law and prohibition of discrimination for the respect of diversity". The President thanked the Council of Europe for its continuous support and cooperation with the Parliament in various fields. Brajović reminded that Montenegro had revised its legislative framework and ratified a number of international instruments related to the protection of human rights since the restoration of its statehood. He expressed hope that by adopting the Law on life partnership of same sex partners, which was scheduled for adoption last year, joint success would be achieved, and Montenegro would take a step further in ensuring a

# CALENDAR



level playing field for all our citizens.

- Chair of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms Halil Duković met with the delegation of the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) composed of: Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings Petya Nestorova and two members of the Council of Europe Group of Experts - GRETA Julia Planitzer and Mihai Serban. Members of the GRETA Delegation emphasised the importance of retaining the fight against human trafficking on the political agenda, thus increasing the odds of protection for the victims of human trafficking and ensuring that the perpetrators of respective crimes receive an appropriate punishment. The Chair of the Committee emphasised that the Committee, in line with its competences and control and oversight role, performs continuous activities aimed at monitoring the status in the field of human trafficking. The Chair said that the Committee was continuously engaged in monitoring the activities of competent state authorities in terms of solving the status of displaced and internally displaced persons in Montenegro and organised numerous control hearings on the topic as well as visits which endeavoured to personally inspect the status of the said persons. It was concluded that the successful fight against trafficking in human beings implied a multisector approach and intensive cooperation of all competent authorities.

## 6 March

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro hosted for an inaugural visit the newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to Montenegro Vladimir Božović. President Brajović wished the Ambassador a successful mandate, expressing belief that through the diplomatic engagement he would contribute for the relations between the two countries to reach a level of mutual understanding and respect. Brajović emphasised that Montenegro has been committed to developing good neighbourly relations with all the countries of the region with which it has built cooperation based on the interests of citizens, the economic and geographical orientation to each other. He stressed that following the adoption of the Law on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the legal status of religious communities, there has been many undeliberate statements, but that the two countries in the further process of European integration through cooperation and mutual respect should overcome all misunderstandings. Referring to the enlargement policy, President Brajović stated that the accession to the European Union in the foreign policy context has

represented the Montenegro's priority and that it would continue to provide Serbia with full support on that journey. Brajović expressed satisfaction with the excellent parliamentary cooperation that has contributed to further building of relations between the two countries. The Ambassador informed the President that during his term of office he would devote himself to improving the political, economic, agricultural and cultural relations of the two countries. Commenting on the adoption of the Law on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the legal status of religious communities, Ambassador Božović said that he believed that the dialogue would lead to results and way out of the situation, assessing that there was room for overcoming differences.

## 9 March

- President Brajović opened the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the Women's Parliament, which addressed the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality 13 years after its adoption.

## 10 March

- Gender Equality Committee, in cooperation with the "Ženska akcija" NGO from Nikšić, organised a photo exhibition "Black and white female frame", on the occasion of the 12th Women's Parliament, held on 9 March. The "Black and white female frame" project is implemented by the "Ženska akcija" NGO from Nikšić, with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Montenegro, promoting female photographic creation in the form of black and white photography, as a special way



of artistic expression. The main objective of the project is to arouse interest in increasing the visibility and promotion of women's contribution to culture, with all its characteristics, above all among the authors of the photos themselves, but also among the decision makers in the field of culture.

# CALENDAR



## 13 March

- A roundtable was organised in the Parliament of Montenegro titled “Does Montenegro have a healthy competition in line with the EU rules?”, as part of the initiative of the Committee on European Integration regarding the supervision of the obligations related to the issues of special importance for Montenegro’s accession process to the EU. Chair of the Committee on European Integration Slaven Radunović explained that the aim of events like this one was to discuss on important topics related to negotiation chapters 8 - Competition, 6 - Company law and 20 - Enterprise and industrial policy from different perspectives and to learn lessons and draft recommendations for better solutions in these fields. Aleksandar Drljević, Chief Negotiator for Montenegro’s Accession to EU, delivered introductory remarks. He spoke about the improvement of the legislative framework as an important precondition for the efficient functioning of the Montenegrin market (laws on labour, public procurements, private and public partnership, concessions and companies), and especially emphasised the importance of keeping healthy competition and respecting market rules. In the discussion that followed, the participants discussed the balance of payments of Montenegro, the state of the industry, the social responsibility of companies operating in the Montenegrin market and the efficiency of inspection, as well as the position of non-governmental organisations, the quality of the education system, and the interest of young people in entrepreneurship and their access to sources of financing. The Roundtable was also the preparation for a consultative hearing dedicated to the negotiation chapter 8, which will be organised this month by the Committee.

## 20 March

- At the Collegium of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro chaired by Ivan Brajović, they welcomed the work done so far and a set of undertaken measures by the National Coordination Body for Communicable Diseases, Ministry of Health and Public Health Institute. Bearing in mind the assessment of the epidemiological situation and recommendations of responsible state authorities, it has been agreed that the Parliament of Montenegro would proceed with further implementation of precautionary measures with regard to the planned legislative activities and meetings of the working bodies in response to the coronavirus COVID-19. The Collegium concluded that a coordinated political response, along with the permanent cooperation of the Parliament and the Government, was crucial in order to mitigate the expected socio-economic

consequences. It was also concluded that timely confrontation with current challenges, as well as responsibility, solidarity and mutual trust, have a stimulating effect on the control of the situation and the rapid recovery of our society. Members of the Collegium agreed on the need for providing a contribution to further stability and preservation of public health, both by the responsible institutions and political parties and by the personal example of each. Due to the current circumstances, it was necessary to postpone the local elections in Tivat.

## 25 March

- President Brajović is a signatory to the regional initiative – Appeal for Assistance to the Region of the Western Balkans in Combating the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19).

## 27 March

- A meeting of the Collegium of the President of the Parliament was held, chaired by Ivan Brajović, and attended by: Deputy Prime Minister Milutin Simović, Minister of Health Kenan Hrapović, Minister of Finance Darko Radunović, Minister of Economy Dragica Sekulić and Minister of Labour and Social Welfare Kemal Purišić. Members of the Collegium considered the previous activities of the National Coordination Body for Communicable Diseases and measures undertaken for protecting Montenegrin citizens regarding the current epidemiological situation. They pointed out that it was very important for every part of the society to support upholding the decisions of the responsible institutions as well as the continuation of the implementation of the needed preventative activities with the aim of timely protections of citizens and countering large-scale infection. A special attention was devoted to the procurement of the necessary personal protection and other medical equipment as well as the preparedness and organisation of the Montenegrin health system in these circumstances. It was necessary to inform the public timely and accurately about all the developments. The Collegium expressed readiness for defining the necessary legislative activities that will be aimed at mitigating the expected socio-economic consequences. Continuous communication was proposed and the responsibility of all representatives of national bodies was requested as well as their obligation to urgently deliver information upon the parliamentary request. Representatives of the parliamentary political parties gave a number of useful suggestions and proposals to the Government representatives, primarily in relation to the preservation and further strengthening of the health system and socio-economic stability.