

# NEWSLETTER OPEN PARLIAMENT



Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ No. 106 ♦ July and August 2020

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# OPEN PARLIAMENT



Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ Electronic format ♦ Release: monthly ♦ Year X ♦ No. 106 ♦ July and August 2020

## FOREWORD

*Dear readers,*

We present to you the key information on activities of the Parliament of Montenegro in the period from 1 July to 30 August, which is, in the form of monthly newsletter "Open Parliament", prepared by Parliamentary Service.

During July, the Fifth and Eighth Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020 and the Seventh Special Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, took place.

In July, Committees considered 17 proposals for a law and performed other activities within their oversight role.

In focus of this month's newsletter is the presentation of the 13<sup>th</sup> July Awards.

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 Fifth Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session in 2020**, MPs adopted the following: Law on Same-sex Life Partnership, Law on Supplements to the Law on Protection of Population Against Communicable Diseases, Law on Amendments to the Law on Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Law on Alternative Dispute Resolution, Law on Amendments to the Family Law, Law on Amendments to the Law on Civil Proceedings, Law on Amendments to the Law on Courts, Law on Supplements to the Law on Public Prosecution Office, Law on Military Intelligence and Security Affairs, Law on Amendments to the Law on Data Confidentiality, Law on Amendments to the Excise Law, Law on the rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway, Law on Amendments to the Law on Safety of Maritime Navigation, Law on Ratifying the Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Montenegro supplementing the European Convention on Extradition of 13 December 1957 and aimed at facilitating its application, Law on Ratifying the Protocol amending the Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons and the Law on Amendments to the Law on Higher Education. Within Elections and Appointments item, MPs adopted a Proposal for the Decision on electing Radoš Zečević as a member of the Constitutional Committee and Proposal for the Decision on electing Strahinja Bulajić as a member of the Security and Defence Committee. The following were also adopted: Law on National Public Broadcaster of Radio and Television of Montenegro, Law on Media, Law on Medicines, Law on Amendments to the Law on Health Care, Law on Amendments to the Law on Emergency Medical Services, Law on Labour Fund, Decision on adoption of the detailed spatial plan for the

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The newsletter is edited by the Education Centre of the Parliamentary Institute.

area of the multipurpose reservoir on the Komarnica River and the Decision on deploying members of the Army of Montenegro in the NATO Response Force - NRF.

As part of the item Elections and appointments, the Parliament formulated the Proposal for the Government for the appointment of Božidar Pižurica and Samet Murić as members of the Commission for Concessions. The Decision on establishing the Committee on Monitoring the Application of the Law on Election of Councillors and MPs in the part relating to the media was also adopted.

**At the Eighth Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session in 2020**, MPs adopted the following: Law on Amendments to the Pension and Disability Insurance Law, Law on Amendments to the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings, Law on Amendments to the Law on Water Management Financing, Law on Innovation Activity, Law on Incentive Measures for the Development of Research and Innovation, Law on Amendments to the Law on Scientific and Research Activity, Law on Amendments to the Law on Energy, Law on Amendments to the Law on Value Added Tax, Law on Roads, and the Law on Amendments to the Law on Air Transport.

Balša Srdanović was appointed Deputy Member of the State Election Commission under agenda item "Elections and Appointments".

**At the Seventh Special Sitting of the First Ordinary (Spring) Session in 2020**, within the agenda item Prime Minister's Questions and MPs' Questions, the answer to the MPs' questions were provided by the President of the Government of Montenegro and the ministers in the Government. The Prime Minister provided answers to seven questions, whereas the ministers to 75 questions.

#### *Proposals for law deliberated in Committees*

- **Proposal for a Law on National Public Broadcaster of Radio and Television of Montenegro** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Media** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Safety of Maritime Navigation** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Medicines** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Health Care** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Emergency Medical Services** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on the Labour Fund** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the
- Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Higher Education** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Pension and Disability Insurance** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare and the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Spatial Planning and construction of structures** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Financing of the Water Management** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Energy Law** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget and the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Value Added Tax** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget and the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Innovation Activities** was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget, within its area of competence, and decided to submit an opinion to the lead committee-Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports. The same proposal was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports and the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Incentive Measures for the Development of Research and Innovation** was considered by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget, within its area of competence, and decided to submit an opinion to the lead committee-Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports. The same proposal was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports and the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Scientific Research Activity** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports and the Legislative Committee.
  - **Proposal for a Law on Roads** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee.

#### *Other activities of working bodies*

- At its 107<sup>th</sup> meeting, on 10 July, **Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration** conducted a consultative hearing of candidate applicants to the Public Call for the Election of four members of the Judicial Council



from among prominent lawyers. Five applicants were interviewed on this occasion: Gavriilo Čabarkapa, Ibrahim Husejnović, Lidija Kovačević, Jadranka Joksimović i Ljubinka Popović-Kustudić.

- At the 111<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 30 July, the Committee determined the Proposal for a Decision on the election of four members of the Judicial Council from among prominent lawyers, and decided to propose that the following be elected by the Parliament: Čabarkapa Gavriilo, Husejnović Ibrahim, Kovačević Lidija and Popović-Kustudić Ljubinka.
- At the 74<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **Committee on International Relations and Emigrants**, held on 20 July, members of the Committee considered and decided by a majority of votes that Milorad Šćepanović be appointed as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to the Russian Federation on residential basis, with headquarters in Moscow.
- At the 75<sup>th</sup> meeting of 20 July, members of the Committee considered and adopted by a majority of votes the 2019 Performance Report of the Committee.
- At the 76<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 30 July, members of the Committee considered and unanimously decided that Slavica Milačić be appointed as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Montenegro – Permanent Representative – Head of Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the United Nations and other international organisations, on residential basis, with headquarters in Geneva.



- At the 41<sup>st</sup> meeting of the **Committee on European Integration**, held on 24 July, members of the Committee, within a consultative hearing, discussed the status of accession negotiations with regard to chapters 23 – Fundamental Rights and Judiciary and 24 – Justice, Freedom, and Security, providing their comments on the findings of the European Commission’s non-paper, which were adopted in June of the current year.
- At the 120<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget** held on 6 July, the Committee conducted a consultative hearing on the topic: “Issues of implementing the moratorium on repayment of credit obligations of Montenegrin citizens and the role of the Central Bank of Montenegro in this process”.
- At the 122<sup>nd</sup> meeting, held on 21<sup>st</sup> July, Committee considered and noted learning about the 2019 Performance Report of the Investment and Development Fund of Montenegro JSC with financial statements and 2019 Independent Auditor’s Report and the 2019 Report on the inspection of works and the level of investment in

accordance with the "Portonovi" investment project - Kumbor, Herceg Novi.

- At the 107<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 7 July, In line with Article 75 of the parliamentary Rules of Procedure, the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget held a control hearing of the Tax Administration Director, on the topic: “Tax Administration’s work in the field of tax debt supervision and collection”.
- At the 62<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the **Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms**, held on 15 July, the Committee considered and supported the 2019 Performance Report of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro.
- At the 90<sup>th</sup> meeting of the **Administrative Committee**, held on 15 July, the Committee gave positive opinion on the Proposal for the Rulebook on Internal Organisation and Job Scheme of the Service of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms, No 03-1052/20 of 9 July 2020. Siniša Bjeković, Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, and Jovana Đurović, Advisor to the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, took part in the meeting. Also, the Committee established: Proposal for a Decision on election of one member of the Constitutional Committee of the Parliament of Montenegro. The Committee decided to propose to the Parliament to elect Radoš Zečević as a member of the Constitutional Committee of the Parliament of Montenegro; Proposal for a Decision on election of a member of the Security and Defence Committee of the Parliament of Montenegro. The Committee decided to propose to the Parliament to elect Strahinja Bulajić, as a member of the Security and Defence Committee of the Parliament of Montenegro.
- At the 91<sup>st</sup> meeting of 23 July, the Committee determined the Proposal for candidates for two members of the Commission for Concessions from among prominent experts, upon the Public Invitation of 30 June 2020. The Committee proposed to the Parliament of Montenegro to elect Božidar Pižurica and Samet Murić as two members of the Commission for Concessions.
- At the 92<sup>nd</sup> meeting, held on 30 July, the Committee gave approval to the Proposal for the Rulebook on Amendments to the Rulebook on Internal Organisation and Job Scheme of the Service of the Parliament of Montenegro. The Committee also approved Proposal for the Decision on appointing a member of the State Election Commission from the Democratic Montenegro and decided to propose to the Parliament to appoint Balša Srdanović.



## NEWS FROM PARLIAMENT



### *Deputies to the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro swear an oath*

Deputies to the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro Nerma Dobardžić and Snežana Armenko have sworn in on 3 July before the President of the Parliament of Montenegro. Brajović pointed out the significance of the functioning of the institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms in its full composition and voiced his conviction that the deputies, respecting international standards and best practice, with their transparent work would contribute to a higher degree of respect and promotion of human rights and freedoms. He reminded that Montenegrin society had great expectations from this institution and emphasised that the Parliament was obliged to help the institution of

Ombudsman so it could be autonomous and independent. He also referenced the recently adopted Law on Life Partnership of Same-Sex Partners and emphasised that the degree of respect for human rights was not ideal in any society, but that the adoption of this law represented a big step forward for the entire Montenegrin society and the quality of human rights. Snežana Mijušković deemed the support of the Parliament very significant, emphasising that without it, regardless of their commitment, they could not accomplish their mission. Nerma Dobardžić and Snežana Armenko were elected deputies to the Ombudsman at the Second Sitting of the First Ordinary Session of 25 June 2020.

### *President of the Parliament of Montenegro hosted OSCE PA Vice-President*

President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović hosted on 27 August OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observer mission to Montenegro Margareta Cederfelt. President Brajović was pleased with the presence of the OSCE observers, which is another confirmation of partner cooperation with Montenegro. He said that the parliamentary majority in this term was working intensively on improving election laws with the aim of creating the best possible election environment, but that, unfortunately, it did not have the support of the opposition parties. OSCE PA Vice-President Ms Margareta Cederfelt thanked President Brajović for the invitation and pointed out that the presence of international observers is a marker of solidarity, which once again shows the commitment to Montenegro and

its citizens. The meeting discussed the innovated election laws, the impact of coronavirus on the conduct of political campaigns and the conditions in which the election process will take place.



## PARLIAMENTARY GLOSSARY

**A Declaration** is a formal act expressing the will (unlike a contract which is a formal expression of the concurrence of wills) on an issue, where a position on an important event or a political, economic, legal or any other issue is taken or declared in public. A declaration can be adopted by the parliament, a state body, a local self-government body, an international organization or institution, a political party, as well as by a professional or any other association. In principle, declarations are political acts with legal meaning, but they are not binding in strict legal terms. Most of them belong to the non-binding form of law commonly also referred to as "soft law". However, there are certain declarations that are legally binding, such as, for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in the form of a Resolution of the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948 and the Declaration of Independence of Montenegro adopted by the Parliament of Montenegro on 3 June 2006. The Parliament of Montenegro can adopt declarations as acts of parliament.<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, p 195

## IN FOCUS



### 13<sup>th</sup> July Awards presented

President of the Parliament of Montenegro presented on 10 July in Villa "Gorica", at the appropriate ceremony, the highest state recognition, the 13<sup>th</sup> July Awards to the winners – Public Health Institute, Ranko Lazović, surgeon, and Živko Andrijašević, historian. In his address, President Brajović said that in difficult times, and there were plenty of that nature in Montenegro, it always seemed that time is running out, especially today in times of health, economic and social challenges. Therefore, let us be more ready and smarter than ever; to emerge victorious, because the battles for a better and safer humanity are yet to come. Speaking about the winners, Brajović pointed out that the Public Health Institute of Montenegro, with its self-confidence, expertise, courage and responsibility, carried the burden of the epidemic under which many developed and powerful health systems in the world broke down. "This award is given not only for the first victory, but for all past and future battles, and the award is deservedly shared by the predecessors of the current generation, creating the foundations of this extraordinary institution". Speaking about the laureate, Ranko Lazović, a gastrointestinal surgeon, he said that the humane attitude and steady hand of Lazović saved many lives. "It is clear that all important struggles are not won by an individual, but by a community, but there is always, among equals, the most prominent one, if not the best, then the one capable of making decisions with knowledge, experience and its title, correct ones and of general importance and benefit. Our laureate, together with the overall health care system, has also gained the trust of

the Montenegrin public". "Mr Živko Andrijašević is one of those who do not give in to the old or the new times and pressures, for whom the profession and the truth are always the motive and the commitment. Andrijašević never compromised with something not true, with myths and mythomania, especially not with populism and politicking. He has already been honest with us saying, like the greatest historians of the past and present that we are what we are, not what we want to be; that we have underestimated ourselves when we should have been proud, and that we had given too much importance to ourselves or others. Because history is a strict and fundamental science, based on facts and truth, which preserves the essence of human civilisation, and everything else would be knuckling under people and time, ideologies, positions and oppositions, religions and indoctrination. Asking that they remain on the track of progress with the same intensity, the President Brajović ended his speech with the words: "I know that you have never betrayed Montenegro, and this award is a confirmation that it did not betray you either. Therefore, today and tomorrow – represent Montenegro with your honour, expertise, and responsibility, dear laureates!" On behalf of the Jury for presenting the 13<sup>th</sup> July Award, the rationale was provided by the member thereof, Jadranka Selhanović. On behalf of the winners, Živko Andrijašević expressed appreciation, saying that the greatest recognition has been given for their works, and the winners have been honoured with an award – both Montenegrin and national and that of the 13<sup>th</sup> July – which cannot be compared with any other in their respective fields of work.

## PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO-FROM CATALOGUE OF RECEIVED PRESENTS

Title: Aquarelle painting  
Country of origin: POLAND  
Extended by: President of the Polish Senate  
Recipient: President of the Parliament of Montenegro  
Date of receipt: 5 September 2013



Title: Oil in canvas painting  
Country of origin: Georgia  
Extended by: President of Georgia  
Recipient: President of the Parliament of Montenegro  
Date of receipt: 17 September 2013





# CALENDAR



## 2 July

- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has responded positively to the invitation of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro, Ivan Brajović, and will form a delegation composed of 22 members to monitor the upcoming parliamentary elections scheduled for 30 August. The ODIHR also responded to the invitation of President Brajović, the Needs Assessment Mission of which for the parliamentary elections in Montenegro paid a visit to our country. In line with the ongoing cooperation of the Parliament of Montenegro with this organisation on the improvement of electoral legislation, ODIHR representatives will talk to MPs who participated in the work of the Committee on Comprehensive Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation. The ODIHR mission also met with other institutions involved in the election process.

## 3 July

- Deputies to the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro Nerma Dobardžić and Snežana Armenko swore in before the President of the Parliament of Montenegro.

## 7 July

- Vice-President of the Parliament Genci Nimanbegu received the Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Montenegro Gregor Presker. On this occasion, he expressed gratitude for the continuous support that friendly Slovenia has provided to Montenegro on the path to Euro-Atlantic integration. The upcoming parliamentary elections were also the topic of conversation, for which Vice President Nimanbegu expressed his belief to be held in a good atmosphere and would result in the continuation of Euro-Atlantic policy in Montenegro. Ambassador Presker was also interested about the challenges the Albanian community in Montenegro had been facing. Therefore, Vice President Nimanbegu informed the Ambassador about the legal provisions of the electoral legislation, expressing his opinion that he was not satisfied with them. The interlocutors agreed that the European Union should be more agile with regard to the Western Balkans and their clearly expressed position on European integration.
- Vice President of the Parliament of Montenegro Branimir Gvozdenović met with experts of the ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission for parliamentary elections in Montenegro Vladimir Misev, Senior Advisor on New Voting Technologies, and Oleksii Lychkovakh, Election Adviser. Vice President Gvozdenović voiced his gratitude for the cooperation and support provided to Montenegro so far

within the work of the Committee on Comprehensive Reform of Electoral Legislation, which he chaired. He also voiced his satisfaction with the fact that ODIHR observation missions in previous reports assessed the elections in Montenegro as elections organised in a peaceful and democratic spirit and in line with the reformed legislative framework, with the use of new information technologies for voter identification. Furthermore, referring to the current situation caused by the coronavirus epidemic, Vice President Gvozdenović assured the experts that the situation was being monitored daily and that further activities were planned accordingly, as well as that the election day in Montenegro would be organised paying a great deal of attention and modelled after the developed countries which had organised their elections in this period, and complying with all the recommendations of the NCB. Misev thanked for the good cooperation in the previous period and informed the Vice President that, after holding meetings with all relevant entities in the country, he would also submit the final report on the needs assessment.

## 9 July

- Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to Montenegro Jurate Raguckiene paid her inaugural visit to President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović. The President of the Parliament congratulated the Ambassador for assuming her office and emphasised that relations of the two countries were characterised by friendly and meaningful cooperation. He expressed gratitude for the continuous support of the Republic of Lithuania to Montenegro's integration processes. Ambassador Raguckiene said that she was honoured by her diplomatic post in Montenegro and that she would dedicate her term to the strengthening of the overall relations among the two friendly states. She stressed that recent opening of the last negotiation chapter 8 was an excellent signal for the



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enlargement policy as a whole, and welcomed

# CALENDAR



Montenegro's progress on its integration path. The Lithuanian Ambassador also reminded that Montenegro had made big steps during the Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the European Union, opening than five chapters, including 23 and 24. The interlocutors discussed the current political events in the run-up to the upcoming parliamentary elections in Montenegro and the Republic of Lithuania.

## 10 July

- The 13<sup>th</sup> July Awards were presented to the winners – Public Health Institute, Ranko Lazović, surgeon, and Živko Andrijašević, historian.

## 13 July

- In his communication with President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović regarding the upcoming parliamentary elections, President of the European Parliament David Maria Sassoli emphasises that the European Parliament's Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG), at its meeting last month, confirmed as a priority election observation in Montenegro. The arrival of the Mission will be considered in the upcoming period, in cooperation with the ODIHR, based on the analysis of the epidemiological situation due to the prevalence of Covid-19 throughout Europe. While congratulating Montenegro on its exceptional success in fighting coronavirus, the EP President stresses that the crisis has proven EU's strong commitment to and solidarity with Montenegro, and also Montenegro's strong commitment to the EU.

## 16 July

- President Brajović hosted a delegation of the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO), led by Gianluca Pasarelli, Professor. President Brajović emphasised the fact that we already have a good electoral law and process, which have been further improved in the previous period. In this regard, he considers that observation missions are welcome and that Montenegro is always ready to consider their suggestions and implement them in the election legislation. Professor Pasarelli stressed that Montenegro represented a benchmark for the region, especially in the context of European integration. Pasarelli was interested in cooperation between the Parliament and the State Election Commission regarding the organisation of the electoral process in the light of the corona virus epidemic. President Brajović informed his interlocutors about the extended session of the Collegium held yesterday, where they discussed guidelines and comparative experiences on the basis of which the SEC will issue a binding epidemiological

instruction, while fully respecting the fact that citizens' health is an absolute priority.

## 17 July

- Ambassador of Israel to Montenegro Alona Fisher-Kamm paid her farewell visit to President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović. President Brajović thanked Ambassador Fisher-Kamm for her wholehearted commitment and personal contribution to the improvement of relations between the two countries during her term. He expressed pleasure with the achieved level of the overall relations, noting that there was possibility for their further improvement in many important fields. The President of the Parliament stressed the importance of the Jewish community in Montenegro and their cooperation with the Montenegrin Parliament, reminding that in Montenegro, a country that fosters historical values of freedom and anti-fascism, there has never been anti-Semitic messages. Ambassador Fisher-Kamm said that Montenegro and Israel were continuously developing friendly relations and assessed that the opening of the Israeli Honorary Consulate in Podgorica was a possibility for more intensive activities and overall presence of Israel in Montenegro. Ambassador Fisher-Kamm also stressed that Montenegro reaffirms its role in global efforts to preserve the memory of Holocaust victims and the fight against anti-Semitism, as permanent commitments of present and future generations.

## 22 July

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović received Resident Coordinator to Montenegro Ms Fiona McCluney, in a farewell visit UN, thanking her for the successful mission and excellent cooperation with the Parliament of Montenegro during her office. He especially emphasised the importance of the continuous political dialogue that we have with UN top officials. The President of the Parliament expressed pleasure with the fact that the 26th Parliament of Montenegro has adopted a series of historic decisions in a very challenging time, such as the Law on Same-Sex Partnership, proving thus once again that Montenegro is an open, modern, democratic civic society observing differences. Brajović emphasised that Montenegro especially valued the engagement and support of the UN system in order to provide an adequate response to the socio-economic consequences caused by the pandemic. McCluney emphasised that during her term Montenegro had achieved great progress in many fields. She stated that the accession process included two-thirds of the Agenda 2030, including the environment, human rights, the rule of law and social politics. She said that, as it



was the case so far, Montenegro can count on the UN support in tackling Covid 19 epidemic, and in that regard, provided information on the Plan for urgent socio-economic response to the consequences of the pandemic.

### 25 July

- Member of the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports Andrija Popović visited the Maritime Faculty of the University of Montenegro in Kotor, upon the invitation of Špiro Ivošević, Dean of the Faculty. Ivošević informed Popović about the organisation and operation of the Maritime Faculty, particularly pointing out the intensive development period of the Faculty, which included the development of both - teaching and scientific process and improvement of work reflected in the implementation of large number of national and international projects, where the Faculty acted as a holder or partner. The financial resources, used in that way, were invested in the development of the Faculty, namely the procurement of modern simulators and other equipment, for the purpose of improving not only the teaching process but also the training of seafarers. He also emphasised the continuous development of the teaching staff, which is reflected in the training of teachers and associates, and the tendency to create and employ young PhDs. They concluded that the Faculty is a prestigious institution of higher education that has produced generations of domestic and foreign students, who conscientiously graduated from one of the study programs of this faculty, some of whom were awarded with the highest maritime titles, working in the companies around the world.

### 28 July

- UK Ambassador to Montenegro Alison Kemp paid her farewell visit to President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović. President Brajović thanked Ambassador Kemp for her commitment and contribution to the improvement of friendly relations between Montenegro and the United Kingdom, wishing her the best of luck in her further career. He stressed that there were numerous potentials for further improvement of bilateral relations and expressed interest in strengthening political dialogue. The President expressed gratitude for the support provided by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy to the Parliament of Montenegro in strengthening legislative oversight, human resources development, and especially in the area of strengthening financial oversight. In that sense, he informed Ambassador Kemp about the establishment of the Parliamentary Budget Office, as a new organisational unit within the Parliamentary Institute. Ambassador Kemp thanked for the opportunity to once again exchange views, before the end of her term of office, on current cooperation as well as the internal political situation in Montenegro in the forthcoming elections. She emphasised that the Parliament of Montenegro achieved significant progress in its work. She particularly pointed

out the importance of adopting the Law on Life Partnership of Same-Sex Partners, by which Montenegro has shown that it is a democratic civil society that respects diversity. She stressed that in the period of the unprecedented global crisis caused by Covid 19 epidemic, Montenegro can count on the UK support.

### 29 July

- President Brajović received Milorad Šćepanović, ahead of taking his office of Montenegrin Ambassador to the Russian Federation, wishing him the best of success to Ambassador Šćepanović in his work and in improving bilateral relations between Montenegro and the Russian Federation.
- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović spoke at the opening of the roundtable titled Transparency of financing political entities and election campaigns, organised by the Agency for Prevention of Corruption, Great Britain Embassy to Montenegro and Westminster Foundation for Democracy. Brajović emphasised that the Parliament of Montenegro, wishing to improve the election environment, immediately after receiving the recommendations from the ODIHR/OSCE observation mission, started their implementation. He also stressed that we are going into these elections with a set of innovated laws, including the Law on financing political entities and election campaigns, which is one of the results of the Committee on Comprehensive Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation. He also emphasised transparency as the key word of the electoral process, which was one of the most important guidelines during the work of the 26th Parliament. President Brajović pointed out the significant support of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and announced the establishment of the Parliamentary Budget Office, as a new organisational unit within the Parliamentary Institute, which will provide support to all



MPs in exercising parliamentary budget control. The round table gathered representatives of political entities in Montenegro, and in the introductory part, the speakers were President of the Council of the APC Momčilo Radulović, the British Ambassador to Montenegro Alison Kemp and the Director of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy Ana Milutinović.

### 10 August

- Chair of the Gender Equality Committee Nada Drobnjak, held a meeting with representatives of the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO) discussing the position of women in Montenegro, with an emphasis on the participation of women in politics (female candidates in electoral lists and female party activists) and the extent to which they were represented within the electorate. The meeting was attended by Ana Mihajlović, Deputy Head of the International Parliamentary Election Observation Mission to Montenegro, Kristina Kostelac, election administration analysts and Danka Gardašević, election administration assistant analyst.

### 11 August

- Chair of the Gender Equality Committee Nada Drobnjak met with Tomaš Mesarić, Head of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), at the same time the Head of the OSCE/ODIHR Observation Mission for the 2020 parliamentary elections, and Rashad Shirinov, a political analyst to the observation mission. The meeting covered issues of participation of women on the Montenegrin political scene, as well as their overall position in Montenegro. Vidosava Vulanović, assistant to the political analyst also attended.

### 18 August

- President Brajović hosted the Core Team of the ODIHR election observation mission, led by Head of the Mission Tamaš Maserić. Brajović confirmed the readiness of the Parliament of Montenegro to work continuously with this organisation on strengthening democratic processes and the trust of citizens in the elections.- I believe that your professional and unbiased assessments will confirm that Montenegro will improve the election legislation in line with the said recommendations, and that every election cycle is being conducted in regulated conditions, Brajović said. Maserić thanked Brajović for the constructive cooperation and stressed that through his previous parliamentary term in the European Parliament was attentively following Montenegro's developments.- We have learnt about the amended electoral legislation, and also that the Law on Election of Councillors and MPs was not adopted due the lack of the necessary majority in the Parliament... The interlocutors exchanged opinions on the activities of the Parliament of Montenegro, especially of the Committee on Comprehensive Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation, results of his work and participation of political parties in improving this process. They talked about the manner of conducting campaign during the coronavirus outbreak and expressed conviction that the elections in Montenegro will be successfully conducted this time as well.

### 24 August

- Vice-President of the Parliament of Montenegro Gvozdenović received an ODIHR delegation led by the head of the observation mission Tamás Meszerics. Gvozdenović

pointed out the significance of organising an ODIHR observation mission in Montenegro, in addition to the difficult situation in the world caused by the coronavirus, pointing out that international observation missions and their recommendations have significance for the implementation and constant improvement of the electoral process in Montenegro. Meszerics voiced his satisfaction with the cooperation with Montenegro so far and notified the Vice President about his intention to have conversations with various actors of the election process in the following days, aimed at evaluating electoral environment. Gvozdenović informed the head of the ODIHR observation mission Meszerics about the work and results of the Committee on Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation which he used to run. He pointed out that good quality legal solutions were adopted, that there was excellent electoral administration and that all parties were participating in the elections which once more confirmed the existence of good quality of normative framework for administering elections scheduled for 30 August. He especially emphasised that the state system was completely stable, organised and operating in accordance with the highest international standards, as well as that it was ready to organise the upcoming elections. Gvozdenović pointed out that holding elections in this period was a challenging task for the entire Europe, including Montenegro, assuring his interlocutors that Montenegro had ensured that all citizens could go to the polls freely and accordingly exercise their constitutional right without restrictions, but with strict compliance with the measures prescribed by the State Election Commission and the National Coordination Body.

### 25 August

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro hosted Defence Minister of the Slovak Republic Jaroslav Nad'. Brajović stressed that Montenegro and the Slovak Republic have built excellent interstate relations and meaningful cooperation, which is a confirmation of a strong partnership and a commitment to the further strengthening of the overall cooperation. Nad' emphasised that Slovakia had always been on the side of Montenegro, actively supporting its membership of NATO and European integration, as a true friend and partner. -Recognising the progress made in Montenegro, Slovakia has been continuously supporting Montenegro's membership in NATO and the process of integration into the European Union since independence. - We all in the European Union see the excellent work you have done in meeting the European criteria and we hope that you will continue the same policy after the elections. Slovakia will continue to support Montenegro's further progress even more intensively...

### 27 August

- President Brajović hosted OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observer mission to Montenegro Margareta Cederfelt.