

NEWSLETTER OPEN PARLIAMENT

Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ No. 110 ♦ December 2020

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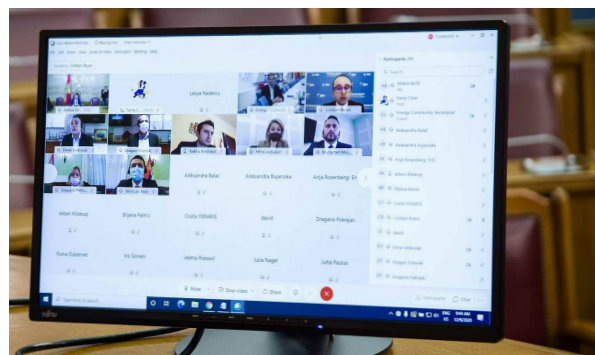
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OPEN PARLIAMENT



Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ Electronic format ♦ Release: monthly ♦ Year X ♦ No. 110 ♦ December 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 December, which is, in the form of monthly newsletter "Open Parliament", prepared by Parliamentary Service.

During December, the Third Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, First-Constituent Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, and the Fourth Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, took place.

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

In focus of this month's newsletter is the President's speech at the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum meeting.

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 Third Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, the Parliament of Montenegro elected the Prime Minister and members of the 42nd Government of Montenegro, as well as appointed chair and members of the standing committees of the 27th term as well as chair and members of the Commission for Monitoring and Control of the Privatisation Procedure.

Within the **First-Constituent Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020**, the Parliament adopted the Decision on determining the number of vice-presidents and elected two vice-presidents from among the parliamentary majority. Branka Bošnjak and Strahinja Bulajić were elected vice-presidents of the 27th Parliament of Montenegro.

At the **Fourth Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020** MPs adopted the following: Decision on establishing the Committee on Comprehensive Electoral Reform, Decision on Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, Law on Amendment to the Labour Law, Proposal for 2021 financial plans together with work plans of independent regulatory bodies, namely: Agency for Electronic Media, Agency for Electronic Communications and Postal Services, Regulatory Agency for Energy and Regulated Utility Services, Agency for Insurance Supervision and Capital Market Commission, Law on Amendments to the Law on freedom of religion or beliefs and legal status of religious communities, Law on Amendments to the Law

on Civil Servants and State Employees, Law on Supplements to the Law on Health Care, Law on Amendments to the Law on Credit Institutions, Law on Amendments to the Law on Recovery and Resolution of Credit Institutions and Law on Amendments to the Law on Fiscalisation in the Trade in Goods and Services. Within the item of Elections and appointments, the Parliament adopted the Decision on the appointment of nine members of the State Election Commission and noted the completion of the procedure for appointing members of the Council for Civilian Control of Police Operations.

Proposals for law deliberated in committees

- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on freedom of religion or beliefs and legal status of religious communities** was considered and proposed to the Parliament of Montenegro for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Credit Institutions** was considered and proposed to the Parliament of Montenegro for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Recovery and Resolution of Credit Institutions** was considered and proposed to the Parliament of Montenegro for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Supplements to the Law on Health Care** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Amendment to the Labour Law** 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 Fiscalisation in the Trade in Goods and Services** 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 Civil Servants and State Employees** was considered and proposed to the Parliament of Montenegro for adoption by the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration and the Legislative Committee.

Proposals for other acts deliberated in committees

- **Proposal for a Decision on Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament 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 Decision on establishing the Committee on Comprehensive Electoral Reform** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration.

Other activities of working bodies

- At its First Meeting held on 30 December, the **Constitutional Committee** adopted the Information Note on the termination of office of the two Constitutional Court judges and the Proposal for the decision on the termination of office of the two Constitutional Court judges Hamdija Šarkinović and Mevlida Muratović.



- At the first meeting, held on 25 December, the **Legislative Committee** elected Jovanka Laličić as Deputy Chair of the Committee.
- At the First meeting, held on 24 December, the **Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration** held a consultative hearing of a candidate from a list of applicants who fulfil statutory conditions for the position of the Supreme Public Prosecutor. After the hearing of the candidate Danijela Marković, the Committee will send a report to the Parliament of Montenegro for further consideration and decision-making.



- At its First Meeting held on 30 December, the **Committee on International Relations and Emigrants** considered the 2019 Performance Report of the Diaspora Administration. Following a

comprehensive discussion, the Committee members did not support the 2019 Performance Report of the Diaspora Administration with a majority of votes.

- At its First Meeting, held on 28 December, the **Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget** considered and decided to propose to the Parliament to adopt the proposals for financial plans together with work plans of the following independent regulatory bodies for 2021: Agency for Electronic Media, Agency for Electronic Communications and Postal Services, Regulatory Agency for Energy and Regulated Utility Services of Montenegro, Insurance Supervision Agency, and Capital Market Commission.



- At the second meeting, the **Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare** held a consultative hearing of Minister of Health Jelena Borovinić-Bojović on the topic: "Considering epidemiological situation with respect to the current measures to be applied during the upcoming holidays".
- At the third meeting, held on 3 December, the **Administrative Committee**, at the suggestion of the President of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksa Bečić, and in line with Article 6 of the Decision on special advisers in the Parliament of Montenegro, the Committee appointed Vuk Janković, law graduate, and Duško Stjepović, international law specialist, as advisor to the President of the Parliament of Montenegro.
- At the fourth meeting, held on 16 December, Luigi Shkreli was elected Deputy Chair of the Committee. Also, in line with the Electronic Media Law, the Committee initiated the procedure for appointment of two members of the Council of the Agency for Electronic Media by issuing the Public call to authorised proposers - non-governmental organisations dealing with the protection of human rights and freedoms and the association of commercial broadcasters.
- At the follow up of the meeting, on 17 December, the Committee has drawn up a List of candidates for the election of chairs and members of the standing committees of the 27th Parliament of Montenegro and has unanimously established the Proposal for the

Decision on the election of chairperson and members of the Commission.

- At the fifth meeting, held on 28 December, the Committee determined, in accordance with proposals by political parties and coalitions from the parliamentary majority and opposition, the Proposal for a decision on appointing nine members of the State Election Commission. The Committee decided to propose to the Parliament of Montenegro to appoint the following as members of the State Election Commission: Koča Đurišić, as member; Miloš Giljen, as alternate member; Dražen Medojević, as member; Milan Marović, as alternate member; Milisav Ćorić, as member; Gavro Golubović, as alternate member; Vladimir Čadenović, as member; Nikola Angelovski, as alternate member; Nataša Pešić, as member; Mersudin Dautović, as alternate member; Vera Mijatović, as member; Dragana Pima, as alternate member; Nikola Dedeić, as member; Asim Andrić, as alternate member; Aleksandar Jovičević, as member; Aleksandar Mitrović, as alternate member; Haris Mekić, as member; Hajrullah Hajdari, as alternate member. Furthermore, the Committee decided to propose to the Parliament of Montenegro to appoint Nikola Dedeić as Secretary of the State Election Commission.



- At the First Meeting, held on 23 December, the **Commission for Monitoring and Control of the Privatisation Procedure** elected Dragica Sekulić for Deputy Chair of the Commission. In addition, members of the Commission presented their opinions and views regarding the future methodology and manner of work of the Commission.



NEWS FROM PARLIAMENT



Parliament elects the 42nd Government of Montenegro

At the Third Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, the Prime Minister and members of the 42nd Government of Montenegro, were elected.



Conference-Towards better parliamentary oversight: What can the Law on Parliament do? held

President of the Parliament Aleksa Bečić, opened on 15 December the Conference "Towards better parliamentary oversight: What can Law on Parliament do?", organised by the Institute Alternative, and held in the Parliament of Montenegro. In his introductory address, President Bečić pointed out that these events, which are the result of good cooperation between the highest legislative and representative house of citizens and the non - governmental sector, the



Parliament demonstrated openness and ability to act a forum for dialogue on various topics important for parliamentary life, society and state. Bečić said that the topic of the conference was of extreme importance because it opens the issue of the Law on Parliament and stated: "Systematic regulation, normative shaping of parliamentarism, and clear definition of legislative relations with other branches of government, is something which, I am sure, all well-intentioned actors of political and overall social life strongly aspire to." He said that "The conference should be used as a chance to point to the need of reasserting the role of parliament, and as a

platform to consider the best solutions that should be incorporated into the content of the law in question". He expressed firm belief that the priority of this term of Parliament will be to strengthen control and oversight role of the Parliament. The conference was organised by the Institute Alternative within the "Parliamentary Oversight for Better Governance" project, with the financial support by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

PARLIAMENTARY GLOSSARY

Logo of Parliament

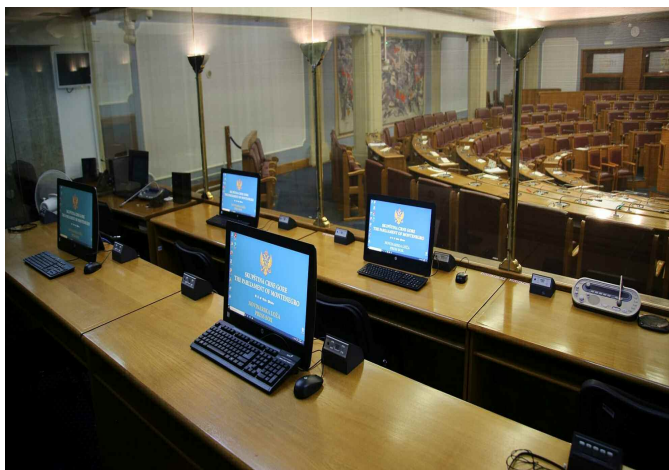
The Logo of Parliament is the graphic sign used for the purposes of the public representation of a parliament.

¹ Doc. dr Komar, Olivera, Prof. dr Ivana Jelić, Nataša Komnenić, Irena Mijanović, Jelena Radonjić, Vlatko Šćepanović, Parlamentarni leksikon, Podgorica, Skupština Crne Gore 2016, p 236

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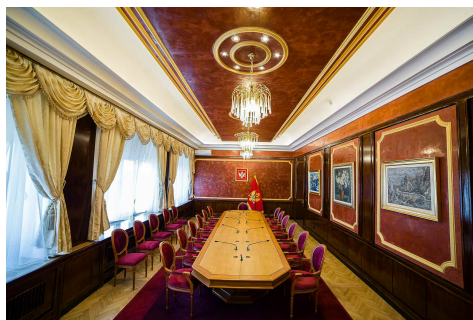
Improved working conditions in the Parliament of Montenegro for media representatives



President Bečić had a meeting with Secretary General of the Association of Professional Journalists of Montenegro Mila Radulović on 16 December, regarding the improvement of the working conditions for media representatives who use the press box for reporting from the Parliament. Representatives of the Association, in the previous meeting with the President of the Parliament, pointed to certain difficulties faced by journalists and photo - reporters when reporting from the Parliament. With the intention of creating the smooth conditions for media representatives in the press box, located within the Plenary Hall, the Parliament engaged in several activities. Namely, four modern computers were installed, the speed of internet connection has been increased, electric installation and lighting have been repaired.

Parliamentary meeting rooms renovated and furnished with modern technical equipment

The equipment for production in the Blue Room was developed using the same platform as the one in the Plenary Hall, using one of the most modern NDI protocols, which enabled the networking of the meeting rooms. In addition to the installed video equipment, the Blue Room changed its visual identity, the complete lighting was replaced with new LED lighting and thus, in addition to improved conditions, better energy efficiency was influenced as well. Extremely demanding works were carried out in the Red Room, which required the complete room to be disassembled thoroughly and every element to be reinstated. For the first time, the Red Room now meets all the high criteria for uninterrupted meetings of working bodies. In the Small Blue Room, new modern conference table was provided for, with built-in microphones and the necessary connections for the e-parliament, and the old lighting was replaced with the new LED lighting.



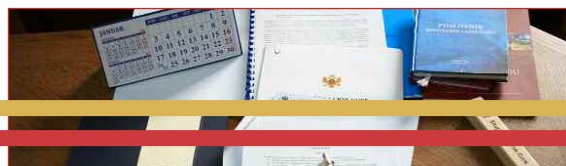
Chair and members of the working bodies elected

On the fourth Day of the Third Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, held on 17 December, The Parliament appointed chair and members of the standing committees of the 27th term as well as chair and members of the Commission for Monitoring and Control of the Privatisation Procedure.

Two Vice-Presidents of the Parliament elected

Within the First-Constituent Sitting of the Second Ordinary (Autumn) Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2020, held on 17 December, the Parliament adopted the Decision on determining the number of vice-presidents and elected two vice-presidents from among the parliamentary majority. Branka Bošnjak and Strahinja Bulajić were elected vice - presidents of the 27th Parliament of Montenegro.

IN FOCUS



President of Parliament spoke at the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum meeting

On behalf of Montenegro's presidency of the Energy Community from 1 January to 31 December 2020, President of the Parliament of Montenegro Mr Aleksa Bečić opened, on 9 December, the first online Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum Meeting. While addressing the participants, President Bečić pointed out that the meeting showed our "joint readiness as a member state to make effort and invest capacities in order to respond to all those commitments assumed on the basis of membership in international organisations". He reminded that the Parliamentary Plenum represented a platform of exceptional significance for member states of the Energy Community, especially for the Western Balkans countries, that were on their European integration path. "Primarily because it gives members of national parliaments the opportunity to have a dialogue on topics relating to certain negotiation chapters, such as energy, environment, competition, regional policy, etc., taking into account, of course, the particularities of each individual country", pointed out President Bečić. On this occasion, he particularly highlighted that one of our obligations would also be to draft and implement integrated national energy and climate plans, and voiced his belief that our countries would pay special attention to creating new projects for which international funding would be available, primarily funds allocated for the Western Balkans through the European Commission's Economic and Investment Plan, through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance IPA III, through the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) etc.



**The Parliamentary Plenum is a body of the Energy Community, with Montenegro as a member since 2006, which brings together representatives of the national parliaments of the Contracting Parties to the Energy Community and representatives of the European Parliament, and aims to make members of the Energy Community better equipped to implement the acquis.*

PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO-FROM CATALOGUE OF RECEIVED PRESENTS

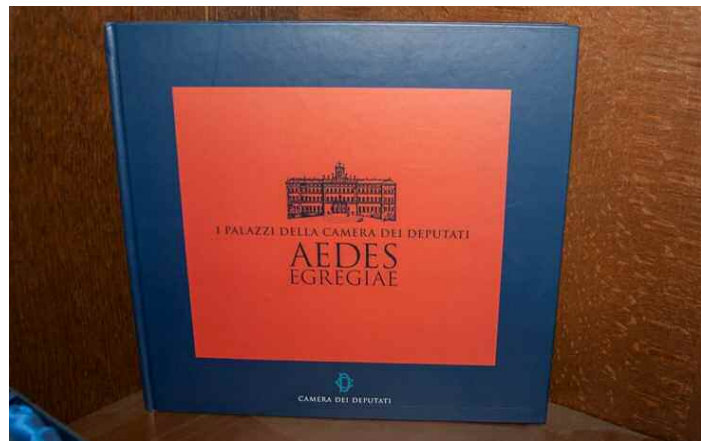
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Extended by: N/A

Recipient: President of the Parliament of Montenegro

Date of receipt: N/A



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Country of origin: Turkey

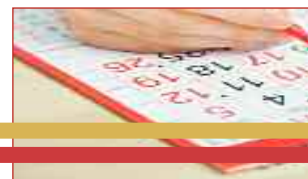
Extended by: N/A

Recipient: President of the Parliament of Montenegro

Date of receipt: N/A



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3 December

- On the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, President of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksa Bečić met representatives of the NGOs dedicated to protection of rights of persons with disabilities Marina Vujačić, Goran Macanović and Milisav Korać. President Bečić expressed readiness of the new parliamentary term to give its contribution to improving the position of persons with disabilities, by means of its legislative and oversight activities. President Bečić said that, in order to facilitate the accommodation of persons with disabilities in the Plenary Hall of the Parliament of Montenegro, in addition to the access ramp, a place has been provided from which it would be possible for PWD to address directly. The interlocutors informed the President about the on-going projects, voicing expectation that the Parliament of Montenegro would continue



with activities on creating preconditions that would fully enable unhindered conditions for movement and work of persons with disabilities.

7 December

- President Bečić forwarded for awareness to Prime Minister Zdravko Krivokapić a list of proposals for laws and other acts which the 41st Government of Montenegro submitted to the 26th and 27th Parliament of Montenegro, acknowledging the fact that, following the holding of parliamentary elections in Montenegro, the 27th Parliament of Montenegro was constituted and the Government of Montenegro started its term of office. The Rulebook on Office Operations in the Parliament of Montenegro prescribes that, when a term of office ends, all acts in procedure are archived. This enables the Government to re-establish the proposals for these acts, as the authorised proposer.
- President Bečić met with the Association of Professional Journalists of Montenegro Mila Radulović, Boris Pejović and

Jelena Popović. Bečić voiced the significance of continuous cooperation between the Parliament and the media representatives with a view to provide timely, accurate and objective informing of the public on the work of their elected representatives and the Parliament in general. Bečić referred to significant assessments of the work of Montenegrin Parliament as the most transparent legislative body in the region and welcomed the initiative of the interlocutors to jointly contribute to the improvement of openness of the Parliament of Montenegro. Pointing out that their focus was on improving various models of media cooperation with the Parliament of Montenegro, the interlocutors showed readiness to fully contribute to establishing transparent and meaningful procedures through dialogue with the Parliament.

8 December

- President Bečić took part in the virtual meeting with MEPs - Tonino Picula and Vladimír Bilčík, while Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro H.E. Oana Cristina Popa was a moderator of the meeting. Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro Zdravko Krivokapić and Dritan Abazović attended the meeting. Bečić emphasised that the previous parliamentary elections in Montenegro were historic, saying that the merits for the transition of power belonged to both - the government and the opposition. Bečić expressed his conviction that faster adoption of the European standards would result in faster closing of all negotiation chapters and, finally, in Montenegro's membership of the EU. He stated that specific steps were taken towards the establishment of the Committee on Comprehensive Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation and thanked for the financial help that EU had provided to Montenegro due to the consequences caused by the coronavirus.
- President Bečić met with representatives of the Trade Union of Physicians Milena Popović-Samardžić, Žanka Cerović and Nebojša Gulić. Thanking them for their commitment and sacrifice in protection of health of all citizens of Montenegro during the complex epidemiological situation, President Bečić spoke with representatives of the Trade Union of Physicians about their noteworthy engagement aimed at improvement of financial situation of physicians, as well as protection of reputation and dignity of the medical profession. The Trade Union representatives pointed out the significance of the role of medical staff in the healthcare system development and voiced their belief that all political entities would recognise possible challenges they were facing, so that they could create preconditions to overcome them with joint action.
- The Working Group on drafting amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro today held its second meeting. Within this meeting, they considered the

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received proposals and suggestions for amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, which were submitted by MP groups and the committees' secretariats, in line with the conclusions from the first meeting. Furthermore, they also discussed certain comparative solutions with regard to the issues related to the rules of procedure, which could be implemented in the parliamentary practice of Montenegro.

9 December

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksa Bečić opened the first online Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum Meeting.
- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Bečić met with representatives of the Federation of Organisations of Veterans of the People's Liberation War of Montenegro (SOBNOR) Radojica Radojević and Radmila Čagorović. President Bečić voiced his gratitude for SOBNOR's work, as an organisation that promoted antifascism, libertarianism and other achievements of People's Liberation War (NOR) with its activities, thus earning respect, not only in Montenegro, but in the region as well. They mutually concluded that, along with the establishment of the NOR principles, as well as rising above personal and party interests, it was possible to work in the best interest of Montenegro and its citizens.

10 December

- President Bečić took part in the virtual meeting with Vice President of the European Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josef Borell. The meeting was also attended by Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro Zdravko Krivokapić and Drirán Abazović, as well as Minister of Foreign Affairs Đorđe Radulović. Borell welcomed the foreign policy orientation of the new ruling majority and stressed that Montenegro and the European Union had to work jointly in order for the EU to open the door of the Western Balkans countries. He reiterated that there is a great mood in the European Union for Montenegro to be part of the Union, and that in order to achieve that goal, it is necessary to make reforms in the area of the rule of law. Bečić emphasised that Montenegro remained consistent in its foreign policy commitment, and that it was a policy that had no alternative. He informed EC Vice President Josef Borell about the priorities of the new Parliament and pointed out that he would work on strengthening legislative, oversight and control role, as well as judiciary reform and overall reform of the electoral legislation. Prime Minister of Montenegro Zdravko Krivokapić assured Borell that the Government he headed would be consistent in

implementing reforms and fulfilling obligations on the path to integration into the European Union.

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksa Bečić opened the exhibition of works by Roma and Egyptian children titled Human rights through the lens of young Roma and Egyptians, on the occasion of International Day of Human Rights - 10 December. Bečić said that "in the contemporary time of great challenges, caused by the coronavirus pandemic and complex economic situation, it is of paramount importance, to devote a special attention to the protection of human rights and freedoms... Bečić said that on the occasion of Human Rights Day a special attention to the promotion and protection of human rights of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro was devoted, in order to emphasise the importance of their full inclusion and equality in our society. Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro Ms Oana Cristina Popa stated that *despite significant support of the EU and the engagement of the institutions and civil society, according to the latest research, these two groups are still at the bottom of the social ladder and face marginalisation within Montenegrin society*. President Bečić presented the award to the author of the best photograph Muhamed Ahmetaj. The exhibition was organised by the Parliament of Montenegro in cooperation with the German humanitarian regional organisation Help and youth NGO Walk with us - Phiren Amenca and the EU Delegation to Montenegro.



- At the 3rd meeting, the Working Group on drafting amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro continued the consideration of Rules of Procedure's regulations - from the third (III) up to sixth (VI) chapter.

11 December

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksa Bečić took part in the tenth jubilee To be Secure Forum (2BS), hosted by the Atlantic Council in Podgorica. Speaking within panel Montenegro at the Crossroads, President Bečić expressed

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pleasure at the fact that in light of democratic changes in Montenegro, political dialogue has returned to the Parliament. He stressed that the new democratic majority would remain faithful to its foreign policy orientation and in this context emphasised that Montenegro would continue to be a reliable and credible partner to NATO Alliance. He also stressed that stable and good neighbourly relations were the foundation of progress and prosperity in the Western Balkans and that Montenegro, as a constructive participant in numerous regional initiatives, should contribute to preserving stability in the region. The officials who took part in the tenth jubilee To be Secure Forum (2BS) are: President of Montenegro Milo Đukanović, Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro Dritan Abazović, President of Slovenia Borut Pahor, President of Northern Macedonia Stevo Pendarovski, and NATO's Assistant Secretary General David Cattler.

- President Bečić participated in the online meeting of the American Atlantic Council, chaired by the Executive Vice President Damon Wilson. Organised in the form of a session, it was also attended by the Prime Minister, Mr Zdravko Krivokapić and Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Dritan Abazović, and the conversation with representatives of the Atlantic Council included the latest developments in Montenegro and the country's political prospects, foreign policy with special emphasis on NATO membership and moving forward on the European path, as well as regional economic cooperation in the Western Balkans. They exchanged opinions on further potentials for strengthening cooperation between Montenegro and the United States and transatlantic cooperation as well. The session was also attended by the United States Department of State Deputy Assistant Secretary, Matthew Palmer, United States Ambassador to Montenegro, Judy Rising Reinke, Ambassador of Montenegro to the United States, Nebojša Kaluđerović, and many other important international participants.
- The Working Group on drafting proposals for amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro today has held its fourth meeting. Within this meeting, they continued consideration of the Rules of Procedure's provisions for chapters VI through X. On this occasion, members of the Working Group agreed on certain solutions, while certain issues remained open for further discussion.

14 December

- MP Božena Jelušić participated in "16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence" campaign and marking of Human Rights Week. She participated in four events organised via Zoom, due to protection measures against the pandemic, dedicated to the problems of discrimination, gender-based and

other kinds violence and gender policies. On 27 November, Ms Jelušić participated in a panel organised by the CEDEM NGO, dedicated to the "Report on Patterns and Extent of discrimination in Montenegro", and on 5 December she spoke on "Gender Equality and the Status of Women's Rights in Montenegro", organised by the Montenegrin Association of Political Science Students (MAPSS), followed by a discussion with students. The MP attended the panel "Participation in Politics and Violence against Women Politicians in South East Europe" organised by the NDI/CEE Regional Party Integrity Program, on 8 December, while on 9 December she participated in the parliamentary focus group on gender policies and women's public involvement in political life, required to draft "The 2021 Global Parliamentary Report".



- President Bečić took part in an online meeting with Matthew Palmer, US Deputy Assistant Secretary Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Bečić expressed his pleasure at continuous commitment to bilateral relations and voiced his expectation that the two countries would continue their good cooperation through their partnership within the NATO Alliance. President Bečić emphasised that Montenegro remained consistent in its foreign policy commitment, and that it was a policy that had no alternative. Welcoming the continuous US support to Montenegro's integration to the EU, the President of the Parliament assessed that the engagement of the EU and the US was crucial for the Western Balkans' stability. Speaking on the foreign policy orientation set out in the Agreement of three coalitions, US Deputy Assistant Secretary Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs Matthew Palmer expressed pleasure at the fact that Montenegro would follow Euro-Atlantic foreign policy path and expressed readiness to support Montenegro in its aspiration to soon become an EU member and strong ally to NATO Alliance.
- President Bečić met representatives of the NGO Young Roma Samir Jaha, Almedin Jašaraj and Sultan Beća. Acknowledging the committed and active work of this non-governmental organisation in order to improve the position of the Roma

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community in Montenegro, President Bečić emphasised the importance of continuous effort on further strengthening the multi-ethnic and multicultural character of Montenegro and the readiness of the Parliament of Montenegro to provide full contribution to combating all forms of discrimination and working to strengthen civil society through available mechanisms. The interlocutors agreed that the achievement of full equality and integration of Roma men and women should be a priority in the work of all responsible institutions of the system. opinions were exchanged on the current activities of this organisation, with the assessment that there is a lot of room for improving cooperation with the Parliament and the responsible parliamentary working bodies.

15 December

- MP Ms Božena Jelušić participated in the panel of the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group (BiEPAG). Also presented in the panel were the results of the Ipsos Strategic Marketing, which, in October 2020 received a request from the European Fund for Balkans to carry out a Balkans-wide public opinion poll in order to learn about the views of the citizens on the issues ranging from European integration and elections. Citizens of Western Balkans countries are still strongly oriented towards the European Union membership. The indicators which in many ways reflect the last elections in Montenegro are 52% of citizens who believe that in the next five years Montenegro could join the EU, or even 80% of citizens who believe that the government could be changed in elections. A priority in the integration process remains combating corruption, and a general message remains that both sides - the EU and countries of origin - need to work more and better, especially with regard to the rule of law and media freedom. Also, the significant funds that the EU will allocate to the Western Balkans will require inclusive projects, which will follow the sense of citizens that these projects are citizen-oriented.
- President Bečić opened the Conference "Towards better parliamentary oversight: What can the Parliament Law do?", organised by the Institute Alternative, and held in the Parliament of Montenegro.
- President Bečić met with representatives of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) Slavica Biljarska-Mirčeski, and Miroslav Šćepanović. Bearing in mind the previous long-standing successful cooperation between the Parliament of Montenegro and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), President Bečić emphasised his gratitude for the activities aimed at the strengthening of the legislative and oversight role as well as important support in building institutional capacities of the Parliament. Bečić especially referred to the reopening

of the Representation Office and voiced expectation that its work in full capacity would contribute to the cooperation with the new parliamentary term. The interlocutors showed readiness to further improvement and development of new mechanisms of parliamentary cooperation, with special emphasis on the strengthening of administrative capacities.

16 December

- President of the Parliament Aleksa Bečić met Secretary General of the Association of Professional Journalists of Montenegro Mila Radulović, regarding the improvement of the working condition for media representatives who use the press box for reporting from the Parliament of Montenegro.
- President Bečić met with Reis of the Islamic Community in Montenegro Rifat ef. Fejzić and his associates Fuad Čekić and Muharem Demirović. President of the Parliament thanked them for the immeasurable contribution that the Islamic Community in Montenegro gave to the preservation of multi-religious harmony and promotion of civic values on which Montenegrin society was founded. Appreciating universal values of peace, equality and solidarity, he voiced his conviction that the Islamic Community in Montenegro would continue to be one of the support columns of tolerance and co-existence. In addition, the Parliament would be a strong partner to the Islamic Community and other religious organisations aimed at preserving peace, friendly coexistence and improvement of the quality of life of all citizens, regardless of their ethic, cultural or religious differences. Reis Fejzić voiced his satisfaction with the opportunity to exchange opinions on various topical issues in direct communication with the President, noting excellent cooperation in the previous period and also voiced his expectation that, in the upcoming period, the Parliament of Montenegro and the Islamic Community in Montenegro would even strongly cooperate on fostering ideas which promote human rights, freedoms and multi-confessional Montenegro.
- President Bečić presented annual volunteerism awards for the most outstanding volunteers who made contribution during 2020, at the event organised by the Association for Democratic Prosperity – ZID, on the occasion of International Volunteer Day. Milo Joko Radović was awarded as the volunteer of the year, while Bajkeri dobre volje Foundation was presented with Annual Volunteerism Award. Bečić said, in his address, that he was honoured to present this year's awards to volunteers who had given an immeasurable contribution in this year coming to the end, which, due to the coronavirus pandemic and its health and economic consequences, has given countless opportunities to show philanthropy and generous help. The annual volunteerism awards are presented with the aim of increasing the visibility of contributions intended at developing

and promoting the volunteerism values.



- At the fifth meeting of the Working Group on drafting proposals for amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, consideration of Rules of Procedure's provisions from chapters XI through XVI was continued. Within this meeting, the MPs paid special attention to harmonising and specifying provisions concerning immunity, as well as further improving provisions concerning the Prime Minister's hour and parliamentary questions.

17 December

- In order to improve transparency of the Parliament of Montenegro as the highest legislative body, an internal rule was adopted on receiving and keeping records on donations, regulating the procedure of initiating, safeguarding and managing donations in the Parliament of Montenegro. All rights and obligations between donors and recipients will be regulated by a contract, while the Parliament of Montenegro will be in charge of coordinating application, control and implementation of the subject donation. In line with Article 22 of the Law on Prevention of Corruption, the Parliament will report on all concluded contracts.

18 December

- At the sixth meeting of the Working Group on drafting proposals for amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, MPs considered and specified provisions concerning immunity and improved provisions concerning parliamentary hearings.

19 December

- President Bečić addressed virtually at the opening of the concept film festival Green Montenegro International Film Fest (GMIFF), devoted to the environment protection. President Bečić said that six-year long persistence of hosts in raising the ecological awareness and promoting Montenegro as a state which has committed itself, through the highest legislative act, to preserving the nature and healthy environment, was nothing less than a true and pure Constitutional patriotism. Bečić said that "the door of the Parliament of Montenegro is always open for all sobering projects which, in such original way, contribute to creating ecological narrative in a society such as

Montenegrin, which must turn its Constitutional proclamations into actual deeds."

21 December

- Secretary General of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksandar Jovičević, along with his associates talked with the representatives of the National Democratic Institute in Montenegro Slavica Biljarski-Mirčevski and Miroslav Šćepanović. They exchanged opinions on possibilities of future cooperation between the Parliament of Montenegro and the Institute. The Secretary General voiced his gratitude for the previous significant support given by the NDI to the Parliament with regard to the strengthening of its legislative and oversight role, improvement of parliamentary mechanisms, but also with regard to activities oriented to further development of administrative capacities of the Parliament. They pointed out readiness for intensifying cooperation through different forms



of cooperation, in line with defined priorities of the Parliament and areas in which the NDI could provide relevant assistance. The Secretary General informed his interlocutors on the current activities in the Parliament of Montenegro, with special reference to the work on drafting the proposal for amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, as well as to the issues of transparency and openness of the institution, and digitalisation of legislative procedure.

- At the 7th meeting of the Working Group on drafting proposals for amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, MPs have considered the possibility for further improvement of provisions regulating parliamentarians'



issues and solutions with regard to the organisation of the Parliament.

22 December

- President Bečić hosted a cocktail reception for the representatives of the diplomatic corps in Montenegro. Addressing the guests, President Bečić pointed out that Montenegro had experienced a historic change of government in the elections as the year was drawing to a close, and that democratic maturity, which has been demonstrated in a peaceful manner; civilised and European-like in the post-election period, could be a source of pride for the entire Montenegrin society. Emphasising that the foreign policy priorities of the new government remain committed to European integration and strengthening the alliance within NATO, he reminded of the importance of strengthening the civic character of Montenegro at the national level, in order for Montenegro to reveal determination in fighting corruption and crime, along with the necessary cohesion of society. President Bečić informed the guests about the steps taken towards the drafting of the new Rules of Procedure of the Parliament and the adoption of the Parliament Law, with the aim of strengthening the control role of the Parliament of Montenegro. President Bečić said he expected the innovated Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro would be adopted at the end of December which would "contain essential obligations according to which one of the vice-presidents of the Parliament will represent minority parties and the other the underrepresented gender". President Bečić also announced the digitalisation of the legislative process, which would greatly facilitate and enhance the work of MPs.
- At the eighth meeting of the Working Group on drafting proposals for amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, MPs harmonised provisions concerning parliamentary questions. Furthermore, they specified solutions regulating in more detail the issue of electing vice-presidents as well as provisions on forming MP groups.

23 December

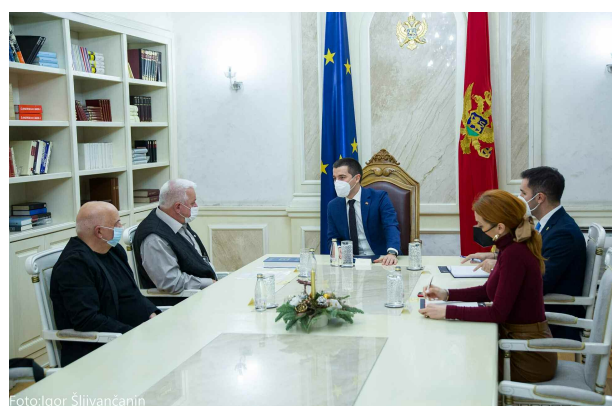
- President Bečić addressed online participants of the conference "State of democracy in Montenegro", organised by the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights – CEDEM. The President stated that one of the most important messages sent during the 27th term of the Parliament so far was the fact that several initiatives and proposals have already been signed together by heads of all MP groups - both the government and the opposition. On this occasion, he also referred to the activities that will be carried out within the institution he was to represent in the following year and according to the success of which that work will be measured, first and foremost a comprehensive electoral reform, which is essential for building the confidence of all political actors and citizens in the electoral process, and which is complementary to accelerating our European path to the community of developed European countries. The success in the implementation of some other activity is not less important, that is the reform of the judiciary, which, when consistently implemented, will undoubtedly and

decisively affect our visible step forward in Chapters 23 and 24. In other words, only with the implementation of these activities will we lay a sound foundation for future democratic processes in our country, President Bečić concluded.

- At the Ninth Meeting, Members of the Working Group on drafting proposals for amendments to the Rules of Procedure considered solutions set out in the Decision on Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Montenegro, drafted on the basis of certain proposals and suggestions presented in the meetings of the Working Group.

24 December

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksa Bečić met with representatives of the Association of Journalists of Montenegro Tihomir Burzanović and Ivan Milošević. President Bečić pointed out that the new parliamentary leadership would continuously work on enhancing the working conditions of journalists and photo-reporters who follow the



Parliament's activities, as well as on improving the overall social environment for the work of the media. He reminded his interlocutors of the numerous activities undertaken in the previous period, in order to make the Parliament's work as much as possible accessible and visible to the citizens and the media. Representatives of the Association informed President Bečić about the status of journalists in Montenegro and voiced their expectation that, in cooperation with the Parliament, they would develop new models of cooperation to jointly contribute to the development of not only better legal solutions in the media, but also full promotion of the public's right to be accurately, fully and timely informed on matters of public concern.

25 December

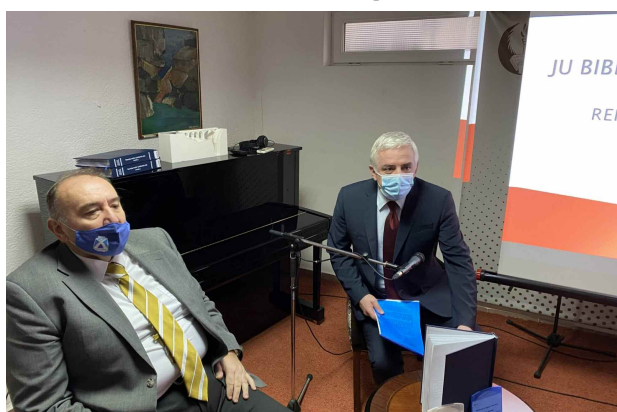
- President Bečić attended the Christmas Mass in the Church of St. Anthony in Tuzi, during which he once again congratulated all believers of the Catholic faith on the most joyous Christian holiday. President Bečić used the last night's visit to Tuzi to meet with Father Gojčaj. In a meaningful conversation, which took place in a friendly atmosphere, the interlocutors agreed that the Catholic Church had always acted from a reconciliatory position in Montenegro, and that its mission had contributed and continued to contribute to building a Montenegrin society based on universal values of love, peace, brotherhood and neighbourly harmony and coexistence.

CALENDAR



- President Bečić gave a presentation for the representatives of the civil sector and provided an opportunity for them to get acquainted with innovations, as well as improved working conditions in the Blue Room. pointed out that the Blue Room was completely renovated with use of parliamentary funds, while the Small Blue Room and Red Room would be equipped equally with the use of donations by the OSCE mission in Montenegro. In addition to the fact that meetings of working bodies will be broadcasted live for the first time using the latest technology, opening social network accounts, more direct communication of citizens through the establishment of the practice of petitions, announcement of a more modern web presentation of the Parliament, Bečić also announced the digitalisation of the legislative process via the e-parliament project, which will greatly facilitate and improve the work of MPs.

- Chair of the of Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms Jovan Jole Vučurović visited the Library for the Blind of Montenegro. Vučurović emphasised that in the previous period, the Committee paid special attention to the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, as a very vulnerable category of the population and with its long-term, continuous activities it contributed to solving certain problems. Vučurović said that the Library for the Blind and its users could count on his full support as well as that of the Committee, since MPs were willing to aid the persons with impaired vision, through personal contact with competent ministries, in order to undertake further steps towards solving the issue at hand. Ombudsman of Montenegro Siniša Bjeković stated that forming of the public entity Library for the Blind meant further continuation of the idea of equality and equal access to education for blind persons, as guaranteed to other participants in the education process. Chair Vučurović pointed out that he would advocate for the Proposal for the Law on Ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled to be put on the Parliament's



agenda as soon as possible.

26 December

- President Bečić met with the Head of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office Local Branch Office Edin Koljenović. pointed out that the Parliament of Montenegro would be open for initiatives aimed at intensifying cooperation and strengthening the position of young people in the region. Koljenović informed the President of the current projects, as well as with the upcoming plans of this organisation. They also discussed the cooperation mechanisms for the sake of connecting the youth of the Western Balkans in order for the further strengthening of their cooperation, but also to strengthen youth policy at the national level.

27 December

- For the sake of improvement of the transparency of the Parliament of Montenegro as the highest representative body, the Rulebook on determining estimated value of the subject of public procurement was adopted, regulating the procedure for determining the estimated value of the subject of public procurement for the procurement of goods, services, works or assignment of contracts, within the purview of Parliament of Montenegro. In addition, the Parliament adopted an internal rule on the allocation of premises for the needs of MP groups, which regulates the manner and procedure for allocation of rooms for the needs of MP groups in the Parliament of Montenegro, in order to more efficiently perform tasks within the scope of work.

28 December

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksa Bečić hosted Ambassador of Argentina to Montenegro Estanislao Zawels in his farewell visit. President Bečić expressed pleasure with traditionally good relations of the two friendly states together with the readiness for further improvement of bilateral cooperation, to which a special contribution is given by the numerous Montenegrin diaspora in Argentina. Bečić noted the importance of Montenegro's Embassy in Argentina, an expressed conviction that together they would contribute to deepening cooperation of the two parliaments, whereby the parliamentary friendship group of Montenegro and Argentina would have an important role. Ambassador Zawels expressed his positive attitude towards stability and prosperity of Montenegro, especially regarding the European integration, voicing expectation that the two countries would continue their cooperation. The interlocutors shared views on the importance of improving economic cooperation, especially in the fields of tourism, trade, agriculture and culture.