



Parliament of Montenegro

# NEWSLETTER OPEN PARLIAMENT

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ No. 79 ♦ February 2018

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# OPEN PARLIAMENT



Parliament of Montenegro

Newsletter on the Parliament of Montenegro Performance ♦ Electronic format ♦ Release: monthly ♦ Year VIII ♦ No. 79 ♦ February 2018

## FOREWORD

*Dear readers,*

We present to you the key information on activities of the Parliament of Montenegro in the period from 1 to 28 February, which is, in the form of monthly newsletter "Open Parliament", prepared by Parliamentary Service.

During February, the Sitting of the First Extraordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2018 as well as the Sitting of the Second Extraordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2018 took place.

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

In focus of this month's newsletter is the President's participation to the OSCE PA Winter session, held in Vienna.

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 Sitting of the First Extraordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2018**, MPs adopted the following: Law on Amendments to the Law on Public Administration, Law on Protection of Population against Communicable Diseases, Law on Amendments to the Law on Transport of Hazardous Substances, Law on Trade Union Representation, Law on Amendments to the Voluntary Pension Funds Law, Law on Amendments to the Law on Investment Funds, Law on Foreigners, Law on State Aid Control, Law on Amendments to the Law on Protection of Competition, Law on Amendments to the Law on Protection of Natural and Cultural Historical Heritage of the Kotor Region, Law on Amendments to the Law on Health Insurance and Law on Amendments to the Law on General Product Safety.

**At the Sitting of the Second Extraordinary Session of the Parliament of Montenegro in 2018**, MPs adopted the following: Law on Supplement to the Law on Public Sector Salaries, Law on Amendments to the Law on Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Law on Supplement to the Law on Youth, Law on Supplement to the Law on Public Prosecution Office and Proposal of the list for the appointment of one member of the Council of the Radio and Television of Montenegro by the authorised proposer.

### *Proposals for law deliberated in committees*

- **Proposal for a Law on Ratification of the Convention on Choice of Court Agreements** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants.
- **Proposal for a Law on Ratification of Agreement between the Government of Montenegro and the Government of the United States of America on**

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improving the execution of international tax obligations and the implementation of FATCA was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants.

- **Proposal for a Law on Amendments to the Law on Proprietary-Legal Relations** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget.
- **Proposal for a Law on Supplement to the Law on Public Sector Salaries** 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 Tourism and Hospitality Industry** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning and the Legislative Committee.
- **Proposal for a Law on Supplement to the Law on Youth** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Legislative Committee and the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports.
- **Proposal for a Law on Supplement to the Law on Public Prosecution Office** 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 Freshwater Fisheries and Aquaculture** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology, and Spatial Planning.
- **Proposal for a Law on Ratification of the Treaty establishing the Transport Community** was considered and proposed to the Parliament for adoption by the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants.

#### *Other activities of working bodies*

- At the Thirty-second meeting of the **Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration**, held on 14 February, the Committee made the following decision concerning the Public Call for the Election of four members of the Prosecutorial Council, from among respectable lawyers. The only candidate to have obtained the required majority, within two rounds of voting, was Aneta Spaić.
- At the eighteenth meeting of the **Committee on European Integration**, held on 8 February, members of the Committee provided a positive opinion on the Draft negotiation position for Chapter 27 - Environment and climate change.
- At the nineteenth meeting, held on the same day, members of the Committee learned about activities with respect to projects implemented within the IPA I programme (2007-2013) and preparations and implementation of some projects comprised by the IPA II (2014-2020). At the twentieth meeting of 16 February, members of the Committee adopted the 2018 Work Plan of the Committee.
- At the Twenty-seventh meeting of the **Committee on International Relations and Emigrants**, on 22 February, the Committee adopted its 2017 Performance Report.
- At the twelfth meeting of the **Gender Equality Committee**, on 13 February, the programme of the eighth session of the Womens' Parliament was determined.
- At the Twenty-first meeting, on 6 February, the **Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare**, adopted the 2017 Performance Report. At the Twenty-second meeting of 13 February, the Committee considered and adopted its 2018 Work Plan.
- At the ninth meeting of the **Anti-Corruption Committee**, held on 7 February, the members issued a repeated public invitation for the selection of a member of the Council of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption.
- At the Thirty-second meeting on 21 February, the **Administrative Committee**, due to previously assumed obligations by MPs Adrijan Vuksanović and Bogdan Fatić, the Committee has amended the composition of the Working Group tasked to inspect documentation by authorised proposers upon public invitation for appointing one member of the Agency for Electronic Media Council, of 28 December 2017 and upon public invitation for appointing one member of the RTCG Council, of 29 December 2017. Aside from MP Marta Šćepanović, coordinator of the Working Group, Ana Nikolić and Milorad Vuletić were appointed as members of the Group. Upon the proposal by Marta Šćepanović, the Committee reached a Decision on the use of mobile phone for official purposes. By its entry into force, the Decision on exercising the right to reimbursement of expenses for using the mobile phone for official purposes shall cease to have effect ("Official Gazette of Montenegro", No 12/08).
- At the Thirty-third meeting of 27 February, the Committee determined the List of timely and complete proposals of candidates for one member of the Council of the Agency for Electronic Media and the List of timely and complete proposals of candidates for one member of the RTCG Council.
- At the First Meeting between the **Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms** and the **Committee on Tourism, Agriculture, Ecology and Spatial Planning**, on 28 February, there was a consultative hearing on the topic: "Activities in enabling accessibility to persons with disabilities".
- At the First Joint Meeting between the **Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare, Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration**, and **Gender Equality Committee**, on 23 February, a consultative hearing of Kemal Purišić, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Mevludin Nuhodžić, Minister of Interior, and Kenan Hrapović, Minister of Health, was conducted, on the topic: "Protection of and help to women victims of violence and victims of domestic violence".



## NEWS FROM PARLIAMENT



### *President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker addressed the Parliament of Montenegro*

President Ivan Brajović spoke on 27 February with the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker. Following tête-à-tête, the EC President signed the Guest Book, after which the President of the Parliament and the EC President addressed MPs of the Parliament of Montenegro. President Brajović pointed out that, after successfully completing the integration process in the NATO, Montenegro has been now directing all its social capacities towards the integration process into the European Union. Brajović also said that it was extremely important for Montenegro that the regatta principle has been confirmed with the Strategy and concluded that Montenegro, with its own efforts and taking responsibility for its own development, would be the first next member of the European Union. President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, said he was honored and pleased to be in Montenegro, which, as he said, was rightly proud of its achievements throughout history, especially when it came to the recent history. The EC President said that he was convinced the place of the Western Balkan

countries, primarily Montenegro, was in the European Union. The EC President stressed that Montenegro has been making significant progress on the path to the EU membership, adding that he was impressed with the determination with which Montenegro has made incredible journey over the course of 12 years. High-level state officials, representatives of the Government of Montenegro, EU resident ambassadors to Montenegro, attended the addressing of the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker.



### *Delegation of the Parliament of Montenegro participated in the 66th National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C.*

First day, President of the Parliament of Montenegro met with Senator Ron Johnson and representatives:



Michael Turner, Eliot Engel, Doug Lamborn and Chellie Pingree. President informed his interlocutors on current political developments in Montenegro and in the Western Balkans region, particularly expressing gratitude for the support and assistance that the U.S. Congress continually provided to our country in achieving a key foreign policy goal - NATO membership. Vice President of the Parliament Branimir Gvozdenović, who was also part of the Delegation, spoke at the forum "Geopolitical Opportunities in South East Europe and the role of the United States and NATO" initiated by and under the auspices of James Mountain Inhofe, Senator from Oklahoma. The second day, President Brajović met Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission Senator Roger Wicker, President and CEO of the Center for Strategic

and International Studies (CSIS) John J. Hamre and President of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) Karen Donfried. The President also had a meeting in the Heritage Foundation, and he also took part in the activities organised within the 66th National Prayer Breakfast. All conversations emphasised the importance of U.S. continuous activities on further strengthening of transatlantic ties and cooperation. Vice President Gvozdenović had separate meetings with senators Roy Blunt and Joe Manchin as well as with representatives Mike Doyle, Randy Hultgren and Roger Marshall. Gvozdenović emphasised the importance of Montenegro's membership in NATO, not only for our country but for the entire region, especially in the context of the need to weaken the influence of ideas in the Balkans based on opposing the Western values. Brajović addressed the attendees at the event dedicated to the SEE countries, organised by representative Robert Aderholt. During the meetings with senator Ben Cardin and the executive vice president of the Atlantic Council Damon Wilson, Brajović pointed out that Montenegro's NATO membership was the greatest foreign policy success of our country which also protected and strengthened all achievements of the referendum on independence and was vital for the stability of Montenegro and the security of its citizens. During his visit to the USA, President Brajović gave an interview to the Voice of America.

## IN FOCUS



### *President of the Parliament of Montenegro participated in the Winter Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly*

President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović gave a speech during the Winter Session of the OSCE PA, held in Vienna, at which occasion he met with several officials.



"Aware of the fact that strength of every society is measured by the strength of its institutions, we in Montenegro, since renewing our independence, have worked diligently on strengthening the rule of law and on increasing the democratic capacity of our institutions. After implementing the demanding reforms and fulfilling the necessary criteria, last year we became the 29th NATO member. Now, all available capacities of our society are focused even more on achieving the second foreign policy priority of our country – membership in the European Union. We see the process of European integration as the best framework for implementing the overall reforms and meeting the highest standards aimed primarily at improving the life quality of each citizen" – said among other things President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović in his address to the participants in the OSCE PA Winter Meeting in Vienna.



Awaiting the upcoming presidential election, the

President of the Parliament in his address reminded of the fact that a majority of the ODIHR recommendations have been adopted and that the upcoming election cycles in Montenegro would be met with additionally improved electoral legislation.

At the follow up of the Winter Session, President Brajović had several meetings with high OSCE officials, as well as President of the Parliament of Austria. At the meeting with OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger, they discussed this organisation's further support to reforms in Montenegro, commitment of the Parliament to multilateral reforms, as well as the exceptional cooperation with the OSCE Mission to Montenegro. The President also met with Vincenzo Amendola, Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy. Second day, at the meeting of President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović with the ODIHR Director



Ingibjörg Gísladóttir, they discussed Montenegro's continuously good cooperation with the OSCE Mission in our country and the ODIHR report's significance for improvement of the electoral legislation. This was followed by a meeting with President of the OSCE PA George Tsereteli and OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Harlem Désir. The last day of the session, President Brajović met with Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian National Council.

During the talks, they also discussed parliamentary model and further development of political relations, while Democracy Workshops were cited as a successful joint project, initiated by former President of the Austrian Parliament Barbara Prammer. The Delegation of the Parliament was also composed of MPs Aleksandra Vuković and Nikola Rakočević.

## FROM THE HISTORY OF MONTENEGRIN PARLIAMENTARISM



### Excerpts from the Constitution of the Principality of Montenegro(1905) involving the System of State Government -(PART IV)- Ministers and Ministerial Council/Government<sup>1</sup>

The Constitution proscribes that the Government is at the top of the State Service hierarchy. It is composed of ministers, who are appointed and dismissed by the Prince. One of the ministers shall be appointed President of the Ministerial Council, at the orders of the Prince. The ministers shall be accountable for their actions to the Prince and the Parliamentary Assembly. Ministers shall take an oath of allegiance to the Prince, swearing to be faithful and abide by the rules of Constitution and law. The Ministers shall be entitled to attend the sittings of the Assembly.

They may participate in the discussion involving every item on the agenda, may ask for a hearing anytime they wish to, however without the right of the vote, which is granted to an MP only (Article 79). A petition complaint may be filed against a minister, provided that a petition is signed by a third of all the MPs. The petition is filed by the Prince and the Assembly. The accused minister shall be trialed before the

State Court. The Prince is not allowed to grant amnesty to a minister. There shall be a separate law governing the ministerial responsibility. (Article 111-117).

The competences of the Ministerial Council/Government are: issuing decrees for the execution of laws and decrees deriving from the supreme and oversight authority of the Prince. The Government proposes to the Parliament the adoption, amendments, and compulsory interpretation of laws. The Government is obliged to provide the committees with an information, when requested by them, the Government may suspend a submitted proposal until a final decision is deliberated within the assembly; the government proposals supported by the Assembly, whose amendments to the law (endorsed by the Assembly) are not supported by the Government, may be 'entirely retrieved' by the Government or brought back to the Assembly along with Government's opinions or amendments; a proposal entirely dismissed by the Assembly, may be submitted once again to the Assembly with certain amendments, while the original version of the proposal may be saved for the forthcoming parliament. (Articles 74, 85, 87, 88, 89).

<sup>1</sup> Izvor: Šuković, Mijat, „Istorija zakonodavstva Crne Gore 1796 – 1916.“, CID, Podgorica, 2007, str. 347-351.

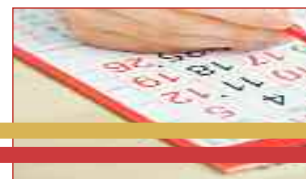
## PARLIAMENTARY GLOSSARY

**Directive.** “Together with regulations, directives are the most important secondary legislation acts of the European union. A Directive is binding in terms of the results to be produced, but it gives to the national authorities the freedom to choose the method and form of its implementation. Unlike regulations, directives are there for the purpose of the approximation and not the absolute harmonization of the Law of the EU Member States. Directives can bind a certain number of member states. They set goals to be achieved, while member states are obliged to implement them in their national systems, choosing the form to do it (a law, secondary legislation and so on). If a member state implements a directive inappropriately or does not implement it at all within the envisaged term, the case law of the Court of Justice of the EU has established the rule that every physical or legal entity can directly invoke the directive and the rights that can be derived from it before the national bodies of the member state.”<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. 193-194.



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## 1 February

- The President of the Parliament spoke with the U.S. Ambassador to Montenegro Margaret An Uehara on the planned American agenda for the traditional Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C., to which the President will be attending. The interlocutors stressed the importance of diplomatic activities and meetings with representatives of the states nourishing the same values as Montenegro.

## 2 February

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović hosted UK Ambassador to Montenegro Alison Kemp. The interlocutors discussed Montenegro's progress in the European integration, the rule of law, the media and other developments in our country. The two noted the joint wish for Montenegro's advancement in all fields, including strengthening of freedom, responsibility and professionalism of the media.



## 6 February

- Chair of the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants Andrija Nikolić met with Ambassador of Romania to Montenegro Ferdinand Nagy. Ambassador Nagy praised the successful fulfilment of Montenegro's strategic priority, joining NATO, especially emphasising the ability of the state policy to achieve remarkable results on its path towards the European Union.

## 7 February

- Delegation of the Parliament of Montenegro participated in the 66th National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C., during which there were a lot of meetings between Montenegrin officials with the American colleagues.
- Standing Delegation of the Parliament of Montenegro to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly composed of MPs Obrad Mišo Stanišić and Genci Nimanbegu took part in

the joint meeting of the Economics and Security Committee and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), held in Paris from 7-9 February. The joint annual meeting was held within the OECD Parliamentary Days, and was aimed at providing the opportunity for direct exchange of information between NATO Parliamentary Assembly delegates and OECD experts on relevant topics, as well as the opportunity for bilateral meetings of parliamentarians in accordance with their interests. During the Joint meeting, bilateral meetings were held with OECD experts and OECD member country delegations on topics "Migration" and "Future of Work". Delegation of the Parliament of Montenegro met Chair of the Friendship Group in the host country (France) Jacqueline Maquet. During the meeting, they spoke on past activities of the two groups and plans for future work. The meeting was also attended by Montenegrin Ambassador in Paris Dragica Ponorac.

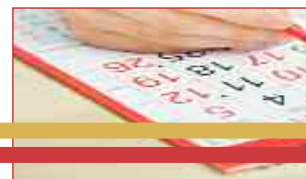
## 9 February

- The first joint meeting of the Committee on European Integration and the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants took place, hosting the European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn. Members of



two parliamentary committees, representatives of MP groups, as well as representatives of the invited NGOs posed questions to the European Commissioner. The European Commissioner stressed that this was a historic moment for Montenegro, the countries of the Western Balkans, the region, and Europe. He assessed that the Western Balkans strategy outlined the path, how Montenegro would be ready for membership in a 2025 perspective, and that this path would depend entirely on Montenegro's objective merits and results. In the end, European Commissioner Hahn expressed readiness of the EU to support Montenegro in its work ahead, while the EU itself, as he said, would be ready institutionally and financially to welcome new member states once they have

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met the conditions.

## 11 February

- Upon the invitation of the Embassy of the Czech Republic to Montenegro, Chair of the Security and Defence Committee Obrad Mišo Stanišić met with Chair of the Committee on Defence of the Czech Parliament Jana Černochová. The occasion for this significant meeting was the celebration of 100th anniversary since the mutiny of sailors in the Bay of Kotor. During the conversation, the interlocutors presented previous most significant results of working bodies as well as the activities planned for the upcoming period, while special reference was given to the issue of cooperation of the two committees. The meeting was also attended by Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Montenegro Karel Urban.

## 16 February

- Chair of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms Halil Duković took part in the workshop dedicated to discussion and validation of findings and recommendations of independent evaluation of the exiting monitoring system of children's rights in Montenegro, prepared by the Coram International at Coram Children's Legal Centre from the Great Britain. Chairperson of the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare Mr Suad Numanović also took part in the workshop. The participants presented key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation conducted in line with the approach planned by the Montenegrin Government and UNICEF, aimed at strengthening the system for monitoring children's rights, as envisaged within the Montenegrin Programme document, covering 2017-2021. Participants of the workshop were presented with four key recommendations involving the Council for Children's Rights, parliamentary committees, the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro and collecting data.

## 17 February

- Chair of the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants Andrija Nikolić and members of the Security and Defence Committee Milorad Vuletić and Miodrag Vuković took part in the Interparliamentary conference, in Sofia. Two-day Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence

Policy (CSDP) brought together delegations of national parliaments of members of the European Union and observer countries as well as representatives of the European Parliament in order to conduct constructive discussions on current topics from the subject areas. The two-day conference was focused on current EU priorities and objectives in the field of CFSP and CSDP, strengthening EU-NATO cooperation in fighting terrorism, cyber-defence, hybrid warfare, as well as cooperation in the field of maritime safety.

## 19 February

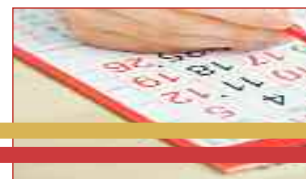
- Member of the Permanent Delegation of the NATO PA, Obrad Mišo Stanišić participated in the Joint Meeting of the Defence and Security Committee, Economics and Security Committee, Political Committee and Officers of the Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security and of the Science and Technology Committee of the NATO PA, which was held on 19 - 21 February 2018 in Brussels. In his address to the participants of the meeting, chaired by Jens Stoltenberg - NATO Secretary General, Stanišić expressed his special pleasure for being part of the meeting in the capacity of a representative of the country that fully supported the goals of NATO, and for the first time participated fully in the work of the meeting. In the context of the aforementioned, he stressed that Montenegro fully supported the vision and priorities presented by NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg.

## 20 February

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović has met Director of the World Health Organization's Regional Office for Europe Zsuzsanna Jakab. President Brajović said that the results achieved so far, in cooperation with the WHO, were the basis for intensifying the expert support aimed at improving the overall health system in Montenegro. Director Jakab praised the contribution of Montenegro in promoting the work of the South-eastern Europe Health Network (SEEHN), as well as the programs of cooperation among small countries. Minister of Health Kenan Hrapović also attended the meeting.
- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović met with Acting Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic Ivan Korčok. It was noted that traditionally good relations between the



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two countries were following the upward path, while a regular political dialogue at the highest level was a confirmation of a strong partnership and a mutual commitment to further strengthening of the overall cooperation.

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović paid a visit to the National Library "Đurađ Crnojević" in Cetinje. The President of the Parliament was the first to visit the exhibition dedicated to codification of the Montenegrin language. President of the Parliament pointed out that the National Library "has been and remained the cradle and mainstream of Montenegrin culture and identity, the center of all the visions and ideas of Montenegrin activity through centuries and millennia". The director of the National Library, Bogić Rakočević, expressed gratitude to the President for the logistical support that the Parliament provided for the sake of the development of the cultural mission that the National Library carries out.

## 21 February

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović, received for an inaugural visit, the resident Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vinko Radovanović. Both agreed that the relations between the two countries are at the highest level, without any open issues. It was pointed out that intensive co-operation of friendship groups of the two parliaments could significantly contribute to the exchange of experience, especially in the process of joining the European Union.
- Delegation of the Gender Equality Committee, headed by Chair Nada Drobnjak, and members Branka Tanasijević, Sanja Pavičević and Maja Bakrač, paid a visit to Brussels, on 20-21 February, at the invitation of the European Parliament, and within the frameworks of the



study visit and an assistance programme involving parliaments of enlargement countries, particularly the Western Balkans. During a two-day visit, members of the

Delegation had the opportunity to converse with numerous representatives of EU institutions. Furthermore, the Delegation participated at the meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, on which occasion Chair Nada Drobnjak spoke about the gender equality issues in Montenegro. European parliament officials welcomed the establishing of the Women's Political network composed of 14 political parties in Montenegro, whose role was to improve legislation in the area of gender equality.

## 22 February

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović spoke at the Winter Session of the OSCE PA in Vienna, where he met with numerous officials.

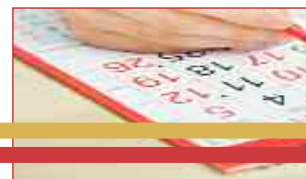
## 23 February

- Secretary General of the Parliament of Montenegro Aleksandar Jovičević with his associates met Secretary General of the Parliament of the Republic of Albania Genc Gjonečaj and his associates. The visit was organised by the OSCE Mission, during which the most important issues on the work of parliamentary services were discussed. In separate meetings, issues regarding the legislative process and oversight role of the Montenegrin Parliament were discussed, with an emphasis on budgetary autonomy of the Parliament, as well as organisational issues and management of human resources. A special attention was devoted to the work of Parliamentary Institute of the Parliament, where experiences of Research and Education centres, and guests from the Albanian Parliament had an opportunity to visit Democracy Workshops "Barbara Prammer".
- Chair of the Gender Equality Committee Nada Drobnjak spoke in the conference organised on presenting the results of the research "Prevention of child marriages in Montenegro: Challenges, lessons learnt and theory of change". The research was made within the programme "Coordinated action to combat violence and child marriages in the Roma and Egyptian communities", carried out by the NGO Centre for Roma Initiative in partnership with the UNICEF Office to Montenegro, and with financial support of the EU. Representatives of the relevant institutions, NGOs and international organisations took part in the conference.

## 26 February

- Members of the Committee on European Integration

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Daliborka Pejović, Mihailo Anđušić and Nikola Rakočević took part in the XIII Conference of the Parliamentary Committees on European Integration/Affairs of the States Participating in the Stabilization and Association Process in South East Europe (COSAP), held in Skopje. The conference was opened by Talat Xhaferi, President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, who said that regional countries had strategically clear aim - the EU membership. During the conference, the participants expressed their views about the EU-Western Balkans Strategy: A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans, and presented the situation in the area of rule of law, the strengthening of the independence of institutions and the fight against corruption and solving the migrant crisis. At the end of the meeting, regional delegations adopted a Joint Statement.

- Members of the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants and the Committee on European Integration and the Friendship Group with the Parliament of Italy had a joint meeting with Italian senator, Lodovico Sonogo, Head of the Italian delegation in the Parliamentary Dimension of the Central European Initiative. Senator Sonogo referred to the European Union's Enlargement Strategy with the Western Balkans, which, in his opinion, valued all the efforts Western Balkan countries have made on the EU accession path, that placed Montenegro as a positive example. MPs expressed satisfaction with the friendly relations between Montenegro and Italy, high-quality on-going projects, as well as potentials of improving cooperation in number of areas. Particular attention was paid to ecology and environment, human rights and energy issues. The meeting was also attended by the Ambassador of the Italian Republic to Montenegro Vincenzo Del Monaco.
- Chair of the Committee on Economy, Finance and Budget Predrag Sekulić participated in the Interparliamentary conference: "Power of Money: Budgetary authority and procedures in the European Parliament", which took place in Skopje - Republic of Macedonia. The Conference was organised by the European Parliament, respectively the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Budgets, in cooperation with Sabor. In addition to MPs of the European Parliament, i.e. MPs of member states of the European Union, there were also delegations of national parliaments representing states in the process of accession to the EU. The Conference was the opportunity for the countries in the accession

process to the EU to converse with the European



parliamentarians on matters involving finances of the EU, plans and funds, as well as the manner the EU oversees the spending of funds originating from grants and funds which are allocated to other countries, the monitoring of the process, the manner of allocation of IPA funds among states, etc.

## 27 February

- President of the Parliament of Montenegro Ivan Brajović met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Igor Crnadak. It was stated that two countries continuously developed friendly relations and cooperation based on multi level connections. In the context of strengthening regional stability, the importance of fostering good-neighborly politics and regional co-operation has been highlighted. During the meeting, two officials exchanged views on the current economic situation, and stressed that the prerequisite for more intensive economic cooperation was better infrastructure connection between the two countries.
- President Brajović spoke to President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, which was followed by an address to the MPs of the Parliament of Montenegro.

## 28 February

- Representatives of the Committee on Political System, Judiciary and Administration met with representatives of the Committee on Public Administration, Local Government and Media of the Republic of Kosovo, as well as with the Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo to Montenegro Skender Durmishi. During the meeting, the participants discussed legal solutions of both countries in the area of local self-government and territorial organisation, with a special focus on issues related to internal organisation of Podgorica and Priština, as main capitals.