



Parliament of Montenegro

Committee on Further Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation

Podgorica, 14. January 2019

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European Commission for Democracy through Law

VENICE COMMISSION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Director Mr. **Thomas Markert**

Distinguished Mr. Markert,

Firstly, I would like to thank for your participation and excellent address at the Session of Cetinje Parliamentary Forum, held in November last year, as well as to express my deep gratitude to you and Venice Commission for the all support to the democratic processes of Montenegro.

I would like to use this opportunity to inform you that the Committee on Further Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation was formed in order to improve the overall Electoral Environment and strengthen public confidence in elections.

The responsibilities of this working body are reflecting the intentions of political stakeholders to respect democratic values and standards for transparent and inclusive elections, therefore we would appreciate if you may ensure technical assistance in the ongoing debate on the key issues within the amending process of the Electoral Legislation.

On behalf of the Parliament of Montenegro I would like to emphasize the importance of counting on your relevant expertise in order to achieve our goals within forthcoming reforms in the first months of 2019. In this regard, we will appreciate long term assistance of the Venice Commission and its opinion already at the drafting stage, by providing an expert that would be present at the Committee meetings in Podgorica, providing input on COE legal standards. The idea is that he/she might be liaison officer among our Parliament and your Commission when we both find it necessary. In order to increase efficiency, the work is organized through seven working groups with the mandate to prepare the best possible solutions that will be sent to the Committee. With this regard, we will appreciate your help in a field of constitutional reforms with regard to Judicial Council, as a main issue that will be discussed at Working Group 3 meetings. The preparation of the overall draft amendments is expected to be completed by 30 September, 2019.

As I previously mentioned, the main goals of the new Committee are referred to the implementation of the recommendations of relevant institutions with regard to the elections in 2016 and 2018 as well as strengthening the overall capacities and transparency of relevant bodies within electoral processes.

In order to ensure comprehensive and inclusive reforms and successful outcomes, the Committee is composed of MPs from ruling party and opposition, with the associate members from NGO and academic community. Moreover, representatives of relevant international institutions (Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro and OSCE) have also expressed the willing to participate in Committee work. Working groups have already started their work, and from the middle January all participants will dedicate their work to ensuring deep analysis on ongoing Election Legislation, focusing on good practices and positive experience within EU Member States.

Please remain assured of my appreciation for the Venice Commission's work under your effective term of office and I am looking forward to our fruitful cooperation in the near future.

Please accept the assurance of my deepest consideration.

With all my respect,



Branimir Gvozdenovic

Vice President of the Parliament of Montenegro

Chair of the Committee on Further Reform of Electoral and Other Legislation

Cc: Božidarka Krunić, Head of the Montenegrin Mission to the COE