

Speech by President of the Parliament of Montenegro
Mr Ivan Brajović, at the reception in Belgrade, on the occasion of the 13th July

11 July 2017, Belgrade

Ladies and gentlemen,

The great date that gathers us today is a common denominator of all Montenegrin successes and victories. For Montenegrins, the 13th July is a legacy of freedom and resistance, which lasts for 139 years.

The great day was also that of 1878, when the Berlin Congress adopted the administrative document to recognise Montenegro as the 27th country of the world, as well as the other of 1941, as the most massive and most combative uprising in a kneeling Europe under the boot of fascism. Back then the 30,000 warriors from all parts of Montenegro made Fascist army General Pirzio Biroli wail: *To keep Montenegrins subjugated would be as futile as trying to plow the sea.* And French giant Jean Paul Sartre cried out that the Thirteenth July Uprising was a magnificent event of the European history of the 20th century.

The unusual uniqueness and determination of the Montenegrin people to preserve their freedom may be the most important clue in the preservation of Montenegrin identity that was shaken by the loss of statehood and blending into the community of South Slavs. United as never before, Montenegrins freed most of the occupied territory in 12 days, causing admiration of all, including those much larger and more powerful.

Dear compatriots, the liberation opened the door of Montenegro, and many left the Montenegrin moderate soil and sought a better life in more fertile and more developed areas. Montenegro suffered for that more than anyone else, because the viscera and intellect of our people were appropriated by big cities around the world. You are descendants of this Montenegrin intellectual and creative spirit, as many of you have personally accepted the outstretching arm of the more promising places. I congratulate you on that visionary and I myself envy a little bit to you and to the world...

But, the times are changing. Montenegro is a member of NATO, and the day comes when it will join the family of the European Union. Now, in the name of an advanced and progressive Montenegro, I give you the hand to achieve all your visions, ideas and existences in modern Montenegro. As the President of the peoples' house - the Parliament of Montenegro, I kindly ask you not to come to your homeland only to open blinds on locked houses, photograph walls covered with ivy and yards full of weeds, or light candles on the graves of your loved ones. I want you to bring in and bring up children in Montenegro, to participate with all the available talents, opportunities and visions in the creation of modern Montenegro of the 21st century. Please, when you go from Montenegro, go to return...

Be what you are, the heirs of King Vladimir, Crnojević and Petrović families... descendants of the 13 July and the 21May, and each country will be proud of you and happy with you, as are Montenegro and Serbia.

In the end, I wish to all of us in the future - Montenegro and the rest of the world – to have as little as possible historic dates such as the 13th July, as this is a sign that there will be peace, and only in peace can one be content and calm.

I wish you a happy holiday!