

President Vujanović's speech at the Inauguration of National Human Development Report (NHDR) 2009: Montenegro – Society for All

Montenegro, as the youngest member of the United Nations, puts UN values and principles and Millennium Development Goals in the foundation of its policies. Therefore, we are especially committed to cooperation with all UN agencies which projects and assistance give important support to democratic and development processes in Montenegro.

We highly value the engagement of UN agencies in Montenegro which resulted in a number of activities and decisions that objectively valorized the achievements of our country.

I am taking the opportunity to underline the importance of a decision of the UN Development Group in June 2009, that recognized Montenegro as a state suitable for application of the Delivering as One UN model with unified financing. This decision is certainly a compliment to Montenegro, and an obligation and commitment at the same time.

We are convinced that that decision is a confirmation of previous positive results, responsibility and clear determination of Montenegro to develop and enhance cooperation with the United Nations for the benefit of its citizens and the world organization itself. In this regard, the state institutions in charge, in cooperation with UNDP, are undertaking activities in defining joint operation directions and establishing concrete goals that will enable better usage of UN potentials and realization of the needs at the state and local levels.

The programs that UNDP Montenegro carries out in cooperation with institutions in charge in domain of social inclusion, institutional reform and judicial reform, sustainable economic development and environmental protection, corresponds with Montenegro's development priorities and needs. We especially appreciate collaboration in the sphere of social-humanitarian issues, especially in domain of taking care of socially vulnerables, solving the position of displaced persons, improving the position of children and the position of women in Montenegro. This includes support in creation of strategic documents on poverty alleviation, inclusion of Roma, Ashkaliae and Egyptians and sustainable development strategy.

I wish to extend special gratitude to UNDP for cooperation in the sector of security and defence. The project for demilitarization of Montenegro in domain of destruction of surplus weapons has been designed and realized with UNDP's assistance. The MONDEM Program's goal is destruction of surplus weapons and ammunition and, in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence of Montenegro and OSCE, and with financial assistance from the USA, excluding the risk of surplus for the safety of citizens and properties. What makes us happy is that this project is being realized in line with the planned dynamics, with prospects to be finished by the end of this year.

It is our constant determination to permanently improve assumptions for creation of a human society based on fundamental principles of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for the environment and sharing responsibilities.

We will keep enduring for a state policy with a powerful social dimension. Our budget allocations will continually be primarily focused to social insurances and benefits, health and

education along with a maximum of commitment to preserving and increasing of budget allocations for those three sectors in the amounts of 70% plus.

We will intensify the activities that provide for and improve macro economic stability and create favorable conditions for entrepreneurship, especially in the area of Northern Montenegro. The economic crisis experience, that got us to preserve an additional employment trend through entrepreneurship and employment programs, especially in the North, do make a realistic basis to continue that process of creating significant effects while overcoming crisis.

In the context of this UNDP's research I deem necessary to express deserved attention to refugees and displaced persons in Montenegro. First of all, because of them and their interest and hard lot that had brought them in that position. Further, because of the efforts of UNDP and UN as a whole, as well as the entire international community to help them. But, I will be utterly frank for the sake of continuous and important support of the state of Montenegro and its citizens by offering those people a maximum of help and assistance. UNDP's research, which is being presented today, points to their generally serious situation. But also it points to their impact on the overall human development index in Montenegro that was analysed in this report.

I will remind the attendees that in times of the largest number of refugees and displaced persons there was over 22% of them in relation to domicile population. Globally speaking, this percentage will remain remembered as one of the biggest representation of this population in a country. Montenegro is proud because they found shelter here, and because the country and its citizens demonstrated a traditionally well-known hospitality.

But it is also necessary to say that, in the course of the past three-year period, the return of refugees and displaced persons to the countries of origin has almost been stopped. Over the past three years the numbers of those persons have been decreased in only 1.640, and currently there are 24.460 persons staying in Montenegro, especially those from the area of Kosovo, of which there is more than 66%. Montenegro will not influence with its state politics on their decision on whether they will come back to Kosovo but it wants to respect their clear and strongly expressed will to be provided with a sustainable return to the area where they came from. We expect that both UNDP and all other international institutions tackling this sensitive and important activity additionally and clearly encourage their return to Kosovo.

In this context, the first National Human Development Report 2009 prepared by UNDP, about social exclusion and vulnerable groups, represents an important contribution to the overall efforts that the state and our society are undertaking in order to achieve full social inclusion.

We expect that the successful cooperation with UNDP will be continued, through further implementation of projects that refer to inducing entrepreneurship, development of small and medium enterprises in the sectors of tourism, agriculture and wood processing, employing of vulnerable categories of population, as well as projects in domains of information technologies and environmental protection.