



STALNA MISIJA CRNE GORE PRI UJEDINJENIM NACIJAMA
PERMANENT MISSION OF MONTENEGRO TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT

by H.E. Mr. Igor Lukšić
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at the

High-level Plenary Meeting of the 65th session of the United
Nations General Assembly

New York
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Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I commend the UN Secretary-General, H.E. Ban Ki-moon for initiating this extremely important meeting towards accomplishing our common mission to accelerate progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Organization of the Summit reaffirms the importance of sitting down together to agree on a concerted action in dealing with the present-day challenges.

Our common reality at the beginning of this millennium has been characterized by unforeseen challenges that have fundamentally impacted our way of life as well as realization of the development targets. The financial and economic situation has weakened our efforts in tackling the existing food and energy crises and coupled with the increasingly negative impact of the climate change has further highlighted the fact that each country as a member state of the UN, in addition to its responsibility for development within its own borders, shares the responsibility for global development. Therefore, a development philosophy that underscores **need for cooperation and interdependence of states and entities** towards a global advancement of living conditions is more important than ever before. And thus also the role of the United Nations as the broadest multilateral forum.

The Millennium Declaration that we have signed in the year 2000 with the emanating Goals has been a milestone in the development paradigm and the approach of the international community to providing aid to the most vulnerable. For the first time we have defined common and at the same time measurable targets with a concrete deadline for reducing poverty, improving health and education, promoting peace, the rule of law and democracy in the context of precepts and principles of sustainable development.

Montenegro is today, just as it was then, firmly resolved to act vigorously and continuously towards carrying out the commitments, as well as to lend **support for strengthening coordination of the relevant entities at a global level.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Agreement on and general acceptance of the MDGs have enabled **an exchange of experience and expertise** towards finding the best solutions to achieve the targets. In addition to their universal applicability, MDGs **lend themselves well to national particularities and circumstances**. This is a crucial value of this process, making it relevant for different countries regardless of their size or degree of development.

Montenegro's Millennium Development Goals Mid-Term Report submitted in the run-up to the Summit **reflects our commitment to take responsibility for conducting the national development policy**. The Report defines 44 targets for the first seven Millennium Goals, which are specific to Montenegro, still to an extent a country in transition, but fully devoted to reform and sustained progress towards full membership of the European Union and NATO.

The targets have been set ambitiously, but we are confident that they are realistic and attainable once effective policies are in place coupled with technical and financial support and sustained cooperation and partnerships within regional and multilateral institutions and forums.

The strategic development priorities under which we have defined the targets set in this Report are based on implementing sustainable development principles, with increasing economic freedoms and a strengthened role of the private sector, advancement of the rule of law as the precondition for a functioning market democracy and improving the living standards of all its citizens by promoting quality public services through effective education, health and social welfare systems. In this way, **Montenegro clearly demonstrates and reaffirms resolve to incorporate into its national policies the obligations undertaken under international agreements, initiatives and declarations**. The Millennium Development Goals are crucial for the United Nations development agenda and their achievement on schedule is one of Montenegro's most important obligations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the past ten years Montenegro has made considerable headways in the fields of economic stability and legislative reform adopting strategic and planning documents and policies harmonized with policy and legislative requirements of the European Union and international conventions. The Platform for achieving Millennium Development Goals has been put in place by adopting a **National Strategy of Sustainable Development** in 2007, which defines the *economic, social, environmental, ethical and cultural vision* of Montenegro's development based on the globally accepted principles of sustainable development of the *Rio Declaration* and *Agenda 21*, the *Johannesburg Declaration* and the *Plan of Implementation*. With a view to ensuring an integrated implementation of development policies as early as in 2002 Montenegro established a **National Council for Sustainable Development**. The Council is composed of representatives of

all the segments of the society.¹ Its chief mission is to enable dialogue and partnership and thus support Montenegro's Government in the field of sustainable development.

The results of reforms in Montenegro are visible. According to the findings of the MDGs Mid-Term Report, despite variable progress in different areas, **Montenegro will by the year 2015 have succeeded in achieving almost all the tasks set at the national level under the MDGs.** However, we still have an important obligation to further advance what has been achieved and to intensify through continuous monitoring the efforts towards meeting our commitments.

During her recent, first visit to Montenegro, the UNDP Chief Administrator Mrs. Helen Clark said, quote "Montenegro is bringing a good story to the MDG Summit in New York in the next couple of weeks. Montenegro will achieve all of the goals. You have even set MDG plus goals ... and you will meet them! We are impressed with the progress you are making on so many fronts" unquote.

The most important challenges in Montenegro's long-term development are those of further reduction of regional economic, social and cultural disparities and social exclusion. Also of strengthening the rule of law and ensuring closer integration of environmental issues in sectoral development policies and strategies. Achieving gender equality is, like in most countries, an area with the least dynamic pace of progress.

As a country of an extraordinary geographical and biodiversity and one of the fastest growing tourist destinations, which is a comparative advantage, Montenegro is facing huge pressures against the environment. Sustainable use of resources is our priority towards achieving the seventh Millennium Development Goal and Montenegro will work hard to accomplish this in the period ahead.

Given the adverse impact of the global economic and financial crisis, **stimulating economic growth, continuing structural reforms and promoting** a dynamic private sector attractive for foreign and local investment **in line with long-term purposes and principles of sustainable development and equitable and inclusive growth** remains essential to achieving all the MDGs. This will call for investment of considerable additional resources in education, science and research programmes. Also in projects involving management and application of cleaner technologies and development of an information and communication society. This underscores interdependence of the eight MDGs and the need for a holistic and comprehensive approach in dealing with them, to which Montenegro is committed.

¹ Government, NGO, academic and business sectors, local self-governments and independent individuals

In today's world full of challenges, partnerships are of great importance. Among those particularly important I would like to highlight one that Montenegro is implementing with much success together with the organizations from the UN system. Montenegro participates in the programme "Delivering as One", within a system of comprehensive UN activity, enabling the UN agencies and the Government to maximize the potential at the local and national levels.

Regional, as well global integration processes strengthen political stability and economic prosperity and help countries ensure public facilities necessary for a sustainable development. Thus, they too are conducive to achieving the MDGs. Montenegro is giving particular attention to building good relations with neighbours and promoting institutional forms of regional cooperation.

Guided by these premises **Montenegro fully supports a renewed commitment of the EU and developed countries to increase and enhance aid to developing countries, as well as give additional attention to the countries, regions and goals most lagging behind, focusing on the Sub-Saharan Africa and the least developed countries.** In this process it is vital that coordination mechanisms be defined within and between countries and that donor aid be harmonized and integrated based on the provisions of the *Monterrey Consensus(2002), the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Action Agenda and the Doha Declaration(2008)*.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The global challenges we are faced with offer a unique opportunity for a coherent, adequate and timely action of the international community. Therefore we see this meeting today as an opportunity to once again underscore the need to *keep the promise* made here ten years ago. In this important mission Montenegro will be a reliable and responsible partner. We therefore support adoption of the Outcome Document as this reaffirms our commitment and our clear plans to fully achieve the goals at all levels.

Thank you for your attention!