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STATEMENT

By H.E. Mr. Milorad Šćepanović
Permanent Representative of Montenegro to the United Nations
at the Third Committee of the 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly
Agenda item 28 - Advancement of Women
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Mr. Chairman,

As this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor during this session, I would like to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election and assure you of the full support of the delegation of Montenegro in your efforts to lead the work of the Committee to the successful conclusion of the issues and challenges before us.

Mr. Chairman,

Montenegro aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

The Government of Montenegro reaffirms its strong support to the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and takes all necessary steps in order to fully achieve gender equality. After regaining the independence in 2006 and establishing legal and institutional basis for realization of the gender equality, Government of Montenegro has started to implement the programs aimed at the improvement of the status of women focusing on their political participation, economic empowerment and life without violence. These programs incorporate work with political parties and other stakeholders, including civil society, to ensure the full implementation of international standards and national legal provisions as well as to mobilize wider societal support for equal political representation. Integral part of these activities includes adopted Electoral Law which defines an obligation for inclusion of at least 30% of women on electoral lists, as well as sanctions which consist of returning the electoral list if it is not in compliance with the law provisions.

In order to increase political participation of women, as well as their representation in state and local institutions by 30%, Government of Montenegro initiated the process of adopting the new

Plan of Activities to Achieve Gender Equality for the period 2012-2016. In diplomatic and consular representation of Montenegro, women are already represented by over 30%.

Mr. Chairman,

In regards to the economic empowerment, UN Women is currently implementing the project „Advancing Women's Economic and Social Rights" in Montenegro, aimed at the elimination of gender-based discrimination in the labour market and mainstreaming the gender perspective in policies, service delivery and budgets through strengthening the capacities of key labour market institutions, employment services and complaint mechanisms for the implementation of international and national obligations for equal economic rights of both women and men. Project includes as well strengthening the capacity of civil society for advocating and monitoring the integration of gender equality into laws, strategies, policies and budgets. Greater attention has been given to the gender-sensitive budget planning, as well as poverty eradication and sustainable economic growth, in particular the economic empowerment of women.

Enhancing the role of civil society in the formulation and implementation of human rights policies and programmes and fully supporting the inclusion of a strong, free and independent civil society's voice ensure active participation of several NGOs in the projects being implemented in collaboration of the Government of Montenegro and international organizations. The main goal of these projects is to encourage women to create their own businesses thus increasing the number of women entrepreneurs. Active participation of NGOs is recognized in the area of prevention of violence against women including domestic violence, thus in 2011 Government of Montenegro financially supported several NGOs dealing with this issue.

Mr. Chairman,

Violence against women, including domestic violence is a social problem of all countries facing with. The consequences of domestic violence are felt by generations, but also by society as a whole. It is an obstacle for achieving equality, development and peace. Domestic violence is defined as a crime in Criminal Code of Montenegro adopted in 2002.

During the last two years, Montenegro adopted several significant acts related to domestic violence. Namely, Law on Protection from Domestic Violence came into force in August 2010. Prepared with the support of UNDP, UNICEF and OSCE experts, Strategy for Fight against Domestic Violence, adopted in July 2011, defines goals and activities for improvement of social and overall protection of women which include harmonization of existing and adoption of new regulations, improvement of social and other protection for victims, raising awareness, development of programs for prevention of domestic violence, development of multidisciplinary treatment model for the prevention and protection from domestic violence, and cooperation between all stakeholders in protecting victims, as well as ensuring psychosocial treatment to the perpetrators. Protocol on the Rules of Procedures of Institutions in Case of Domestic Violence was adopted on 25 November 2011. Its implementation will be

monitored through the reports on the conducted measures and ensured through the constant cooperation at the institutional level, and through the UN's assistance in terms of education, expertise and financial support.

Recognizing the problem of violence against women, national mechanism for gender equality, since its inception, has participated in the Global Campaign of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. Campaign is organized in close cooperation with UN Women, UNDP and OSCE.

Mr. Chairman,

Over the past decade, there has been considerable progress towards gender equality in Montenegro, with increasing understanding of the issue and efforts to integrate gender component into key government policies and processes. However, much more needs to be done. Elimination of discrimination by gender is a prerequisite for active and non-bias inclusion of all social actors into the political and economic life of Montenegro. Government of Montenegro will continue to work in cooperation with all partners to create an environment for design, initiation, implementation and promotion of gender sensitive policies and laws, as well as the development of partnership and relations with the international community and full respect of international standards that contribute to the achievement of equal rights, possibilities and responsibilities of women and men in the society.

Thank you.