



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE

25-28 November 2010

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Central European Initiative (CEI) held its Annual Session in Budva, on 26 and 27 November 2010.

The topics of the Parliamentary Assembly of CEI were: “Cross-border Cooperation between Countries of the Central European Initiative” and “Parliamentary Cooperation with Civil Society”.

The meeting was chaired by Miodrag Vuković, President of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension and Head of the Montenegrin Parliamentary Delegation to the CEI-PD.

The meeting was attended by delegations representing the following member countries: Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Republic of Serbia, Republic of Slovenia and Ukraine.

The opening session, in accordance with the topics, was opened by the speeches of Željko Šturanović, Vice-President of the Parliament of Montenegro, and Milan Roćen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro.

The first thematic session of the CEI Parliamentary Assembly was opened by the speeches of Gordana Đurović, Minister for EU Integration of Montenegro and Clive Rumbold, Head of Political, European Integration and Trade Section of EU Delegation to Montenegro. The second thematic session of the CEI Parliamentary Assembly was opened by the speeches of Vasilije Lalošević, Member of Montenegrin Delegation to CEI-PD and Marko Čanović, NGO Representative.

The meeting was also attended by guests of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Regional Cooperation Council, and representatives of the Diplomatic Corps.

Participants at the meeting presented their national experiences in the areas covered by thematic units.

At the end of the meeting of Parliamentary Assembly of Central-European initiative, participants adopted -

FINAL DECLARATION

Parliamentary Assembly of the CEI:

Marks the 50th anniversary of the idea of French Minister of Foreign Affairs Robert Schuman, on establishing a new organisation which has developed into the community of 27 European states inhabited by about a half a billion citizens, under a joint motto “United in Diversity”;

Takes into account that the goal of the Central European Initiative is the integration of all CEI members into a family of European countries, and particularly emphasises the willingness of the CEI countries that have already gained the status of EU members to contribute in providing various forms of support to countries under the accession process;

Acknowledged the decision of the EU Commission concerning the necessity of further enlargement in respect to Western Balkan countries, as well as the conclusions and recommendations incorporated in opinions and annual progress reports for candidate and potential candidate countries;

Welcomes the opinion of the EC on the EU membership application of Montenegro with the conclusions and recommendations related to candidate status granting, while anticipating a decision about the date for starting negotiation;

Particularly appreciates concrete steps undertaken on approximation of candidate countries and potential EU candidates, emphasising the importance of the decision on visa liberalisation for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina;

Encourages steps on further visa liberalization between CEI Member States;

Supports the trend of strengthening parliaments on national level, and importance of national parliaments in relation to the policy of the European Union, arising from Lisbon Treaty;

Emphasises that the formula for brighter future of united Europe incorporates peace, safety, spreading of tolerance, understanding and mutual respect, economic development, building of a rule-of-law state and efficient institutions of the system, founded on Economic values and standards;

Welcomes Millennium goals of development reflected in extermination of extreme poverty and famine, achievement of universal primary education, promotion of gender equality, reduction of child mortality, improvement of mother health, fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and other illnesses, ensuring environmental sustainability as well as creating global development partnership, and, in these terms, appreciates the efforts of CEI countries in achieving the Millennium goals through establishing and implementing of appropriate instruments;

Reminds of available means for delivery of cross border cooperation projects and accordingly invites to development of projects that would lead to strengthening of links between nations and countries of the Central European Initiative;

Invites CEI states to pay special attention to promoting joint projects of EU members and the CEI countries that do not belong to the Union; projects related to exchange of knowledge and experiences, which turned out to be the most efficient and most encouraging mechanisms for transfer of experiences in all developmental areas;

Confirms commitment of the CEI countries for further developing of good neighbour relations, and encourages constructive dialogue and project oriented regional cooperation;

Invites to firm cooperation between the Government and Parliamentary Dimension of the Central European Initiative, and strengthening of cooperation of the Parliamentary Dimension of CEI with other regional organisations and initiatives, aimed at strengthening of the impact of all initiatives on better relations in the region;

Recognizes three key areas identified by CEI Action Plan 2010-2012: economic development, institutional development and horizontal instrument (inter-regional and cross-border cooperation) and emphasises that successfulness in fulfilling obligations from the plan will depend on CEI countries, i.e. their willingness to contribute to the achievement of the goal, which is a sound (sustainable) regional cooperation;

Expresses interest of national parliaments of CEI-PD Member States in establishing closer cooperation and exchange of experiences for the purpose of finding efficient parliamentary response in part related to parliamentary cooperation with civil society and transparency of work;

Aware of importance of involving all actors of the society in building parliamentary democracy, **emphasises** the necessity of intensive cooperation with civil sector through all available mechanisms;

Encourages the efforts of parliaments to identify joint goals that can be achieved through cooperation with civil sector;

Appreciating the connections of non-governmental organisations with various target groups, **points out** the need to develop ideas and suitable cooperation mechanisms aimed at raising awareness of citizens with regard to parliamentary activities;

Invites parliaments of CEI-PD Member States to have a proactive approach in supporting, articulating, improving and establishing closer cooperation in part related to delivery of projects for the purpose of strengthening administrative capacities of parliaments and improving the conditions for strengthening parliamentary cooperation with civil society;

Expresses the most sincere wishes for the Republic of Serbia to be successful in its presidency of the Central European Initiative in 2011.