



Podgorica, 10 December 2011

As of today, the institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms (Ombudsman) and Human Rights Action (HRA) start the implementation of the project "**Children, write to the Ombudsman!**".

In order to promote respect for human rights of children, it is important to inform children about the institution of the Ombudsman and encourage their participation in the processes concerning them directly.

Bearing in mind:

- The 2009 study "Violence against children" of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms, showing that 800 children out of 1200 students surveyed in Montenegrin elementary schools in 2009 have been exposed to violence (66.67%);
- Frequent cases of violence in schools, several of which have been published in the media in 2011;
- Acting of the Ombudsman on complaints of violence in schools and recommendations the Ombudsman submitted to the Ministry of Education and Sports on this occasion last week;

We have recognized the need to educate school age children about the right to address the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms in order to protect their rights, as well as the need to present these right to children in a more understandable and comprehensive way. In the following period, until the end of the school year, children will be informed in various ways on their right to write to the Ombudsman about their experience of unfair situations they are exposed to in schools, which lead to violations of their rights. This action will enable better understanding of the position of children in schools and further recommendations of the Ombudsman. At the same time, received letters will serve as basis for the script of the comic strip book on children's rights, which could hopefully be introduced into the regular curriculum as a teaching tool.

Comic strip book will include: typical examples of unacceptable violence in schools by teachers and students, situations provoking such violence and examples of peaceful conflict resolution and constructive ways to introduce discipline, examples of avoiding discriminatory behaviour, description of other forms of human rights violations, such as denial of information and free expression of opinions and how to overcome them.

We also hope that the media in Montenegro will support the implementation of this project and get involved in informing children about the project and their right to address the Ombudsman. To this end, we invite you to publish the address of the Ombudsman children can write to:

Zaštitnik ljudskih prava i sloboda Crne Gore

Bulevar Sv. Petra Cetinjskog 1A/2

81000 Podgorica

E-mail : ombudsmandjeca@t-com.me

blog : www.ombudsman.co.me/blog/

Sincerely,

Nevenka Stanković,

Deputy Ombudsman for the Rights of the Child

Tea Gorjanc Prelević,

Executive Director of NGO Human Rights Action