

Annalisa GIANANTI

International Relations Officer-Political Affairs Advisor

DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO MONTENEGRO

Dear participants,

Good morning. It is a pleasure to be here with you after such a long time. It is a pleasure to take part in this First National Conference on a project supported by the EU Delegation on Judicial Reform Monitoring. We attach great importance to cooperation between the Ministry of Justice and civil society organisations, in this particular context Human Rights Action and CeMI, in the reform of the judicial system, which is one of the pillars of Chapter 23 and the overall reform of the rule of law sector. Judicial reform is a broad concept of course encompassing not only legislative changes which are greatly undertaken. Of course, there is harmonisation of the national legislation with the *acquis*, but judicial reform is a continuous process, continuous training of judges and prosecutors, as well as the administrative staff. It requires investments into the equipment. We know how important it is to establish an IT system functioning well in both the judicial and prosecutorial sector in order to ensure efficiency of the judicial system.

Ultimately, reforming the judicial and prosecutorial system means of course to have a fair, independent, professional and efficient judiciary so that all the citizens can have access to the justice.

As the Minister of Justice emphasized, many efforts have been done from the beginning of this reform process. Implementation phase that has already started, for example the implementation of the Constitutional amendments that was completed recently, then many important laws have been adopted in order to ensure strengthening independence and efficiency of the judicial and prosecutorial system. But many other efforts are yet to be made in order to make solid results in the field. Last week when our Director General visited Podgorica we met with few representatives of the prosecutorial organisation and the courts and we welcome establishing the new special prosecutor and this is a first step towards establishing solid, sincere results of combating organised crime which is one of the priorities in the area of rule of law, so we believe this is an important step forward and we will be really glad to see the first results. There is no doubt that it is important for judges and prosecutors to have all the necessary tools in order to achieve adequate results, and which I have already mentioned. This is a matter of each individual judge and prosecutor to perform their duties independently and professionally.

The EU has provided significant funds for supporting this reform, and we will continue to do so, of course with the aim to close the Chapter 23, of course when the country and its system are ready to

achieve this goal and the results provided by the Chapter 23. We are ready of course to support this process in the future.

Thank you for your attention, I am glad I will be able to hear useful and interesting suggestions on how to further improve the system, and to hear this from the people involved in the process. Thank you very much.