

Podgorica, December 9, 2009.

**Olli Rehn, Commissioner
General Directorate for Enlargement
European Commission**

Brussels

Dear Mr. Rehn,

Following the application of Montenegro for membership of the European Union, and decision of the EU Council to implement the procedure laid down in Article 49 of the Treaty on the European Union, and accordingly inviting the Commission to submit its Opinion on capacity of Montenegro to comply with the obligations resulting from membership of the European Union, the Government of Montenegro has solemnly received, from Your part, on July 22 2008, in Podgorica, the Questionnaire - a comprehensive list of questions and information necessary for the European Commission in order to prepare its Opinion on application of Montenegro for membership of the European Union.

It is my pleasure to hand over comprehensive answers on the Questionnaire, prepared by the Government of Montenegro, supplemented with a large number of annexes providing easier follow-up and understanding of the answers delivered. Prepared document shall provide the Commission with the information necessary for assessment and preparation of the Opinion.

The Government of Montenegro is at the disposal of the Commission to give supplementary explanations on the answers on the Questionnaire.

I sincerely believe that this, new, phase in dialogue between the European Commission and Montenegro, in which we are jointly entering in 2010, will give additional impetus to the implementation of reforms and the European integration process in our country.

Yours sincerely,

Prime Minister of Montenegro,

Milo Đukanović

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Montenegro signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union on 15 October 2007. Part of the Agreement relating to trade entered into force in January 2008 and Montenegrin market will be opened to the companies of EU already in 2012. Ratification of SAA is in its final phase in Member States' parliaments and it is expected to fully enter into force in the beginning of 2010.

Good implementation of the economic part of the Agreement determined the dynamics of the following steps. Following the submission of application of Montenegro for membership to the European Union on 15 December 2008 and the Council's decision of 23 April to implement the procedure laid down in Article 49 of the Treaty on the European Union, the Commission was invited to submit its opinion on the application. In line with the above mentioned, on 22 July the Government of Montenegro ceremonially received the Questionnaire- Information requested by the European Commission to the Government of Montenegro for the preparation of the Opinion on the application of Montenegro for membership of the European Union (containing 2 178 questions).

The Questionnaire is official instrument of EU for assessment of readiness of a country to initiate the accession process. Positive opinion of the European Commission (announced for autumn 2010) provides for the possibility of acquiring the candidate status (already at the end of 2010) and the perspective of accession negotiations on membership (2011).

Timely preparation for answering to the EC Questionnaire is estimated as the key step in the process preceding the opening of negotiations for full membership in European Union. Montenegro has successfully completed this commitment.

Draft answers were adopted by the Government of Montenegro on 26 November 2009 and this document shall be ceremonially delivered to Commissioner Rehn on 9 December 2009 in Brussels.

Preparation of answers to the Questionnaire of the European Commission has been the biggest and most complex administrative venture of Montenegrin institutions since achieving independence and represents our firm commitment to further democratic and economic reforms in the country and dynamic European integration process.

For the purpose of better preparation of answers, we adopted a special Instruction on preparation of answers (July 2009) which defined the mechanism of coordination in the preparation of answers and explicit rules for all included in this complex process. The progress of realization of this important task has been considered every week at the sessions of the Government, during the entire process.

During the process of preparation of answers, the Government of Montenegro asked the European Commission four times for additional clarifications in relation to certain number of questions and had a regular communication with representatives of the EC Delegation in Montenegro.

In the final phase of preparation of answers, the Verification Commission consisted of 8 ministers met nine times and confirmed the texts of all prepared chapters.

The process of preparation of answers to the Questionnaire involved the participation of circa one thousand civil servants, also including delegated members of the Parliament for the part of political criteria, as well as local and foreign experts, IT support and Translation Centre. Specially designed software for monitoring the process of answering as well as for translation to English language was also prepared. The media were regularly informed about the entire process.

Answers have been prepared on 4,433 pages, elaborated through 4,000 sub-questions. Answers are accompanied by a number of annexes, consisted of: laws, secondary legislation, requested international treaties, strategies and other types of documents (265 documents on approximately 9,000 pages).

Throughout various chapters, a reference is made between diverse questions, by giving a note at the end of an answer, if those answers are connected.

Statistical reviews are given in the requested form for the available periods, with the source of data specified. Answers have been prepared in a concise, transparent and clear manner. Longer answers have been prepared in the areas of particular importance. Certain annexes are useful for easier understanding of several answers.

Having in mind the period of year when the answers have been finalised, we would like to note that the Economic and Fiscal Programme of Montenegro for 2009-2012, completed in December 2009 and subsequently submitted, will represent an integral part of answers to the part of the Questionnaire related to macroeconomic indicators.

The Government of Montenegro shall remain at disposal to the Commission for any additional clarifications referred to answers to the Questionnaire, and shall be prepared to update certain answers or to answer particular additional questions at any time, if necessary.

The Government of Montenegro is ready to take active part in the forthcoming consultative process, until the preparation of the European Commission's Opinion.