



STALNA MISIJA CRNE GORE PRI UJEDINJENIM NACIJAMA
PERMANENT MISSION OF MONTENEGRO TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT

BY H.E. MR. IGOR LUKŠIĆ PHD
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AT THE

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL
21 JUNE 2012

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Madame President,

Mr. Secretary General of United Nations,

Mr. Secretary General,

Majesties, Heads of States and Governments,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor and a pleasure for me to address you on behalf of Montenegro and to contribute through my personal participation to the success of this most important meeting on sustainable development in this decade. I would like to thank our host President and Government for hospitality and successful organization of this event.

Sustainable development is a fundamental issue today, an issue that we cannot leave for later. We have gathered here to confirm again the importance of implementation of the obligations we have accepted; to assess the achieved, and to look into the challenges we need to face in order to ensure sustainable growth for all the people on this planet.

In the contemporary world, the sustainable development strategy is becoming a crucial tool in tackling the global trends. Increase in the size of population, urban development and unsustainable production and consumption, threats to the environmental balance could all cause an irreparable damage to the planet. At the same time, in the times when the world is facing an economic crisis, increase in unemployment and poverty, it is even more important and sensitive to offer the principles of sustainable development as a response to these difficulties. Adoption of key decisions to build a more predictable future requires strong political will and determination of all of us. Our citizens expect the political leaders to answer the question how to improve the individual living standards, not only from the aspect of economic growth, but the quality of natural environment, as well. No matter how insoluble this rebus may seem, and no matter how mutually conflicting the goals themselves sometime may seem, the generations to come expect answers from us. Mere statistics regarding economic parameters, such as the GDP trends, for example, without taking into consideration the micro-perspective of each individual or household, represent a dead-end street.

Thus, I welcome the text of the Final Document that defines how to initiate and sustain thorough changes in all areas, in order to achieve sustainable development. Changes that will ensure continuous economic growth, with minimum pressures on environment. Changes that create equal opportunities for social, intellectual and cultural development of each and every individual.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In early nineties, Montenegro defined protection and sustainable use of natural resources as a basis of its economic development.

Aware of the fact that the implementation of this idea requires an efficient institutional framework, we have been working intensively to develop an institutional system for sustainable development. The ten-year experience in the work of the National Sustainable Development Council confirms the fact that multi-stakeholder advisory government bodies represent an important tie between the state and the society. A tie that needs to be upgraded, as recommended in the Final Document. Our experience also shows that national sustainable development strategies in Montenegro represent a successful framework for long-term strategic planning. Besides, within those strategies, it is necessary to define the principles of green economy as an integral part, a mechanism to implement sustainable development in practice.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The green or blue economy represents a concept that we in Montenegro are committed to. The main three sectors of our economic growth – tourism, agriculture and energy – involve responsibility and sustainability. Success of the tourism sector depends on a sound and dynamic environment, clean water, and fresh air. Our energy sector leans on the renewable sources of energy with over 70% of the total production in Montenegro. We are increasingly focusing on production of homemade food and our local agricultural facilities. Thus, we are determined to protect valuable natural resources and to improve the efficiency of their use. This is our long-term response to the challenges imposed by climate change and its implementation is even our constitutional obligation.

We need to live within the limits of the available economic resources. We are learn how to live within the environmental standards. We will make an effort to create the prerequisites for small and medium size enterprises to incorporate the principles of sustainability into their business practices. Thus, we will ensure their competitiveness in the national, regional and international market in the long run. We will make our environment better. By doing so, we will make our lives healthier, less stressful and more fulfilling.

A green economy will also require a better connection between the labor market and education, introduction of life-long learning, and promotion of an entrepreneurial, innovative and research-oriented character of the education system.

In such a context, efficient institutions that support sustainable development, at the national and international level, are necessary for further improvement of the sustainable development agenda and creation of adequate space for the private sector, civil society

and local authorities. They, however, involve a set of values without which the mechanisms on their own are inefficient.

In the efforts to revitalize and increase the UN efficiency, a very important element in my opinion is to strengthen ECOSOC. Having in mind the need to tackle challenges regarding protection and integration of the environmental pillar into the concept of sustainable development, I believe that it is necessary to strengthen UNEP as well. Sustainable development agenda requires an integrated and coherent approach, with clearly defined priorities. To that end, in the upcoming period we must strongly support the definition of goals that will guide our future development.

I believe that the conclusions of this Summit will be encouraging enough for all the countries to commit themselves to the creation of mechanisms at the national level which will show that the consumer interests, business interests, and green interests are one and should not collide. Montenegro is ready, in cooperation with the international community, to serve as an experimental area for fundamental changes that each of our societies must turn to.

Dear Sirs,

Today, the countries are either responsibly approaching the implementation of necessary measures as a response to the challenges of the modern times, or they are postponing them for some future times. Montenegro has recognized its role. I believe that in this process we will achieve full cooperation with the regional and international partners and the UN System, as we see their role as vital in our endeavors to make a successful transition to the economy that uses natural resources in a responsible and efficient manner. In that context, as one of the fifty countries in the world, we have supported the initiative of the UN Secretary General - Sustainable energy for all. Besides, together with the UN in Montenegro we are building the first UN building that will truly be environmentally friendly and self-sustainable, energy-efficient and as such, it will serve as an example and incentive for others.

We are fully aware of the importance of sustainable future and that this is an ambitious, complex and responsible task. I am certain that we can live up to it and that, upon our return from Rio, we will demonstrate the determination and responsibility to leave to the future generations the heritage of a cleaner, healthier, safer and prosperous economy.

Thank You.