

*Intervention of Montenegro
by*

Mr. Ljubisa Perovic
Head of the Office for Sustainable Development
Government of Montenegro

Session 3: Institutional framework for sustainable development

Distinguished Co-chair, Delegates and Participants,

We align with the opening statement made by the European Union yesterday and other statements urging for making synergies among many organizations dealing with the topic.

However, what we feel is **missing** in our rethinking of the global system today is the question of adequate institutional frameworks for sustainable development **at the national level**. We support the efforts to make the UN CSD more successful, and urge for it to be strengthened and have its role asserted among the other UN agencies and international process. But for the UNCSO to truly make an impact, it has to ensure that it has **reliable partners**, which can implement the agreements forged in this forum. **These partners are the individual countries**, and only if they have the adequate internal institutional processes that could hold their governments **accountable** with regards to their international commitments, the CSD can be truly successful.

To contribute to thinking about this, in our opinion, **this crucial segment of the global SD institutional framework**, we would briefly like to share our experience in setting up a national institutional system of sustainable development.

Even prior to gaining its independence four years ago, Montenegro invested significant efforts in identifying the best institutional framework for the implementation of its sustainable development policies. The first Constitution of Montenegro defines Montenegro as an ecological state. To implement this concept, the Government formed the **National Council for Sustainable Development**, established the **Office for Sustainable Development** and adopted the **National Strategy of Sustainable Development**.

The Council is the key institution of the system, in particular because its 23 members represent all segments of Montenegrin society. These include the representatives of national and local governments, civil, academic and business sectors, as well as independent experts. We are aware that setting up institutions is the *easy part*, and that our **challenge now is to make them effectively work**. In this regard, we would like to share and open for discussion the following three points:

- **The first point** is that having a multi-stakeholder Council, dealing with sustainable development as an overarching concept, is one of the key elements for building **stronger bridges between its three pillars**.
- **The second point** is that in order to make these bodies have a true impact on the overall country policies it is opportune for them to be an integral part of the national decision-making processes in the individual countries. In the case of Montenegro, our Council is

chaired by the Prime Minister, which gives it political leverage and makes sustainable development relevant to all sectors of society.

- **The third point** is that for the success of the national system effective it is desirable to have an expert institution within the government dealing exclusively with the issues of sustainable development, but functioning outside **the level of ministries**. In Montenegro, the **Office for Sustainable Development** has such status, which enables it to promote the integrated approach to the three pillars of sustainable development.

During these three days, we have mentioned the need to uphold many principles, solidarity, equality, accountability, transparency, precautionary principle. But we missed to highlight one, which we believe is crucial for reaching sustainability and that is the principle of **subsidiarity**. The role of national and sub-national governance is only partially touched by the third question of this session, and we would urge the Secretariat that in the preparations for the Rio+20 more focus is placed on this issue.

Thank you for your attention.