EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

11 July 2006 SMZ/pel

ASSEMBLY OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST EUROPE

DELEGATION FROM THE COMMITTEES ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS, INTERNAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

2nd EP-Serbia and Montenegro Inter-parliamentary Meeting

5 December 2005 Belgrade

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[FdR 636747] PE 366.233

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The meeting opened at 15.15 with Mr Zoran ŠAMI, President of the Assembly of Serbia and Montenegro, and Ms Doris PACK, chairwoman of the EP Delegation for relations with the countries of South East Europe, in the chair.

Mr SAMI and Ms PACK welcomed the participants to the interparliamentary meeting and Ms Pack added that the committee on foreign affairs of the European Parliament had decided recently to appoint a special rapporteur for each country of the Western Balkans, in order to better follow the situation, and that, for Serbia and Montenegro, the rapporteur was Mr Jelko Kacin. She was pleased to lead a delegation to Belgrade a few weeks after the opening of negotiations between the EU and Serbia and Montenegro for the conclusion of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement. She admitted that the negotiation process would not be easy, but ensured that the European Parliament would continue to closely follow the developments in the State Union.

1. Adoption of the draft agenda

The draft agenda was adopted.

2. Approval of the minutes of the 1st IPM EP-Serbia and Montenegro held on 15-16 December 2004 in Strasbourg

The minutes were approved.

3. Exchange of views with representatives of the Government of Serbia and Montenegro, the Presidency-in-Office of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on the political situation in Serbia and Montenegro and on its progress in the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process, also with a view to possible developments in the constitutional relationships between the Republics of Serbia and Montenegro

Mr HUDSON, Deputy Head of Delegation at the European Commission Delegation to Serbia and Montenegro, took the floor.

He said that the interparliamentary dialogue is increasingly becoming the political engine moving Serbia and Montenegro forward on its path to the EU. Since the last interparliamentary meeting in December 2004, significant progress has been achieved and the opening of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations heralded a new and promising stage in EU-Serbia and Montenegro relations. This progress was made possible by the reforms undertaken and by the role played by the Parliaments of the constituent Republics.

The **Feasibility Report** however stressed that Serbia and Montenegro must continue with the reforms in a number of areas. The **2005** Commission Progress Report on Serbia and Montenegro concluded that despite the progress made to underpin the SAA negotiations, a number of problems remain. A **revised European Partnership** was submitted by the Commission to the Council with a view to help Serbia and Montenegro to address the outstanding problems.

The key priorities in the revised Partnership are the following: first, the reform of the public

administration and of the judiciary which are necessary for the successful implementation of the SAA obligations. Moreover, these reforms are key to the fight against corruption and organised crime. They also contribute significantly to the improvement of the business environment. Taking into account the fact that the reforms are costly, the EU has been providing significant assistance to Serbia and Montenegro.

Second, **economic reforms** are of paramount importance. Progress achieved in terms of macro-economic stability is welcomed, but there is urgent need to implement economic structural reforms in order for macro-economic stability to be sustainable.

The third priority is the **democratic control over the military**. Parliamentary control over the military must be reinforced significantly to consolidate the rule of law. In terms of its **international obligations**, Serbia and Montenegro has achieved significant progress with the ICTY, but further progress needs to be made to bring remaining fugitives to justice. Concerning **Kosovo**, Belgrade needs to intensify dialogue with Pristina and to show a constructive approach to status definition. In addition, Belgrade has to encourage the participation of Kosovo Serbs in the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government.

The Commission underlined the importance of **fully respecting the Constitutional Charter** and having a constructive approach to the distribution of powers between the State Union and the Republics. Moreover, the Commission expressed the hope that the SAA negotiations can be concluded in one year from their opening, but this depends on the progress made by Serbia and Montenegro in political, economic and institutional reforms.

The European Partnership priorities need to be considered as priorities also in the parliamentary agenda of Serbia and Montenegro and it is necessary that all pro-European political forces contribute to the reforms.

Mr McILLROY, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the United Kingdom to Serbia and Montenegro, took the floor on behalf of the Presidency-in-Office of the Council of the EU. He wanted to stress the importance of Parliament's role for transforming into reality and acts the citizens' support for European integration. He admitted that the State Union had progressed much on the way of European integration but, also considering that the democratic process had started five years before, much more support and progress were still needed. He stressed the tremendous importance of co-operating with the ICTY and in particular the urgency of transferring to the Tribunal Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadcic.

Mr JEVREMOVIC, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, speaking on behalf of the Government of Serbia and Montenegro, was pleased to realise that inter-parliamentary cooperation between Serbia and Montenegro and the European Parliament had been re-activated to a regular pace. On the basis of the opening of SAA negotiations, Serbia and Montenegro was now able to look at 2006 with more optimism, especially for the aspects of foreign policy. He admitted that the Government had currently to deal with a big and delicate issue, Kosovo, on which it wanted to confirm the high priority of implementing democratic standards, which could not be questioned anymore. The Government also wanted to continue the dynamic of the SAA negotiations in a more "pro-active" way, and to develop regional co-operation.

Mr KACIN invited the State Union Assembly parliamentarians to act more constructively, and also to put the situation of their country in the regional context. Not only Serbia and Montenegro had problems, for example, with Kosovo. Also the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had

problems to present a state name internationally recognizable and to co-exist with its important Albanian community. In concrete terms, he considered that no doubts should exist any longer, among the political forces in power as well as among the opposition parties, on which are the priorities. 90 % of the Serbia and Montenegro citizens would say that the absolute priority is economic development.

Mrs PACK pointed to the EU visa policy for nationals of Serbia and Montenegro and reported on the talks had on this earlier the same day with the Minister of Interior of the Republic of Serbia. She was pleased to announce that the European Parliament would soon adopt a resolution on enlargement, currently prepared by Mr Brok MEP, and that an amendment would be included in it on softening the visa policy for certain categories of citizens of the Western Balkans countries. She sincerely wished Serbia and Montenegro a lot of success on their way to European integration.

Mr DULIC observed that Serbia and Montenegro should concentrate on real priorities, which were economic development, fighting against poverty and overcoming the other obstacles to social modernisation of the country. These were the most difficult issues, and not Kosovo! European integration was a difficult objective to achieve for Serbia and Montenegro, at least in the short term, precisely for economic reasons. He pointed to the concrete risks of nationalism and radicalization that the country would face.

Mr DRLJEVIC welcomed the participants to the second Inter-parliamentary Meeting EP-Serbia and Montenegro and expressed his satisfaction for the recent opening of negotiations between the EU and Serbia and Montenegro for an SAA. He recalled that the Republic of Montenegro, according to the Constitutional Charter, had the possibility to call a referendum on independence /exit from the State Union, and stressed that , in that case, the process would have to be fair, democratic and transparent.

Mr DEMETRIOU expressed satisfaction at the fact that the various interlocutors met earlier that day by the EP delegation, i.e. the Serbian Minister of Interior and the Deputy Minister of Justice, were all heading towards European integration. Nevertheless, to make Serbia and Montenegro fit for becoming a candidate for EU membership, deep transformations were needed. For example, the country still suffered from serious shortcomings in the fields of democracy, human rights, rule of law and the rights of the minorities. By the way, the Commission's remarks on these sectors should not be understood as void critics, but as encouragements to the country expressed with good will.

Mrs KALLENBACH asked Mr Drljevic whether the efforts deployed by Montenegro for the organisation of a referendum on independence were just formal steps to proof that Montenegro was a functioning democracy, or was there in the Republic a substantial will for independence.

Mr DRLJEVIC answered that, of course, the strategic interest of Montenegro was European integration. Montenegro was not of the idea that this would be achieved more quickly by Montenegro than by Serbia, but that essential standards could be achieved more easily and more efficiently by Montenegro through its functioning Republican Institutions. State Union Institutions did not function correctly: as an example, he reported that, a few days before, the State Union Parliament had not succeeded to vote a common resolution drafted to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the United Nations Charter.

Mr SOC underlined that he belonged to an opposition party in Montenegro. He stressed that the

priority was not the holding of the referendum on independence, but European integration. Every step should be taken in a framework of mutual trust. Indeed, if it was true that State Union Institutions were not functioning, this was because someone did not want them to function, and just obstructed them.

Mr KACIN drew attention of his Serbia and Montenegro colleagues that, after all, the decision on the fitness for EU membership would be taken by the European Union. Whether Serbia and Montenegro would like to prepare together or separately for European integration, this was their decision. He warned them also that negotiations would be long and difficult, probably more than 31 chapters (that was the amount for countries like his own, Slovenia, at the time of negotiations for accession to the EU) would have to be negotiated.

Mr KLIBARDA referred to the text of the draft joint statement to be adopted later, and in particular to § 17: instead of reading, with an euphemism,"took note of the wish of *Montenegrin political leaders* to submit to a referendum the question of Montenegro's status...", it should read: "took note of the wish of the *majority of Montenegrin citizens* to submit to a referendum the question of Montenegro's status...".

Mr KALEZIC complained that State Union Institutions, and in particular Montenegro, were still hostages of the Milosevic's legacy in Belgrade. He pointed to the fact that several precious years had been lost, and time should not be wasted any longer.

Mr RASOVIC underlined that he belonged to an opposition party in Montenegro. He stressed that the reason why the majority wanted to organise a referendum was certainly not to improve democracy. The majority's claims that they would respect all democratic standards in organising the consultation was void of any meaning. The truth was that at the moment no dialogue was possible between the opposition and the majority in Montenegro on referendum issues.

Mr BRAJOVIC encouraged his opposition Montenegrin fellows to be more constructive. The referendum was of course an issue to be put on the political agenda. It made no sense to continue to say that the moment was not adequate yet.

Mr MEIJER asked whether there was not an option that the State Union could seek EU membership while efforts for increased autonomy would continue. He asked what the preferred options among the Serbian and Montenegrin colleagues where. Would the defenders of the State-Union want to keep it eternally or rather prefer a dissolution following EU membership. Would the advocats of independence not rather seek something like a situation comparable to Catalonia or Flanders.

Mr SAMI stressed that the independence referendum was clearly foreseen in the constitutional charter. At the same time it was equally clear that the Montenegrin society was very much divided on this issue. In Serbia, many believed that the State Union was indeed the best framework for Euro-Atlantic integration.

4. Rule of law and justice and home affairs, with particular reference to cooperation with the ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia)

Mr LJAJIC, Minister for Human and Minority Rights, speaking on behalf of the Government of Serbia and Montenegro, concentrated his intervention on co-operation with the

ICTY. He recalled that he had already on several occasions had the chance to address EP Members on the problem represented for Serbia and Montenegro by the fact that not all the ICTY indicted had been delivered to the Tribunal in The Hague yet. He reported on the failure of a recent operation, which though had been well prepared, to arrest Ratko Mladic, and observed that nobody knew where he was . Nevertheless, the Government believed that the area where he was hiding was becoming more and more tight. On the other hand, he was proud that Serbia and Montenegro had answered positively to all requests of co-operation, access to documents, etc...presented by the Tribunal. Moreover, domestic war crimes conducted in Serbia would contribute to improve the climate.

Baroness LUDFORD admitted that progress of Serbia and Montenegro in the field of cooperation with the ICTY could not be denied; however, should Serbia and Montenegro keep on and achieve to arrest the indicted people left, namely the two principal accused, this would constitute a huge difference. She explained that the EP Members understood well how difficult it was for the Serbia and Montenegro authorities to explain to their citizens the need to arrest in particular those two indicted, but the benefits which could come to the State Union from such full co-operation would be undeniable.

Baroness Ludford then mentioned the delicate problem of arrests and intimidations against human rights activists denounced by Amnesty International and others. She observed that human rights should be undividable, that no double standard should be applied and encouraged the country to apply a more courageous and consistent policy for the defence of human rights. By the way, she was pleased to note, in that respect, the promising talks had earlier that day with the Serbian Minister of Interior and Deputy-Minister of Justice.

She was also positively impressed by the assurance of firm commitment, received by the Serbian authorities, to combat organised crime and corruption.

In concluding, she said she well understood that Serbia and Montenegro, and Serbia in particular, could have the impression to be isolated and punished and therefore it was particularly important to work for improve the country's image and situation in the sector of the rule of law. This would also provoke beneficial effects on the EU 's will of softening its visa policy towards the citizens of Serbia and Montenegro.

5. Economic situation in Serbia and Montenegro

Mr NURKOVIC, Minister of Internal Market of Serbia and Montenegro, speaking on behalf of the Government, observed that, in his view, there had been no problems, in the field of economic policy, between the Parliament and the Government of Serbia and Montenegro. On the other hand, there were a lot of concrete problems for achieving economic integration between the two Republics of Serbia and Montenegro.

Mr PARIVODIC, Minister for International Economic Relations of the Republic of Serbia, was proud that the Serbian Parliament had been very active in the field of economic legislation and that the World Bank had prized Serbia for the improvement of the environment with reference to investment. But Serbia, despite the current promising economic trends, was still obliged to carry on a very restrictive policy of public expenses; therefore, Serbia tremendously needed EU pre-accession funds to re-equilibrate its balance. Serbia was also suffering from economic and social isolation, fundamentally because the EU had a restrictive visa policy: most of the young people, unfortunately, had never travelled abroad from Serbia. To further improve the Serbian economy, land privatisation and infrastructures were also important elements. In conclusion, he was proud that Serbian economy could benefit from the availability of very good

human resources and was also focusing on the development of high quality Information Technologies (IT).

Mr MUSCAT acknowledged the impressive pace of restructuring of Serbia and Montenegro's economy, but encouraged his fellows not to forget that people's welfare was very important to achieve too. Unfortunately, the inflation rate seemed to grow up again and the grey economy was still very large in the country. He asked the Serbia and Montenegro's parliamentarians what they intended to do in that respect, as well as for improving economic and social rights of workers and for the protection of the environment. He also asked them whether the economic programme recommended by the IMF could be realistically respected.

Mr PARIVODIC considered that, despite several problems mentioned, the economic situation in Serbia was much better than two years before. On restructuring and privatisation, he said that perhaps a prudent policy consisting in repairing economically the companies one-by-one was the best for Serbia. Concerning the growing rate of inflation, he said that this could depend on structural reasons.

Mr BECSEY insisted that it was urgent to progress with privatisations, and that it was important to find the right balance between the investments in the political sectors (like the judiciary or the police for example) and those in the economic sector.

Mr KACIN asked Minister Parivodic to give him economic statistics on Serbia including Kosovo.

Mr PARIVODIC answered that these were not available and that he personally did not see what economic contribution Kosovo could bring to the European Union, at least until it would remain such a criminality-dominated place .

6. Exchange of views on the present situation in Kosovo and the perspectives related to the future talks on its final status

Due to time constraints, this point was not discussed.

7. Adoption of a joint statement by the chairpersons of the delegations

The joint statement of the European Parliament's and the Parliament of Serbia and Montenegro's delegations' chairs was adopted unanimously after discussion of amendments proposed by Mr Kacin, Baroness Ludford, Ms Kallenbach, Mr Muscat and some members of the delegation from the Assembly of Serbia and Montenegro and approval of compromise formulas.

8. Any other business

None.

9. Date and place of the next Interparliamentary Meeting

It was agreed to call further meetings in Autumn 2006, at the State Union or at the Republican level, as soon as the development of the situation would allow that.

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Ms Pack and Mr Sami thanked all the participants, the interpreters and the secretariat.

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The meeting finished at 18.30 p.m.

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BILAG/ANLAGE/ΠΑΡΑΡΤΗΜΑ/ANNEX/ ANNEXE/ALLEGATO/BIJLAGE/ANEXO/BILAGA

DELTAGERLISTE/ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KATAΣH ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/LISTE DE PRESENCE/ELENCO DEI PRESENTI/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA

Til stede	Formandskabet/Vorstand/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Ufficio di Presidenza/Mesa/Puhemiehistö/J.L. Presidium: (*) Per Stenmarck				
Anwesend	PACK (P) Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Μέλη/Members/Diputados/Députés/Deputati/Leden/Deputados/jäsenet/ Ledamöter:				
Παρόντες	BECSEY, KALLENBACH , LUDFORD, MEIJER				
Present	Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suplentes/Suppléants/ Membri supplenti/Plaatsvervangers/Membros suplentes/Varajäsenet/Suppleanter:				
Presentes	DEMETRIOU, KACIN, MUSCAT				
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(1) 5.12.2005

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 ^{* (}P) =Formand/Vorsitzender/Πρόεδρος/Chairman/Président/Presidente/Voorzitter/Presidente/Puhemies/Ordförande
 (VP) =Næstform./Stellv. Vorsitz./Αντιπρόεδρος/Vice-Chairman/Vice-Président/Vicepresidente/Varapuhemies
 Ondervoorz./Vice-Pres./Vicepres/Vice ordförande.

Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung d. Vorsitzenden/Mε π ρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chairman/Por invitación del presidente/Sur l'invitation du président/Su invito del presidente/Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/A convite do presidente/Puhemiehen kutsusta/ På ordförandens inbjudan:

Mr JEVREMOVIC, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Government of Serbia and Montenegro

Mr RASIM LJAJIĆ, Minister for human and minority rights, on behalf of the Government of Serbia and Montenegro

Mr AMIR NURKOVIĆ, Minister for internal market, on behalf of the Government of Serbia and Montenegro

Mr MILAN PARIVODIĆ, Minister for international economic relations of the Republic of Serbia

Radet/Rat/Συμβούλιο/Council/Consejo/Conseil/Consiglio/Raad/Conselho/Neuvosto/Rådet: (*)

Mr McILLROY, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the United Kingdom to Serbia and Montenegro, on behalf of the Presidency-in-Office of the Council of the EU.

Kommissionen/Kommission/Eπιτροπή/Commission/Commissione/Commissio/Commissio/Kommissio/Kommissionen: (*)

Mr David HUDSON, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation in Belgrade, representing the European Commission

Andre deltagere/Andere Teilnehmer Επίσης Παρόντες/Also present Otros participantes/Autres participants/Altri partecipanti Andere aanwezigen/Outros participantes Muut osallistujat/Övriga deltagare					
Gruppernes sekretariat Sekretariat der Fraktionen Γραμματεία των Πολ. Ομάδων Secretariat political groups Secr. de los grupos politicos Secr. groupes politiques Segr. dei gruppi politici Secr. van de fracties Secr. dos grupos politicos Puolueryhmien sihteeristö Gruppernas sekretariat	PPE-DE PSE ALDE Verts/ALE GUE/NGL UEN EDD	RUHRMANN MACHMER GLASBERG			
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Cab. du Secrétaire Général					
Generaldirektorat Generaldirektion Γενική Διεύθυνση Directorate-General Dirección general Direction générale Directione generale Directoraat-generaal Direcção general Contrôle financier Service juridique Pääosasto Generaldirektorat	I II III IV V VI VII VIII	MECKLENBURG			
Udvalgssekretariatet Ausschußsekretariat Γραμματεία επιτροπής Committee secretariat Secretaria de la comissión Secrétariat de la commission Segretariato della commissione Commissiesecretariaat Secretaria de comissão Valiokunnan sihteeristö Utskottssekretariatet		MAZZI-ZISSIS, GRUNERT			
Assist./Βοηθός		WHITTALL, ESCOFET			
(P) =Formand/Pres./Πρόεδρος/Chairman/Président/Voorzitter/Puhemies/Ordförande					

^{* (}P) =Formand/Pres./Πρόεδρος/Chairman/Président/Voorzitter/Puhemies/Ordförande

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⁽VP) =Næstform./Vize-Pres./Αντιπρόεδρος/Vice-Chairman/Vice-Président/Ondervoorz./Vice-pres/Varapuhemies/Vice ordförande.

⁽M) =Medlem./Mitglied/Mέλος/Member/Miembro/Membro/Lid/Membro/Jäsen/Ledamot

⁽F) =Tjenestemand/Beamter/Υπάλληλος/Official/Funcionario/Fonctionnaire/Funzionario/Ambtenaar/ Functionário/Virkamies/Tjänsteman

PARLIAMENT OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

Members participating in the 2nd IPM EP - Serbia and Montenegro, Belgrade, 5 December 2005

ZORAN ŠAMI	President of the Parliament	DSS ¹
MILORAD DRLJEVIĆ	Vice-president of the Parliament	DPS CG ²
OLIVER DULIĆ	Chairman of the Committee on	DS^3
	European Integration	
ZORAN SUBOTIČKI	Committee on European Integration	G 17+ ⁴
V /		
BRANKO RUŽIĆ	Committee on European Integration	SPS ⁵
ALEKSANDAR	Committee on European Integration	SPO ⁶
PAJOVIĆ		7
ZLATA	Committee on European Integration	SRS ⁷
RADOVANOVIĆ		
LAZAR MARJANSKI	Committee on European Integration	SRS
VELIBOR STOJKOVIĆ	Committee on European Integration	SRS
LJUBIŠA JOVAŠEVIĆ	Committee on European Integration	DSS
SANDA RAŠKOVIĆ-	Committee on European Integration	DSS
IVIĆ		
RADOICA LUBURIĆ	Committee on European Integration	DPS CG
NOVAK KLIBARDA	Committee on European Integration	NS CG ⁸
IVAN BRAJOVIĆ	Committee on European Integration	SDP CG ⁹
HELENA VUČETIĆ	Committee on European Integration	LS CG ¹⁰
RADIVOJE RAŠOVIĆ	Committee on European Integration	SNP CG ¹¹
IVICA KALEZIĆ	Committee on Foreign Affairs	DPS CG
NIKOLA LAZIĆ	Committee on Foreign Affairs	DSS
TOMISLAV NIKOLIĆ	Committee on Foreign Affairs	SRS
DRAGAN ŠOĆ	Committee on Foreign Affairs	NS CG ¹²
MIROSLAV ALEKSIĆ	Chairman of the Committee on	DSS
	International Economic Relations	
JAN HUSARIK	Committee on International Economic	G17+
	Relations	
RADOJEVIĆ VELIMIR	Committee on International Economic	SNP CG

Democratic party of Serbia
 Democratic party of socialist-Montenegro

³ Democratic party ⁴ Group 17 + (in ruling coalition in Serbia)

⁵ Socialist party of Serbia

⁶ Serbian renewal movement(in ruling coalition in Serbia)

⁷ Serbian radical party

Serbian radical party

8 People's Concordia (in ruling coalition in Montenegro)

9 Socialist democratic party of Montenegro (in ruling coalition in Montenegro)

10 Liberals of Montenegro

11 Socialist peoples party of Montenegro

12 People's party of Montenegro

	relations	
ZLOKOVIĆ STANKO	Committee on International Economic	DPS CG
	Relations	
PRAVDIĆ	Committee on International Economic	DSS
ALEKSANDAR	Relations	
VERICA KALANOVIĆ	Chairman of the Committee on	G17+
	Internal Economic Relations	
LJUBIŠA SELIĆ	Chairman of the Committee for the	SPO
	Consitutional Charter issues	
TARZAN MILOŠEVIĆ	Committee for Kosovo and Metohija	DPS

Representatives from the Government

Mr PAVLE JEVREMOVIC, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr RASIM LJAJIĆ, Minister for human and minority rights

Mr AMIR NURKOVIĆ, Minister for internal market

Mr MILAN PARIVODIĆ, Minister for international economic relations of the Republic of Serbia