



Montenegro

Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the
United Nations Office and other International Organizations
in Geneva

No. OHCHR/ 45-3

The Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, and with reference to the later's Note verbal dated 2 March 2020, has the honor to submit the responses of the Government of Montenegro to the questionnaire on current levels of representation of women in human rights organs and mechanisms.

The Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 5 June 2020

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Secretariat of the
Human Rights Council Advisory Committee
GENEVA



Advisory Committee of the Human Rights Council

Questionnaire on current levels of representation of women in human rights organs and mechanisms – information provided by MONTENEGRO

Question 1 Do current processes in the State allow for, or encourage, a consideration of gender balance when nominating, electing and appointing experts for human rights organs such as the Advisory Committee and treaty bodies? Do these processes ensure publicity, transparency, and participation by civil society organizations and/or other actors?

Response

As regards the procedure for nominating and electing experts for human rights bodies, the Government of Montenegro established the Commission that considers all application and elects the candidate for the post on the basis of the fulfilled criteria and necessary conditions required in the application. The members of the Commission are officials dealing with human rights issues in the respective Ministries, and the process is coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The election and decision are based on the expertise and knowledge of the applicant, the experience, and practical results of the candidate in promoting human rights.

The process is transparent, the application and relevant information regarding the criteria, deadline, and procedures are available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We particularly encourage the participation of the representatives of civil society and academia.

Question 2 Does the State take into account the gender composition of the treaty bodies or the Advisory Committee at the time of nomination or election?

Response

Montenegro is fully devoted to achieve gender equality and empower women at the national and international levels. In that context, we pay special attention to gender composition of the treaty bodies at the time of the election. We believe that the progress in the field of gender parity should begin from the UN system and particularly human rights bodies that promote anti-discrimination and equality.

Question 3 Does the State have any good national practices related to the nomination, election and appointing processes for human rights organs such as the Advisory Committee and treaty bodies? Do these processes take into account gender when nominating, electing, or appointing?

Response See answers to questions 1 and 2.

Question 4 How does the State take into consideration its obligations concerning non-discrimination and women's right to equal access to participation, as well as its obligations under Article 8 of CEDAW to ensure women's equal participation in

the work of human rights organs when nominating or appointing candidates for those organs and mechanisms?

Response Montenegro continuously works to achieve progress in the field of equal participation of women in every field. That is one of the main priorities of the Government, and we have reached positive results particularly with the active participation of women in regional human rights mechanisms. We are devoted to ensure implementation of the obligations under Article 8 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and to provide the opportunity for women to represent our country at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

Question 5 How many women has the State nominated to human rights organs and mechanisms in the last five years (such as the Advisory Committee or treaty bodies)?

Response All our elected representatives in UN human rights bodies were women. We have the representative in the Human Rights Committee Ms. Ivana Jelic for the period 2015-2018. Ms. Jelic was the first representative of Montenegro to UN treaty body after we regain our independence; Ms. Zdenka Perovic in the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture for the period 2017-2020.

We have nominated in last five years:

-Ms. Sanja Elezović for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for period 2019-2022;

-Ms. Ijiljana Jovanovic for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for period 2021-2024.

Question 6 Does the State take any action to publicize and encourage women to apply for the special procedures mandate-holders vacancies?

Response

See answer for the question 1.

Question 7 What are the main challenges within your country in tackling the issue of gender balance when nominating and electing candidates for human rights organs and mechanisms such as the Advisory Committee, treaty bodies and the special procedures?

Response

The main challenge is lack of expertise of candidates, as Montenegro is young country which regained independence 14 years ago, and we are in the process of strengthening

capacities in many fields. The human rights issues are complex and they can be appropriately protected when the experts and defenders are fully aware of all aspects of violations and potential violations and discrimination. In order to enhance capacities and improve professional skills in this area Government and NGOs in cooperation with international organisations and human rights mechanisms organise continuous trainings and workshops.

Question 8 Are there good practices by the State or other stakeholders that ensure gender parity? If yes, could you please share these practices?

Response

Montenegro is fully devoted to the implementation of international and domestic legislation in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. One of the most important achievements in this field is the improvement of anti-discrimination legislation, national action plans, and the development of institutional mechanisms for gender equality at the state and local levels. In accordance with the Law on Gender Equality Montenegro has developed mechanisms for implementation of gender parity both on national and local levels. As a result of that, gender equality issues are addressed by coordinators in state institutions and municipalities – 105 altogether.

The comprehensive approach to gender equality at the national level is focused on three priorities: 1. increasing political participation of women, 2. combating violence against women, 3. economic empowerment of women. *Equal participation of women and men at all levels of decision making* is one of the basic strategic goals. The Law on the Election of Deputies and Members of Parliament from 2014 improved the political participation of women on electoral lists. In the present convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro, out of 81 MPs 19 of them are women or 23.46%. *The elimination of all forms of gender-based violence, violence against women, and domestic violence have been recognized as one of the national priorities.* In order to achieve protection of the victims of domestic violence we have amended the national framework, and adopted a number of Regulations to ensure its full implementation while intensifying penalties for perpetrators. Montenegro has undertaken a number of additional steps regarding the enforcement of the principle of "zero tolerance" towards the violence against women and domestic violence through effective and coordinated cooperation of all competent authorities, institutions and organizations. In order to give a holistic response to violence against women, the Government made partnerships with non-governmental organizations fighting for women's rights. *The support for the economic empowerment of women is defined as one of the key priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls.* In this context, mechanisms have been created, and consistent strategic documents that provide support for women's entrepreneurship have been adopted.

In order to monitor progress on gender equality and close the gap between men and women, Montenegro in cooperation with international partners calculated for the first time Gender Equality Index in January 2020. The index value of 55 (out of the maximum 100 points) demonstrates that we need to take additional efforts to ensure the advancement of the position and rights of women in our society.

Question 9 Are there recommendations directed to States, international bodies, or other entities, that you wish to make in order to strengthen and inform this report?