



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY

The Acting Deputy Director-General

15 JUL 2009

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Mr Svetozar Djurović  
Secretary General  
Ministry of Interior and Public  
Administration  
Montenegro

By email:  
office@montenegrinmission.be

Dear Mr Djurović,

I have the pleasure to inform you that on 15 July 2009 the European Commission adopted a proposal to add the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia to the list contained in Regulation 539/2001 of countries whose citizens are exempt from the visa requirement when crossing the external borders of the EU (the Schengen 'positive list'). This Commission proposal to establish a visa-free travel regime with Montenegro is the direct result of the continuous commitment and important achievements of your authorities in fulfilling the requirements of the visa liberalisation dialogue.

At the Senior Officials' meeting of 11 June 2009, the Commission services updated assessment on the implementation of the Roadmap for visa liberalisation of your country was presented. It was stated that Montenegro has made significant progress across all areas and meets a large majority of the benchmarks. Furthermore, it was stressed that Montenegro should continue its efforts to meet all the benchmarks before the adoption of the proposal by the Council. The major remaining open benchmarks to be addressed relate to:

- the effective implementation of the Law on Foreigners, in force since January 2009;
- the definition of a sustainable solution regarding the status of displaced persons and internally displaced persons, including access to identity documents (for instance, through the provision of an *ad hoc* status for these persons under the Law on Foreigners and the adoption of an adequate action plan for their integration);
- the strengthening of the capacities in the area of law enforcement and the effective implementation of the legal framework for the fight against organised crime and corruption, including through allocation of adequate financial, human and technical resources.

I wish to highlight that the Commission services will continue to follow the progress on related issues as far as they are deemed important and relevant for the assessment of the fulfillment of the benchmarks still to be met. I would also like to encourage Montenegro to

continue work in other areas of the Roadmap, in particular as regards the further improvement of technical equipment at all border crossing points and the full implementation of the Law on Personal Data Protection.

The dialogue on the above issues will continue at the level of Senior Officials. The Commission services will monitor the implementation of the open benchmarks in parallel with the examination of the legislative proposal in the European Parliament and the Council. We would therefore like to ask the Montenegrin authorities to submit an updated report on progress made in the relevant areas by 25 September 2009. As part of the monitoring process for the remaining open issues, expert missions or meetings on specific issues could also be organised, should the need arise. The Commission will inform the Council on progress made before the final adoption of the proposal.

Finally, allow me to once again congratulate your country for the progress achieved so far in the visa liberalisation process and to encourage the Montenegrin authorities to make all necessary endeavors to fulfill the remaining benchmarks before the Council takes its decision.

Yours sincerely,



Jean-Louis De Brouwer