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Podgorica, Montenegro

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Embassy of Bulgaria, H/E ambassador Mr **Mladen Petrov Tchervenjakov**
Embassy of the Czech Republic, charge d'affairs Mr **Petr Šmejkal**
Embassy of French Republic, H/E ambassador Mrs **Verionique Brumeaux**
Embassy of Greece, H/E ambassador Mr **Sotirios Athanasiou**
Embassy of Croatia, H/E ambassador Mrs **Ivani Perić**
Embassy Italia, H/E ambassador Mr **Vincenzo Del Monaco**
Embassy of Hungary, H/E ambassador Mr **Krisztian Posa**
Embassy of Germany, H/E ambassador Mrs **Gudrun Elisabet Stainaker**
Embassy of Poland, H/E ambassador Mrs **Irena Tatarzynska**
Embassy of Romania, H/E ambassador Mr **Ferdinand Nagy**
Embassy of the United States of America, H/E ambassador Mrs **Margaret En Uehara**
Embassy of the Slovak Republic, charge d'affairs Mr **František Lipka**
Embassy of Slovenia, charge d'affairs Mrs **Danici Lašić**
Embassy of Turkey, H/E ambassador Mr **Serhat Galip**
Embassy of United Kingdom, H/E ambassador Mr **Ian Robert Whitting**
Honorary Consulate of Belgium, honorary consul Mr **Jean I.Y.H.A. Dumortier**
Embassy of Denmark (in Belgrade), H/E ambassador Mr **Michael Borg-Hansenu**
Embassy of Netherland (in Belgrade), H/E ambassador Mrs **Maria Cornelia Wilhelmina Van Miltenburg**
Embassy of Canada (in Belgrade), charge d'affairs Mr **Kevin Rex**
Embassy of Norway (in Belgrade), H/E ambassador Mr **Nils Ragnar Kamsvag**
Embassy of Portugal (in Belgrade), H/E ambassador Mrs **Maria Do Carmo De Sousa Pinto Allegro De Magalhaes**
Embassy of Spain (in Belgrade), charge d'affairs Mr **Íñigo Ramírez De Haro Valdés**

Open Letter to the Embassies of NATO Member States by Marko Milačić:

Do Not Send the Invitation!

If your governments, in early December, give the green light for the NATO membership invitation to Montenegro, you risk to seriously destabilize this country.

If, due to your own interests and the overall interest of NATO Alliance, you decide to take this action, you should know that you will be taking sides, not only in the geopolitical chess game, but also in very dangerous internal political matters. By sending the invitation, let alone granting NATO membership to Montenegro, you will be giving life-saving oxygen to the crime-ridden lungs of those who have ruled Montenegro undemocratically for more than 25 years.

Moreover, by sending the invitation, you will be responsible for creating yet another ominous political dividing line in Montenegro. And you should know that divisions are the life-blood of the ruling Montenegrin oligarchy.

If you send the invitation, you will cement the authoritarian regime. The state in which the police puts itself above the constitution and arbitrarily beats and tortures ordinary citizens, as we have seen during the October 24 protests, should first be allowed to democratize and only then make decisions about joining military alliances.

If you send the invitation, that will not be - as the ruling authoritarian elite is proclaiming in its propaganda - the invitation to the entire Montenegrin community. No. It will be the invitation meaningful only to a very few people on the top who will use it to extend their grasp on power.

If you send the invitation, that means that you have recognized the corrupt elite in power, heavily involved in running the rings of organized crime. That you give it legitimacy and justify the path it has taken. This means nothing else than that you have become its accomplices.

If you send the invitation, you make possible the decision on such an important topic to be made in the organization of the ruling elite which, as the recent "recording" scandal shows, is expert in electoral rigging and manipulations. In Montenegro, as you know well, there have been no free and fair elections. How can we then freely and fairly decide about NATO?

Moreover, the government of Montenegro does not intend to organize a referendum on this topic, even though our Movement made publicly available a classified government document that shows that 84% of the Montenegrin citizens favor the referendum.

This is extremely undemocratic, don't you agree?

Therefore, if you and the governments you represent send our government this invitation, at the very moment that the major part of the society is fighting against the last autocratic regime in Europe, this will mean that you have no good will toward our people and our political community. This means that you also want to manipulate us. To play with us.

If this invitation comes to the government of Montenegro, this will mean that you have no respect for the general will of the people. In the "diplomatic report" scandal, our Movement has provided evidence that the government cheated and lied when talking about foreign policy priorities. We have shown that the prime minister Djukanovic has falsified the findings of a public opinion poll by 11 percent in favor of NATO.

We have also shown that the majority of Montenegrin citizens are against NATO membership and in favor of military neutrality. In case you want to know more about the "diplomatic report" scandal, we can provide you with all these documents. So that you can see for yourself to what extent the Djukanovic regime is willing to lie, not only to us, but also to you.

If you send the invitation, that means that you are giving further legitimacy to the 26-year rule of Milo Djukanovic who has been described in the documents of an Italian court in 2004 as "a dangerous international criminal" who needs to be arrested and brought to justice.

If you send the invitation, you will be responsible for shoring up the reputation of Milo Djukanovic whose name used to be among the fifteen people indicted for organized crime in Italy before he attained immunity from prosecution as the head of a government. You will be rescuing the person about whom the former finance minister of Italy, Otaviano del Turco, once said: "Without Djukanovic, there would be no Prudentino (the key mafia boss in Italy). And without Prudentino, there would be no Djukanovic".

If, after all that I have noted in this letter, you still send the invitation, that will be an undemocratic act in its essence. It will be a demonstration of brute force by your governments against the people who are fighting for justice and freedom.

If you send the invitation, you will open the Pandora box of violence. Montenegro does not need the invitation to NATO, it needs the invitation to democracy. We don't need but invitation to NATO, but the invitation to a mafia-free and socially just society.

However, such "invitations" neither can nor should come from the outside. They have to come from the inside, from the emancipated citizens, who will finally rebel and say - enough is enough! Down with the police state! Long live freedom!

If you really want to hear what the people of Montenegro think (even though the historical record shows this not to be the case), you should wait until the country democratizes, until it becomes capable of making decisions on the basis of free and fair elections. In a word, first, democracy, and, then, all else!

If, however, this letter falls on deaf ears, and the invitation does come, then you should know that you are directly destabilizing Montenegro, that you want push it into the cauldron of violence and suffering and eventually break it up.

This will never be accepted by the people of Montenegro. If you place your faith in the odious figures such as Djukanovic, you will be seen to be as just as odious. Think about that. Think about that twice before deciding. Do you want to go down in the Montenegrin public opinion together with Djukanovic? I hope not. This would be a very bad policy for the future, because a free and democratic Montenegro will reject it.

Marko Milacic, Executive Director

Movement for Neutrality of Montenegro, journalist