

## REFORMS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

19 April 2011, Podgorica

UNIVERSITY OF MONTENEGRO  
RECTORATE

Prof. Dr Predrag Miranović, Rector and Chairman of the Senate

Dear Mr MIRANOVIĆ,

**We are addressing you with a suggestion to consider, during this new term of office, termination of certain previously established practices that have reduced the level of transparency of the University of Montenegro. In this regard, we are proposing to open to the public sessions of the Senate, which are chaired by you.**

Namely, the sessions of the Senate of the University of Montenegro were open to the public up to your appointment to the position of Rector in 2008, when by adoption of the new Rules of the Procedure of the Senate this possibility ceased to exist.

The public is being informed about the work of the Senate only when you find it necessary, namely, by public announcements, interviews etc. An exception is being made in the manner that you can decide, if there is some particularly important issue for the University, that the sessions can be attended by the media representatives.

Maybe you have a strong base for decision to make the sessions of the highest academic body at the University closed to the public, but insight of the media in the work of the Senate brings much more benefits to the University and to the public interest.

**In specific, there are 5 members of the current composition of the Senate from the ranks of students' representatives. We assess that they can fight for the rights and initiatives that they propose more effectively in the presence of the media.**

**Furthermore, on the website of the University of Montenegro there is no comprehensive information about the content of opinions presented at the sessions, journalists are not allowed to attend the sessions, and the Bulletin briefly covers only formal aspects.**

The University of Montenegro should be a leader of free thought, working in a completely open manner, and in that respect transparency of the work of the highest authorities of the University of Montenegro is one of the prerequisites.

The Senate has the authority to nominate professors for university titles. Concerning these issues, students' members of this body do not have the right to vote, which opens up the possibility for potential abuse and infliction of immense damage to professors and all those who have the

academic capacity to start and accomplish their career at the University of Montenegro, and who are not necessarily party cadres. I will remind you of the recent accusations in public regarding corruption and nepotism at the University of Montenegro, which can be prevented by more transparent work of the Senate.

There also open issues of financing of the University. Since you have repeatedly stated that the University requires additional financial funds and in order to improve that situation, citizens i.e. taxpayers need to know how and what for their money is being spent, particularly during the economic crisis that affects all segments of society. We should not also neglect the money allocated by self-financed students in the amount of 500, 1.000 and 2.000 EUR per person, which is not being spend transparently at certain faculties, and without reports clearly presented to the public.

*It is important to note that the Senate should, in front of journalists, provide answers to the questions regarding the state of affairs at some faculties where students funded from budget and self-financed students attend together the lectures while there is not enough seats in the halls, as well as why there are overlaps and who is responsible for the fact that they do not receive adequate quality of studying.* The problems concerning the reading room, library fund, laboratory equipment and other important requirements for quality studying are already famous. Members of the Senate from the ranks of professors, as well as those among the students, have to face these problems, especially by carefully and professionally conducted elections for the positions and functions at the University, which are important for addressing these issues, and which the Senate is authorized for.

**While we discuss the reforms carried out behind closed doors, while there is no conflict of opinions, but all breathe as one, the University of Montenegro will not be implementing its mission. Therefore I once again appeal to you and other members of the Senate to initiate the process of amending Art 38 of the Rules of Procedure of the University Senate of Montenegro.**

Respectfully Yours,

Daliborka Uljarević, Executive Director