



CENTAR ZA GRAĐANSKO OBRAZOVANJE
CENTRE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

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INSTITUTIONS EXIST FOR THE CITIZENS OF MONTENEGRO

Centre for Civic Education (CCE) welcomes the involvement of the Head of the DPS parliamentary club, Miodrag Vuković, to the current debate on the appointments of the members of the RTCG Council.

Freedom of the media is a precondition to development of democracy and it is necessary that all political actors contribute in a quality manner to the efforts in implementing media laws, primarily with regard to the transformation of RTCG into a genuine public service, which it is currently not, as was recently pointed by the European Commission. It is therefore justified that this issue has become, and should remain until it is adequately solved, the “no. 1” issue in Montenegro.

CCE reminds that a set of media laws was adopted by the Parliament of Montenegro with support of all the parliamentary clubs. For years these were praised as an example of best European standards. However, with the possibility of some representatives of the civil sector who are not to the liking of the authorities actually gaining the membership in the RTCG Council, suddenly “shortcomings” started appearing in the Law.

There are no perfect laws, and both the media laws and the Law on NGOs should be seriously reconsidered and amended. But, this is not and must not be a justification for interest lobbies and the ruling coalition to continuously break the Law. **A law which is in force must be implemented, until replaced by another law. Otherwise, there is no rule of law.**

CCE warns of the increasingly frequent attempts by the representatives of the ruling coalition to manage one autonomous sector – NGOs, and urges them to dedicate themselves to respecting the law and building democratic institutions, instead of gravely endangering the very principles of an open, civil society by their words and actions.

CCE express its concern over the new praxis of the Montenegrin Parliament, according to which the provision that “MP can not be hold responsible for public statement or act if that has been done in function of MP” starts to be misused and serves for abolishing breach of law.

CCE emphasises that the institutions of the system exist for the benefit of the citizens of Montenegro. It is therefore a legitimate right of every individual in Montenegro to hold the officials in those institutions responsible for their actions. There is nothing “tasteless, threatening or infantile” in the efforts of individuals and NGO sector to insist on the respect for the law, on the rule of law and in trying to contribute building of a democratic society of responsible citizens. The only thing that could be dubbed “tasteless, threatening or infantile” is the attitude of certain decision-makers who forgot that, except for privileges, they also have responsibilities and that their task is to promote the public, not personal interests.