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## **NGO WILL CLOSELY MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF THE REFORMS IN AREAS THAT CONSTITUTE THE NEGOTIATION CHAPTER 23**

Upon the initiative and in coordination of the Centre for Development of NGOs (CRNVO), a *coalition of non-governmental organizations has been established in order to monitor the course of negotiations under Chapter 23*. **The long-term objective of the Coalition’s activities is to contribute to achieving a noticeable improvement in the lives of the citizens of Montenegro.**

**The coalition is composed of organizations with perennial experience in working in the areas which constitute the negotiation chapter 23, namely:** the Centre for Development of NGOs (CRNVO), the Centre for Civic Education (CCE), Human Rights Action (HRA), Centre for Monitoring (CEMI), Centre for Democracy and Human Rights (CEDEM), LGBT Forum Progress, Institute Alternative, European Movement in Montenegro, NGO Safe Shelter for Women, SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Nikšić, Centre for Women’s Rights, Roma Scholarship Foundation, Association of Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro, Centre for Anti-discrimination “EKVISTA” and NGO Anima.

Coalition members have undergone several months of the training process on the ground of the chapter 23 content, monitoring and reporting methodology and creation of communication strategies by *Croatian ad hoc coalition of NGOs for monitoring negotiations in the area of the chapter 23, the first of its kind in the region*. Also, they had a chance to talk with key stakeholders from civil society and the public sector in the Republic of Croatia, as well as representatives of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Croatia. Training and consultation are an integral part of the project implemented by CRNVO with the Centre for Peace Studies in Zagreb, which key result is precisely the formed Coalition.

We welcome the opening of the negotiations process with Montenegro and announce that we will **closely monitor the process of implementation of reforms in the areas of justice, basic human rights and fundamental freedoms and anti-corruption policies that constitute Chapter 23, during the entire negotiation process; regularly inform national and international public about all the negative and positive progress in these areas, and advocate changes in legislation, institutional and implementation framework which will have permanent affects in improving human rights of the citizens of Montenegro as well as in providing a high degree of rule of law.**

We also believe that the Government of Montenegro should not repeat the mistake of several EU countries in which the negotiation process was characterized by a high degree of confidentiality, and that it must ensure, from the beginning of the negotiation process, a continuity in informing citizens about the process itself and the effects of planned and implemented reforms for improving their everyday lives.

We therefore call upon the government of Montenegro to revive **the principle of transparency**, which is contained in a numerous adopted strategic documents, during the negotiating process, and promptly provide to the public: **criteria for opening and subsequent closing of the chapter 23** and other chapters, **action plans for the implementation of criteria for Chapter 23** and other chapters, **reports on the implementation of the obligations within defined criteria and negotiating positions of Montenegro for Chapter 23** and other chapters.

**The coalition is open to all non-governmental organizations which with their knowledge and experience wish to contribute to substantial changes in the field of human rights, fight against corruption, and judicial reform in Montenegro, while sharing values and beliefs upon which existing members of the Coalition gathered too.**

On behalf of the Coalition members,  
Marina Vuković, Deputy Executive Director of the Centre for Development of Non-governmental organizations  
(CRNVO)