

Podgorica, 14 January 2022

PARLIAMENT OF MONTENEGRO

To: Aleksa BEČIĆ, President

SUBJECT: Urgency to initiate proceedings against Jovan Vučurović

Dear Mr Bečić,

We are addressing you on behalf of the ***Coalition Together for LGBTIQ Rights***, which gathers NGOs and institutions and is formed to work together and advocate for full legal and social equality of LGBTIQ + people in all spheres of life. We are requesting you to initiate the determination of responsibility of the President of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms, Jovan Vučurović, for hate speech against LGBTIQ + persons and human rights defenders in Montenegro.

We believe that, as the President of the Parliament of Montenegro, you are familiar with hate speech and homophobic attitudes expressed by MP Vučurović during the debate on amendments to the Law on Social and Child Protection. Also, after the reaction of our Coalition to his statements, MP Vučurović publicly insulted all activists who fight for the rights of this marginalized group in Montenegro, which only confirmed his discriminatory attitudes and thus once again demonstrated that he is not worthy of the office of president of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms. Therefore, MP Vučurović grossly violated Article 9a of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination related to hate speech, as well as Article 443 of the Criminal Code.

We hereby refer you with the Urgency to initiate, in accordance with your competencies, and pursuant to Article 16 of the Code of Ethics, proceedings against the MP, President of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms Mr Jovan Vučurović for violating the Code of Ethics, in particular Article 5, which prescribes the duty of MPs to perform their functions impartially, without prejudice and discrimination in relation to race, religion, sex, nationality, age, marital status, sexual orientation, social property status and all differences, respecting and protecting human rights and freedoms.

As prescribed by the procedures, based on your submission, Mr Vučurović's Deputy, pursuant to Article 14 of the Code, should convene a session of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms and propose an agenda with acts related to violations of the Code. If this is not done, we remind you that in this case, you can convene that session of the Committee, as prescribed by this article.

We believe that the position of the President of the Committee for Human Rights and Freedoms has a special responsibility and that MP Vučurović, by violating the general ethical principles in the work of MPs, has demonstrated that he is unworthy to hold this important and responsible position. We consider that the Parliament of Montenegro, as the highest instance of the legislature and the House of Representatives of all citizens of Montenegro, is obliged to protect from the abuse of power by those who should protect the rights of all guaranteed by the Constitution and laws.

Finally, we note that in addition to this, you have the option of your party's parliamentary club to initiate proceedings to remove Mr. Vučurović, given that the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly stipulate that a proposal for dismissal may be sent to the Administrative Board by the parliamentary club, after which the Administrative Board considers the proposal and after the vote sends the proposal that is submitted to the Parliament for voting.

Hoping that you will respond positively to this urgency, and do everything in your power to make this process a reality, please let us know in writing about the actions taken in relation to the stated requirements of the Coalition for LGBTQ Rights.

Respectfully Yours,

NGO Montenegrin LGBTIQ Asociation Queer Montenegro
NGO Juventas
Asociation Spektra
NGO Stana
NGO Center for Monitoring and Research (CeMI)
NGO Montenegrin Women's Lobby
NGO Shelter
NGO ANIMA – Center for Women's and Peace Education
NGO NGO Center for Development of NGOs (CRNVO)
NGO Centre for Civic Education (CGO/CCE)
NGO Human Rights Action (HRA)
NGO Center for Democracy and Human Rights (CEDEM)
NGO Prima
NGO Union of High School Pupils
NGO Women Rights Center
NGO Active zone
NGO Center for Roma Initiatives
NGO Center for Affirmation of the RE Population
Montenegrin Olympic Committee