

## *Communiqué*

The Project on Ethnic Relations, a U.S.-based institute, together with the Ministry for the Protection of Rights of Persons Belonging to National and Ethnic Groups of Montenegro held a roundtable in Pržno on October 21-22, 2005 under the title “Developing a Governmental Minority Policy for Montenegro.” The meeting was sponsored by the British Embassy in Serbia and Montenegro. Participants included members of the parliament of Montenegro representing all parliamentary parties.

The main topic of the discussion was adoption of the law on minority rights.

Following are the main items of the consensus that was reached at the meeting:

- The parliamentary parties agreed on the need to pass this law as soon as possible;
- Differences on terminology used by the law were resolved and new terminology was agreed upon;
- Serious progress was made in resolving the issue of political representation in the parliament of Montenegro (Article 25 of the draft law). All minorities that number more than one percent of the total population of Montenegro according to the latest census will be represented in the parliament of Montenegro through representatives from separate national minority lists having in mind ethnic and language specifics as well as the already achieved rights of Albanians;
- A high degree of consensus was achieved on the issue of the formation and functioning of the national minority councils that are envisioned in the draft law;
- The draft law will oblige the government to develop a strategy for effective socialization and integration of the Roma in Montenegro;
- In addition to the already foreseen television programs in the languages of national minorities, special programs will be produced in the state language about minorities in Montenegro.

The Serb People’s Party expressed a different opinion on these issues, and offered a different approach.

The participants agreed that the working group of the Ministry for the Protection of Rights of Persons Belonging to National and Ethnic Groups will complete the final draft of the law and will deliver it to the parliament of Montenegro before the second half of November.

The participants will ask the Government of Montenegro to complete all necessary work in order for this law to be adopted by the end of the year.

The Project on Ethnic Relations will brief the U.S. State Department in Washington and the European Commission in Brussels on the conclusions reached at this meeting.

*Pržno, Montenegro  
October 22, 2005*