

Mr. Milo DJUKANOVIĆ

Prime Minister of Montenegro

***Address at the Inauguration of the International
Conference „Values and the 21st Century”****

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Academicians, Distinguished Members
of the Diplomatic Corps,*

It gives me great pleasure to speak at the opening of the international conference „Values and 21st Century”. The topic that has brought us together is certainly a huge challenge, not only for the scientific and scholarly community, but also for each responsible individual and the society as a whole. It is in the best interest of Montenegro and her future to get the best possible insight into issues that are in the focus of interest of the world scholars and whose topical character calls for a constructive approach by all the major actors in the society. It is of particular importance that this conference has brought together prominent scientists and scholars, academicians, university professors from several continents and from over 30 countries, whose diverse experience and expertise are essentially useful and welcome in examining this complex topic as comprehensively as possible.

I consider the Conference „Values and 21st Century” very important for further promotion of the Montenegrin scientific and scholarly thought, as well as promotion of the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts, which has been furthering co-operation in this field by organising this and other similar high-level gatherings of international character. But this also promotes Montenegro as a nation demonstrating a clear readiness to actively participate

* Welcome speech

in deliberation of long-term global goals, whose path towards European and trans-Atlantic integration calls for bringing our action fully in line with commitments we have undertaken as a part of the international community.

Montenegro is strategically committed to the concept of sustainable development. The social and economic progress achieved over a relatively short period, especially since becoming independent, implies consulting the best European and world expertise and an interactive relationship of the state, scholarly and scientific institutions and the intellectual community, brought together by projects of long-term importance for the prosperity of the country. In other words, the model that we have chosen and that has shown to be a success, imposes on us an obligation to view the issue of „*Values and the 21st Century*” in the context of our overall development as a knowledge-based society.

The so called „dual use of scientific discoveries” belongs to those issues that we must not interpret in isolation. Possible shifts in the system of values must be subject of not only scientific and scholarly élites, but also of political ones. Each nation must be aware of potential impact and effects of fast adoption and application of the most advanced scientific and technological achievements. Likewise, each nation is in a way vulnerable to an invasion of new information and knowledge, which inevitably results in establishment of different value standards. Therefore, along with the awareness of individual responsibility and that of the Government, we must be aware of the responsibility of the generation we belong to. Since regardless of the extent to which scientific and technological progress may determine relations in the society, the order of values must be based on universal ethical principles, humanitarianism and solidarity. It is worth recalling that in Montenegro the concept of „chivalry”, which has over centuries epitomized the Montenegrin character, is valued above and beyond all else.

I am sure that this conference will confirm that the issue of values, viewed from many diverse, but equally demanding aspects, is moving to the forefront in respect of the intellectual community, which we, as responsible people must be alert to and which has a crucial impact on creation of a sort of value guidelines. Since this century has been characterized as the century of knowledge, the obligations and responsibility of the political élite must be fully in line with knowledge and sense of the intelligentsia of our age.

Montenegro will, in keeping with her capacities, seek to actively participate in evaluation of the millennium goals, because, inter alia, we believe that the

era of globalisation can bring about abrupt changes in the system of values. This is an expression of our wish to listen attentively to the voice of the Montenegrin and international scientific and scholarly community, but also of our need to continue to build with determination a society based on intransient civilization values, the values that imply a strong humanistic content and that unreservedly extol man. In this regard our main asset is the diverse, multiethnic and multicultural organism of Montenegro and each citizen is well aware of this.

Thus it is only natural that the Government of Montenegro should continue to be committed to cherishing such values, promoting a policy of dialogue, solidarity and mutual respect as our most important achievements. I wish to assure you that our young nation, at the same time a nation with a millennium-long history, views the issue of „*Values and 21st Century*” as a challenge putting to the test our ability to provide a concrete contribution, mindful of relevant viewpoints of the scientific and scholarly community. This position is derived from our conviction that human resources are the greatest asset we possess.

We will not provide for a secure future only by creating material wealth and by making our economy healthy and competitive over a reasonably long period of time. On the contrary, this is just a precondition for a comprehensive development of the society in which each individual will be free and prepared to contribute to further construction of a modern society. That is why in this 21st century – a century of huge dilemmas, opportunities and challenges – we will not wait for outcomes, we want to create a sustainable vision that will let generations to come enjoy progress against a backdrop of established intransient civilization values. Because we owe this to the time in which we live and to those who will come after us, we must not let a crisis of values thwart our efforts.

Just as we must keep pace with modern scientific and technological advancement, we must very carefully cherish the values of our legacy, born out of centuries of many an intertwined civilisation and based on promoting diversity among people and their cultures. This obligation, primarily ethical, we must in particular honour today, when Montenegro has created all the preconditions for accelerated development and progress in European integration. We are conscious that the results that we have achieved in strengthening mechanisms of the rule of law, human and minority rights, the education system, coupled with a dynamic economic system cannot be fully meaningful

unless our endeavours spur fundamental human and social values conducive to building a system of values based on solidarity, trust, humanism and responsibility, above all responsibility to the young people on whose knowledge a European Montenegro will rely tomorrow. Therefore, we will channel all the forces of the society towards preserving the stable and sound fabric of our country and those intransigent values that are the corner stone of our permanence through history and pledge of our certainly more secure future.

I consider the international conference „*Values and 21st Century*” a platform for confronting diverse experiences and homogenizing knowledge at regional, European and global level. Because this moment in history calls for full coordination of intellectual forces. The more accessible the scientific achievements, the more successful we will be in accomplishing our development goals without adverse consequences for the environment and the cultural ambience and fully conscious of the irreplaceable value of natural and human resources.

The importance of science and advanced technologies for Montenegro and her institutions is doubtless, as our certain road towards united Europe implies considerable investment in knowledge and research, with strong support for research projects and continued progress of scientific and cultural institutions of national importance. We can properly address crucial issues of our development only provided the scientific and scholarly élites are involved in such processes. The great creative potential that Montenegro has in all fields encourages us to seek to build our future as a knowledge-based society.

Therefore, Montenegro wants to be involved in global research and technological processes, not only because it is in our best interest to actively follow the dynamic processes evolving in this sphere, but primarily because of the consciousness that investing in education and science, along with preservation of key values, creates the biggest asset that a nation can have.

Given the linkage and sensitivity of the issue of further progress and values in the century in which we live, as a responsible Government we will continue to express our unequivocal support for the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts and other educational, scientific and scholarly institutions in regard of organisation of conferences on this or closely-related topics and will stand ready to take account of recommendations of prominent scientists and scholars from different fields. The conference „*Values and the 21st Century*” is yet another opportunity to contribute, by an exchange of knowledge

and a strengthened partnership, towards detecting the most important values in this century and their further impact on broader social development.

I am therefore confident that the messages of this conference, which has, to our satisfaction, brought together many important personalities from the scientific and scholarly world, will strongly resonate in Montenegro and the countries you come from. Finally, hoping that this gathering will provide a motive to continue to examine the topic of values in the 21st century and organise future meetings at such a high level, I wish you an agreeable visit to Montenegro and every success in your work.

Thank you for your attention.

