

P R O T O C O L
of the 1st session of the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation
between the Government of the Slovak Republic
and the Government of Montenegro,
3 and 4 December, 2018 Bratislava

The 1st session of the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Montenegro (hereinafter referred to as the “Joint Commission”) was held on 3 and 4 December, 2018 in Bratislava.

The Joint Commission was held in accordance with Article 3 of the Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Montenegro on Economic Cooperation, signed on 25 March, 2014 in Bratislava.

The Slovak delegation was headed by Peter Žiga, Minister of Economy of the Slovak Republic and Chairman of the Slovak part of the Joint Commission.

The Montenegrin delegation was headed by Dragica Sekulić, Minister of Economy of Montenegro and Chairman of the Montenegrin part of the Joint Commission.

The members of both Delegations are listed in the Annexes I and II, respectively.

THE FOLLOWING AGENDA OF THE SESSION WAS ADOPTED:

I. Opening session of the Joint Commission

II. Discussion in expert groups in the following fields:

1. Economic and Trade Cooperation
2. Cooperation in the field of Energy and Renewable Energy Sources
3. Industry and Innovation
4. Society Informatization and Digitalization of Public Administration
5. Agriculture
6. Environment protection

III. Finalizing the Protocol of the Joint Commission

IV. Concluding Plenary session of the Joint Commission

- Reports on the conclusions of the working groups,
- Signing the Protocol of the 1st Session of the Joint Commission.

Both sides made a review of the overall economic development of two countries, of the bilateral economic cooperation and possibilities for further development of mutual cooperation in the fields of common interest.

The experts of the Joint Commission have continued their discussions in separate experts groups. The results of discussions were summarized as follows:

I. Economic and Trade Cooperation

Bilateral statistical overview

Statistical data on bilateral trade and FDIs between two countries were shared by both sides.

According to the Slovak statistical data, the bilateral foreign trade turnover between Slovakia and Montenegro was EUR 15.96 million in 2017 and fell by 23.75% compared to 2016. The Slovak export to Montenegro reached EUR 15.81 million in 2017 and dropped by 23.4%. The Slovak import from Montenegro was only EUR 0.15 million during the same period and dropped by 48.3%. During the first eight months of 2018 the Slovak export to Montenegro reached EUR 11.79 million, thus the moderate increasing was 2.5% compared to the same period in 2017. The Slovak import from Montenegro was EUR 0.03 million and when compared to the same period in 2017 the drop was by 25%. The bilateral trade turnover reached EUR 11.82 million during the first eight months of 2018 and increase was by 2.4%.

The main Slovak export commodities to Montenegro are passenger cars, which accounts for 31% of the Slovak exports to Montenegro, followed by the export of electrical apparatus for wire telephony with almost 23% and televisions with 17.5% share in the Slovak export to Montenegro. Aluminum ores with 66% share dominated in the import from Montenegro to Slovakia, followed by the import of machinery parts with 18.62% and automotive parts, as well as articles of vulcanized rubber with 3.9%.

According to the data of the Statistical Office of Montenegro, in 2017 the total trade exchange between Montenegro and Slovakia amounted to EUR 7.96 million, which represents increase of 39% compared to 2016. The total exports of Montenegro to Slovakia in this period amounted to EUR 0.07 million, which is considerably lower compared to 2016 (EUR 0.44 million), while imports amounted to EUR 7.89 million and it was higher by 49% compared to 2016. During the first nine months of 2018 the Montenegrin export to Slovakia reached EUR 0.01 million. The Montenegrin import from Slovakia was EUR 6.17 million. The bilateral trade turnover reached EUR 6.18 million during the first nine months of 2018.

The most important products imported from Slovakia during the first nine months of 2018 were: electrical machinery and equipment (EUR 1.77 million), vehicles and parts thereof (EUR 0.93 million), whilst Montenegro mostly exported the following: electrical machinery and equipment (EUR 0.003 million) and vehicles and parts thereof (EUR 0.003 million).

Both Sides agreed that the bilateral trade between two countries is not at the desired level and committed to work on exploring the potentials for further increase of trade volume.

The discrepancies were established in both statistics, which are due to differences in the statistical methods.

The Montenegrin side presented investment activities and opportunities, and tourism data. Regarding tourism turnover with Slovakia, in the period for 10 months in 2018, Montenegro was visited by 5.576 Slovakian tourists who realized 31.663 overnights, which means increasing by 6.1% and decreasing by 1.3% respectively, compared to the same period in 2017. An average stay in Montenegro was 5.41 days.

Both sides expressed the importance of tourism in fostering the economic development of both countries, and proposed to establish cooperation in the following areas:

- in the field of education and training system in order to overcome a shortage of skills in tourism sector;
- in funding the development of tourism
- in exchange and sharing of tourism-related information, knowledge and experience and research in tourism and related industries fostering cooperation between the public and the private sectors, as well as cooperation through international travel and tourism-oriented organizations, aiming to facilitate alignment with global trends,

Both sides exchanged information regarding their FDIs and made a review on their investment policies.

According to the data from the Central Bank of Montenegro, the total investments from Slovakia to Montenegro during the first nine months of 2018 amounted to EUR 0.40 million, whilst investments in 2017 amounted to EUR 0.70 million. There were no foreign direct investments from Slovakia to Montenegro in 2016.

The Montenegrin side pointed out the favorable business and investment environment in Montenegro which provides an opportunity for investments of the Slovak companies and establishing of joint ventures.

Both countries expressed their interest in further development and improvement of cooperation between the Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency (SARIO) and the Chamber of Economy of Montenegro. Both sides agreed to organize a B2B event within the period of 18 months.

Both sides have exchanged their experiences regarding the functioning of economic diplomacy, stressing the importance of coordinated activities of all institutions responsible for investment and export promotion at the national levels. Further dialogue on the exchange of best practices was agreed.

II. Cooperation in the field of Energy and Renewable Energy Sources

Slovakia and Montenegro agreed on enhancing cooperation in the energy sector.

Both sides exchanged experience concerning the implementation of the EU energy legislation and the national legislation in the field of energy and decided to continue cooperation between two Ministries and responsible experts

The representatives of both sides expressed their interest in strengthening the cooperation between Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency (SIEA) and the respected Montenegrin institution.

Mutual activities should be focused particularly on:

- exchange of expert experience on sustainable exploitation of renewable energy sources (RES) and on possibilities for common implementation of flexible mechanisms to achieve national aims regarding the share of RES in the gross final consumption of energy,
- exchange of experience and best practices with implementation of effective financial mechanisms to support projects in the field of energy efficiency and effective methods of energy savings monitoring, including energy efficiency fund,
- creation of capacities for professional education in the field of energy and innovations in energy,
- exchange of knowledge regarding the development of innovations and support of competitiveness growth of companies within national economies,
- exchange of expert's experience in the field of internal energy market,
- the possibility for future investment in energy sector.

Both sides agreed on transfer of the Slovak experience and know-how in the field of RES, EU energy legislation and the national legislation in this field.

The Montenegrin side presented ongoing energy projects in Montenegro and possibilities for cooperation and investment for the Slovak companies.

The Slovak company SES a. s. Tlmače declared their interest to participate in ongoing energy projects in Montenegro.

III. Industry and Innovation

Both sides discussed the possibilities to enhance cooperation in the industry with an emphasis on the Slovak experience with implementation of the Industrial policy and Smart Specialization Strategy. The Slovak side presented the experiences with establishing the models of the Slovak industry support in the segment Industry 4.0.

The Montenegrin side expressed its interest to transfer the Slovak experience in supporting the innovation and innovation environment (with focus on science and technology park), as well as various types of support within the Smart Specialization Strategy (S3), whose adoption in Montenegro is expected soon.

The Slovak side, represented by the Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency, and the Montenegrin side welcomed the possibilities for further exchange of more details and exchanging best practices using TAIEX or other available forms in implementation of different innovation tools.

Both sides exchanged information regarding the good examples of the Slovak participation in EU programmes and other initiatives related to industrial development and experience concerning the implementation of effective measures and instruments for improving competitiveness of industry with a special focus on support programs.

The Slovak side expressed its interest in development of bilateral cooperation with Montenegro in the field of science and research in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding on the Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Ministry of Science of Montenegro and the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, signed on 21 June, 2017 in Podgorica.

The Montenegrin side informed on the Initiative for establishment of the International Institute for Sustainable Technologies of South East Europe (SEEST), as a regional project initiated by Montenegro and asked the Slovak side for experience in the health system, especially in the field of radiology and oncology which could contribute to the development of the aforementioned regional project.

1. Society informatization and digitalization of public administration

The sides informed each other about the institutional structure of the ICT and e-Government development in both countries. The following topics have been discussed:

1. E-Government, e-identification, e-authentication

Both sides exchanged experience concerning the national legislation in the field of electronic signature and electronic identification as well as the by-laws for its implementation.

The Slovak side agreed to share their experience in drafting legislation through the developing cooperation in the area of e-Government and information security, using the different models of TAIEX mechanism,

2. E-services for citizens and business

The Slovak side presented their experience in establishing secure and safe contact point for cooperation between the citizens and public administration.

The Slovak side offered to the Montenegrin side cooperation and assistance in connection with consultation, analytical, implementation and integration services for information systems and registers of public administration (e-Government), as well as assistance concerning solutions for electronic services for citizens and entrepreneurs. Development funds could be used for exchanging the 'know how' on e-Government improvement or for providing educational services to Montenegrin partners at the governmental level.

The Slovak side informed the Montenegrin side on the possibility of free of charge sub-licensing to use the informative system of different registers of Slovak Republic that is operated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Slovak Republic. Slovak side is also prepared to provide sub-licences for other registers depending on particular requirements of Montenegro.

3. Public administration reform and Civil Service System

The sides exchanged the good practices and the Slovak experience in strengthening the administrative capacity and implementation of optimization as a key challenge in the process of public administration reform.

Common programs for cooperation and organization of educational trainings and workshops were proposed.

V. Agriculture

The Slovak side declared its readiness to provide experiences and knowledge in the field of agriculture, food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary issues, forestry, as well as rural development.

The Slovak side expressed support to the potential cooperation between the State Veterinary and Food Administration of the Slovak Republic and the Administration for Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Affairs of Montenegro.

The Montenegrin side declared its readiness to utilize the Slovak experience in negotiation with EU, especially regarding the chapters related to agriculture and food safety.

The Montenegrin side informed Slovak side on implementation of rural development programme (IPARD) and informed that it is ready to utilize experience of Slovakia in implementation of rural development measures, as well as the establishment of the Paying Agency.

VI. Environment protection

Both sides discussed opportunities for cooperation in the field of environmental protection.

Slovak side offered to the Montenegrin side exchange of experience in the field of waste management, water protection and integrated water management, with focus on urban waste water collection and treatment.

Montenegrin side expressed special interest in the Slovak experience achieved during the negotiation process in the field of waste management. Also, the Montenegrin side is interested in introduction of extended producer's responsibility principle, organisation of deposit system and meeting the recycling targets.

Slovak side agreed with its Montenegrin counterpart to strengthen their expert cooperation using the Slovak Aid and its Centre for Experience Transfer from Integration and Reforms (CETIR) and the new Mid-term Development Cooperation Strategy for the period 2020 – 2023 (currently in the making) for organizing expert visits in both countries to share experience with the transposition and implementation of European environmental legislation, as well as expertise considering different environmental projects. Slovakian side is willing to send its Montenegrin counterpart more detailed information about how to apply for official development assistance in short time via e-mail.

Conclusion

In accordance with mutual wishes to find practical and effective tools and ways to strengthen economic cooperation between both countries, the session of the Joint Commission and expert discussions were held in a friendly and a constructive atmosphere.

It was the recommendation of the Joint Commission that the expert meetings should also be held in the period between the sessions of the Joint Commission, according to specific needs, or to resolve individual issues or projects of cooperation, based on the requirements and drafts prepared in the meantime.

The next session of the Joint Commission shall be held at a date and place to be decided by both sides through diplomatic channels.

Done in Bratislava, on 4 December, 2018, in two original copies in the English language.



On behalf of the Slovak Republic
Peter Žiga
Minister of Economy
of the Slovak Republic



On behalf of Montenegro
Dragica Sekulić
Minister of Economy
of Montenegro

THE LIST OF THE SLOVAK DELEGATION

1. Peter Žiga Minister of Economy of the Slovak Republic
Chairman of the Slovak part of the Joint Commission
2. H. E. Roman Hlobeň Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to Montenegro
3. Radovan Urban Kocák Director, Bilateral Trade Cooperation Department, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
4. Katarína Benková Senior State Counsellor, Bilateral Trade Cooperation Department, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic,
Secretary of the Joint Commission
5. Katarína Klapáková Head of the Protocol Department, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
6. Alena Žáková Director, International Relations in Energy Department, Energy Section, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
7. Peter Drotár Senior State Counsellor, Fuels and Energy Department, Energy Section, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
8. Veronika Čarná Senior State Counsellor, International Relations in Energy Department, Energy Section, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
9. Miroslav Mariáš Senior State Counsellor, International Relations in Energy Department, Energy Section, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
10. Andrea Farkašová Director, Industrial Development Department, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
11. Adrián Krajňák Senior Counsellor, Industrial Development Department, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
12. Lujza Chrvalová Senior Counsellor, Industrial Development Department, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
13. Boris Škoda Director, Investment Department, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
14. Vladimír Tanistrák Senior State Counsellor, Innovation and Applied Research Department, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
15. Marián Adam Senior State Counsellor, Economic Diplomacy Governing Department, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
16. Igor Paule Director, Strategy and Analyses Department, Tourism Section, Ministry of Transport and Construction
17. Zuzana Fejdiová Senior State Counsellor, International Relations Department, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
18. Viera Špalková Senior State Counsellor, Waste Management Department, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic

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| 19. | Oľga Trcková | Senior State Counsellor, Waste Management Department, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic |
| 20. | Lýdia Bekerová | Senior State Counsellor, State Water Management and Fisheries Department, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic |
| 21. | Alena Kurecová | Water Research Institute |
| 22. | Jaroslava Kadlicová | Senior State Counsellor, Food Processing and Trade Section, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic |
| 23. | Andrea Tvrdá | Senior State Counsellor, Rural Development and Direct Payment Section, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic |
| 24. | Jakub Birka | Director, International Scientific and Technical Cooperation Department, Science and Technic Section, Ministry of Education, Science, Technic and Sport of the Slovak Republic |
| 25. | Vladimír Sedláček | Director, IT of Public Administration Department, Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the Slovak Republic |
| 26. | Martin Bezek | IT of Public Administration Department, Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the Slovak Republic |
| 27. | Tibor Buček | Director, Foreign Trade Department, Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency |
| 28. | Adam Csuka | Project Manager for Balkan Countries, Foreign Trade Department, Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency |
| 29. | Igor Uhlík | Project Manager, Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency |
| 30. | Vladimír Borza | Director, Programme and Analyses Department, Innovation and International Cooperation Section, Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency |
| 31. | Kvetoslava Šoltéssová | Director, Law, Methodology and Education, Energy Issues Section, Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency |
| 32. | Monika Kohútová | General Director, EXIMBANKA SR |
| 33. | Silvia Gavorníková | Director, International Affairs Department, EXIMBANKA SR |
| 34. | Barbora Kudzejová | Director, Non Marketable Risk Insurance Department, EXIMBANKA SR |
| 35. | Peter Gaži | SES Tlmače, a.s. |
| 36. | Martin Benko | Registers for public administration |
| 37. | Róbert Matzenauer | Senior State Counsellor, Protocol, Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic |

THE LIST OF THE MONTENEGRIN DELEGATION

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| 1. | Dragica Sekulić | Minister of Economy of Montenegro
Chairman of the Montenegrin part of the Joint Commission |
| 2. | Nikola Vujović | State Secretary
Ministry of Economy of Montenegro |
| 3. | Ivan Saveljić | Vice-President
Chamber of Economy of Montenegro |
| 4. | Radosav Babić | General Director for Investments, Development of SMEs
and Management of EU Funds, Ministry of Economy
of Montenegro |
| 5. | Olivera Brajović | General Director for Development of Competitiveness
and Investments in Tourism, Ministry of Sustainable
Development and Tourism of Montenegro |
| 6. | Dragan Asanović | General Director for Waste Management and Utility
Development, Ministry of Sustainable Development
and Tourism of Montenegro |
| 7. | Darko Konjević | General Director for Rural Development,
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Montenegro |
| 8. | Anđela
Čelebić- Vukadinović | Minister Counsellor, Embassy of Montenegro to the Republic
of Austria and to the Slovak Republic |
| 9. | Mia Živković | Chief of Cabinet,
Ministry of Economy of Montenegro |
| 10. | Bosiljka
Vuković-Simonović | Director of the Department for Economic Diplomacy, Ministry
of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro |
| 11. | Ružica Misković | Head of the Department for International Cooperation and EU
Integration, Ministry of Public Administration of Montenegro |
| 12. | Smilja Kažić–Vujačić | Head of the Directorate of International Cooperation /IPA Body/,
Ministry of Science of Montenegro |
| 13. | Ivana Popović | Senior Advisor in the Directorate for Industry
and Transformation, Ministry of Economy of Montenegro |
| 14. | Svetlana Stijepović | Secretary of the Montenegrin part of the Joint Commission,
Senior Advisor in the Department for Foreign Economic
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