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***EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN THE CROATIAN PARLIAMENT***

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The *European Affairs in the Croatian Parliament Bulletin* is published monthly by the European Affairs Department. The Bulletin provides an overview of the Parliament's work related to European affairs and arising from the membership of the Republic of Croatia in the European Union.

The Croatian Parliament, as the national parliament of an EU member state, participates in the decision-making process at the European level by overseeing the activities of the Government in the European Union institutions and by exercising the powers conferred on national parliaments by the Lisbon Treaty.

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***Activities of the European Affairs Committee***

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The Committee for European Affairs carries out European affairs in accordance with the Act on the Cooperation of the Croatian Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia in European Affairs and the Rules of Procedure of the Croatian Parliament.

**At its 1<sup>st</sup> session**, held on 9<sup>th</sup> July, the Committee discussed

1. Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union from July 1 to December 31, 2024
2. Confirmation of the Work Programme for the Consideration of the Position of the Republic of Croatia for the year 2024

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***Activities of the Foreign Policy Committee***

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The Foreign Affairs Committee, as the competent working body of the Croatian Parliament responsible for matters of foreign policy and international relations, and matters relating to the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, monitors and discusses in its meetings the current political situation, including in South-Eastern Europe.

In accordance with the provisions of the Standing Orders, the Foreign Affairs Committee monitors the policies of the European Union within its jurisdiction, including the European Union enlargement policy and accession negotiations.

Croatia strongly advocates the process of enlargement of the European Union and supports the European path of the countries of South-Eastern Europe, including Montenegro. We witnessed how the Resolution on Genocide in the Jasenovac, Dachau and Mauthausen camps system, adopted by the Parliament of Montenegro on 28 June 2024, the purpose of which is to exploit the memory of the Jasenovac victims for short-term political goals of one part of Montenegrin politics and relativize the UN Resolution on Srebrenica Genocide, triggered political divisions and adversely affected our bilateral relations with Montenegro.

As a result, at its 1<sup>st</sup> meeting held on 11 July 2024 following the adoption of the Resolution on Genocide in the Jasenovac, Dachau and Mauthausen camps system, the Foreign Affairs Committee discussed bilateral relations with Montenegro, and after the discussion decided to adopt the Conclusion.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Foreign Affairs Committee considers the adoption of the Resolution on Genocide in the Jasenovac, Dachau and Mauthausen camps system by the Parliament of Montenegro on 28 June 2024 to be completely unacceptable and inappropriate. The Republic of Croatia supported Montenegro, cultivated good neighbourly relations and helped it on its path to NATO membership, and all the time strongly advocated for its European path and integration into the European Union as soon as possible.

The Committee recalls that at the parliamentary level, Hrvatski sabor has actively assisted Montenegro by transferring its experiences from the pre-accession period and contributing to the preparations of the Parliament of Montenegro for future activities within the European Union.

The Committee believes that such action by Montenegro cannot be considered as benevolent for the further development of good neighbourly relations and is not consistent with the European values and Montenegro's EU aspiration, and views the Resolution as a harmful act of daily politics.

The Foreign Affairs Committee indicates that this action gives rise to the question about the intention of adopting a Resolution that undermines the building of a culture of reconciliation and good neighbourly relations, and questions Montenegro's true EU accession aspirations. As a candidate country for EU membership, Montenegro supported the proposal of Germany and Rwanda for a resolution on the genocide in Srebrenica, whereas a few days later the Parliament of Montenegro passed a Resolution on Genocide in the Jasenovac, Dachau and Mauthausen camps system, which is not intended to ensure honouring of the victims of the Jasenovac camp, something that the Republic of Croatia has been unequivocally doing all along. The Parliament of Montenegro uses the Resolution to push forward short-term political goals of the current government, put into perspective the UN resolution on the genocide in Srebrenica and promote the concept of the so-called of the Serbian World, which benefits Russian efforts to destabilize Europe.

The Foreign Affairs Committee takes positive note of the fact that in the Montenegrin Parliament there are political forces that support Montenegro's European path and good neighbourly relations with the Republic of Croatia, as well as the fact that the President of Montenegro condemned this Resolution.

According to the Foreign Affairs Committee, this act is part of an externally directed scheme to put a strain on the relations between Montenegro and the Republic of Croatia, discourage pro-European actors in Montenegrin society, and deliberately impede Montenegro's path towards EU membership.

The Committee highlights that the current Montenegrin government's actions towards the Republic of Croatia, which experienced the hardship of war killing many people in the 1990s during the aggression of the Milošević regime that ruled Serbia and in which, regrettably, Montenegro also took part, are intended to sour relations between the two countries. We recall that Montenegro did not condemn the aggression against the Republic of Croatia, nor did it clearly and unequivocally condemn the crimes committed in the Montenegrin Morinj camp. Moreover, it dismissed the officials who had backed the placement of the plaque in the camp.

Therefore, the Foreign Affairs Committee urges Montenegro to refrain from taking any additional actions that would cause a further set-back in the relations between the two neighbouring countries and face its own responsibility by prosecuting high-profile cases of war crimes committed by Montenegrin nationals during the aggression against the Republic of Croatia in the Dubrovnik region (City of Dubrovnik, Dubrovačko primorje, Župa Dubrovačka, and Konavle).

The Committee also calls on Montenegro to resolve other outstanding issues, including compensation for prisoners of war in Montenegrin camps, protection of all rights of the Croatian national minority in Montenegro in accordance with the European Union's Common Position on Chapter 23, presented at the Intergovernmental Conference on 26 June 2024, and the issue of maritime border and the return of the naval training ship Jadran.

The Foreign Affairs Committee expects that Montenegro will refrain from further stirring up antagonism between Montenegro and the Republic of Croatia with a view to further strengthening bilateral cooperation, including at the parliamentary level, and ensuring further support for Montenegro's EU accession process.

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*EU documents forwarded directly to the Croatian Parliament*

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Pursuant to the Protocol (no. 1) on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union, all draft legislative acts and communications are forwarded directly to national parliaments.

The Croatian Parliament publishes daily the received EU documents, along with information on the reference code assigned to each document, the applicable adoption procedure, its submission date and the timeframe for carrying out the subsidiarity check.

**In July 2024, the EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament 74 documents: 30 draft legislative acts, 44 communications and other non-binding documents.**

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*Application of EU law*

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In July 2024, the Croatian Parliament enacted four laws in the process of harmonization with European Union law.