

JOINT PRESS STATEMENT
HEAD OF THE OSCE MISSION TO MONTENEGRO
UN RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO MONTENEGRO
COUNCIL OF EUROPE OFFICE TO MONTENEGRO
on the occasion of the launch
of the campaign “16 days of Activism Against Gender Violence”

CETINJE, November 25, 2009 - Up to half of all women worldwide have experienced violence behind closed doors of their homes. This problem is pervasive in Montenegro as in all societies and remains a serious obstacle to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

Each year since 1991, tens of thousands of activists from every region of the world have taken part in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign and today we are calling on all state institutions, academia, NGOs and individuals to do anything and everything to put a stop to this grave violation of human rights and threat to society. This year's campaign is an opportunity to focus on what Montenegrin society is going to do to put an end to this crime.

The OSCE Mission to Montenegro, the United Nations Country Team in Montenegro, and Council of Europe Office in Montenegro have partnered with the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, Department for Gender Equality and the Gender Committee of the Parliament of Montenegro to set aside these coming 16 days as a time for reflection, for advocacy and for action to underscore that family violence in Montenegro will not be tolerated. During 2009 Montenegro has taken a very important step in this fight with the government's adoption of the Draft Law on Protection from Family Violence, which is now in public discussion. The OSCE Mission to Montenegro, the United Nations Country Team, and CoE now urge that this important piece of legislation be passed as law as soon as possible.

Building on this momentum, the 2009 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign honors institutions, groups and individuals who have committed to bringing violence in the family to the forefront of national attention, to encourage everyone in their various capacities to take action to end violence in the family and to demand accountability for all of the promises made to eliminate violence in family. Therefore, we are honored to have three Presidents, Mr. Vujanovic, Mr. Krivokapic and Mr. Djukanovic, acting as partners in this Campaign committing, demanding and sending messages that we are all responsible for bringing an end to violence in the family.