



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Olli Rehn
Member of the Commission

Brussels,
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09 SEP. 2005

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for your letter of 10 July 2005. I am pleased to inform you that the European Commission does indeed envisage opening an Office in Podgorica in the near future. This Office will certainly also contribute to strengthening the relations with the civil society that plays a key role in promoting the European integration process and monitoring the progress made in the fulfilment of recommendations and standards.

When preparing its reports, the Commission consults widely with main stakeholders both through its Delegation in that country and in Brussels. We are keen to intensify this process with representatives of civil society organisations and remain open to receive any information that you care to submit to us in the areas covered by the Commission Reports.

As regards IPA, our major objective when designing the new financial instrument for pre-accession IPA was to streamline all pre-accession assistance within a single framework covering both “candidate” and “potential candidate” countries, taking due account of the differences between the beneficiary countries, in particular in terms of administrative, programming and management capacity. Far from isolating potential candidates, IPA will ensure that the Western Balkans benefit from a focussed pre-accession strategy, even before they gain candidate status, by building on the progress made under the CARDS programme and beginning the process of alignment with the *acquis communautaire*. IPA will allow us to ensure that the needs of each beneficiary country and also the specific needs of the Western Balkans as a region are adequately met.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Radulović (EMIM), Mr Muk (CRNVO), Ms Uljarević (CGO),
Mr Stojanović (CEMI), Mr Golubović (CAZAS), Mr Medojević (GZP),
Mr Darmanović (CEDEM), Mr Perazić (IES), Mrs Striković (NVO Women Action),
Ms Zeković (SOS Telephone), Ms Radunović (DELFIN), Mr Milosević (ZID),
Ms Zeković (Green Home), Ms Elezović (Open Society Institute),
Ms Vojvodić (Juventas)

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