



Dear Conference Participants,

It is a great pleasure for us, the European Commission on Sexual Orientation Law (ECSOL) as a partner of the Government of Montenegro, to welcome you to the International Human Rights Conference “Toward Europe, Toward Equality” in Danilovgrad, Montenegro.

We are delighted that you are able to take part in this truly historic conference, the first of its kind, organised by a state-government, in the Balkans, which brings together internationally recognized socio-legal scholars, experts and activists from around the world to discuss the status of important human rights laws and social views pertaining to sexuality with a focus on the Balkan region.

We salute Prof. Jovan Kojicic who set up the project “Justice in the Balkans: Equality for Sexual Minorities” and so bravely organised its two landmark international academic conferences in Podgorica (2009) and Belgrade (2011). The next conference is already planned for Zagreb. It is a well deserved honour for these achievements that the Government of Montenegro organises this remarkable conference on the occasion of Prof. Kojicic’s appointment as the Prime Minister's advisor on human rights and protection against discrimination.

The European Commission on Sexual Orientation Law (ECSOL), as a non-governmental and non-political academic network of legal experts across Europe, is promoting equality and freedom for all the various sexual orientations and gender identities in the whole of the continent as its central task. In this respect we are proud to have Prof. Kojicic as our Montenegrin member and we are delighted to be able, as a partner to this conference, to spread the idea of sexual dignity and liberty in the Balkans; even more so as this conference is performing this task on a high professional level.

We are saluting the Government of Montenegro for taking the lead for equality in the Balkans and I sincerely hope that you enjoy the conference, and that you take the opportunity to share your experiences and aspirations with your colleagues from around the world.

RA Dr. Helmut Graupner, Co-coordinator