

**Borjanka Simićević,**  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
of Montenegro to Ukraine

## **UKRAINE–MONTENEGRO: a relationship that transcends formal diplomacy**

It is my privilege and great responsibility to be the Ambassador of Montenegro to Ukraine, a country with which we share genuine friendship, mutual respect, and identical values. Ever since I assumed this role, I have understood that working under the current circumstances is not just about representing my state but also about sharing the fate of the people experiencing one of the hardest pages of their contemporary history.

Every day I spend in Ukraine, I join its citizens in witnessing the indescribable challenges and the reality that often defies words; at the same time, I witness daily examples of human resilience and brilliance. In every conversation, I can feel the strength of the people who choose dignity despite the pain; in their daily struggle against the countless challenges, they keep protecting their core values: freedom, independence, peace, and the right to live in the country of their own.

Amidst this struggle, I can't help but feel personal responsibility and a deep emotional connection. I share this reality with my Ukrainian colleagues, friends, the families who have been forced to leave their homes behind, and the young people who continue dreaming about a better tomorrow. Every day I spend in Ukraine, I see not only tragedies but also courage, human warmth, and solidarity. This shapes me not only as a diplomat but also as a person.

It's a special feeling to represent Montenegro, a small country with a big heart, in a country fighting not only for its survival but also for the principles belonging to the entire humankind. This fight is not just Ukrainian. It is a struggle shared by those of us who believe in an order based on justice and law. Montenegro knows this and has proven its position via its clear, unwavering, and consistent attitude since the very



Амбасадорка Чорногорії під час вручення Вірчих грамот  
Ambassador of Montenegro presenting Credentials

start of the Russian Federation's aggression. We chose Ukraine's side, and thus chose the side of truth and justice.

Montenegro's and Ukraine's relations go deeper than their modern political aspects. They are deeply rooted in shared history, spiritual closeness, and culture. Our countries are linked by Slavic cultural and civilisational heritage, which has gradually formed our people's identities, resilience, pride, and trust in their paths. The symbols of our spiritual and historical proximity are found in two historical figures from our cultural past: Montenegrin vladika and poet Petar II Petrović-Njegoš, and Ukrainian poet and national symbol Taras Shevchenko. Two contemporaries, born in the same century, who left an indelible mark on their people's history and identity. Their words, thoughts, and deeds transcend the bounds of language and space, manifesting as ideas of freedom, resistance against injustice, strength of the spirit, and the importance of safeguarding national identity. Their literary legacies still carry the universal messages of upholding humanity, justice, and truth even in the harshest times. Each in their own way, our national geniuses taught us to preserve our dignity and trust in the people's strength, and now, with Ukraine defending its independence and the right to free existence, these messages are taking on a renewed meaning.

This is the foundation upon which we have built our modern bilateral relations, which took on full-fledged institutional form after Ukraine gained independence in 1991 and Montenegro in 2006. Since the moment we established diplomatic relations, we have observed increasingly active political dialogue, development of the body of treaties and agreements, and specific forms of cooperation in the fields of economy, tourism, transport, education, science, and culture. What especially inspires me is that our cooperation is not limited to the interactions between our governments but is also deepening through ties and understanding at the local level. Cooperation agreements and city twinning — like in the case of Kyiv and Podgorica, Kharkiv and Cetinje — are a testament to our peoples' real connection. It's worth mentioning the city of Cetinje, formerly the Montenegrin capital, and its people, whose solidarity marches and other humanitarian initiatives amplified and highlighted the voice in Ukraine's support. When it comes to strengthening the ties between our peoples and cities, honorary consuls of Montenegro also play an irreplaceable role. Their dedication and genuine devotion are an example of diplomacy based on mutual respect, trust, and friendship. Our country is sincerely grateful for everything they do, serving not only as representatives but as bridges connecting people and cultures.

In all the international forums under the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the EU's platforms, etc., Montenegro consistently and firmly votes to support Ukraine. It's a vote for justice, international law, and peace. Montenegro was among the first countries to condemn the Russian invasion and has always voted for resolutions that assert Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. At the same time, our country has provided Ukraine with political, military, security, and humanitarian support. Most importantly, perhaps, it has offered human solidarity, opening its doors to Ukrainian citizens and providing them with shelter and safety. Thanks to the traditional Montenegrin spirit of hospitality and solidarity, Ukrainians were able to find a second home and a space of safety and friendship in Montenegro.

Montenegro confidently supports Ukraine's European future and firmly believes that Ukraine belongs among the free and democratic European nations. The start of the negotiations to join the European Union is an important step in this direction, confirming Ukraine's strategic choice. As a country that has achieved the most progress on its

path to the EU and aims to become its next member by 2028, Montenegro is ready to share its experience and provide Ukraine with comprehensive support along its European course.

Ukraine's European path is inextricably tied to its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. Montenegro believes that Ukraine is on the path to inevitable NATO membership and expresses the hope that the conditions for formalising this process will be created soon. With every passing day, Ukraine proves its dedication to the Alliance's common values, not only by virtue of political choice but also through the unbelievable courage and sacrifices it makes to defend these values. In this context, Montenegro will also continue to provide unwavering support to Ukraine's efforts in the international arena.

In the spirit of friendship, mutual respect, and shared values, Montenegro and Ukraine continue opening new pages in their relations. Ahead of us are new agreements, initiatives, and specific areas of cooperation that indicate both sides' desire to enhance their partnership across all fields, from political dialogue and economy to education, culture, and people-to-people contacts. We are especially inspired by the genuine reciprocal interest in strengthening our cooperation. Such dedication reaffirms the fact that our states' relationship transcends formal diplomacy. We believe that such relations stand for a living, dynamic, and strong interaction between not just the states, but also between people, institutions, and ideas. Going forward, we will keep developing a firm, long-term, meaningful partnership based on these fundamentals and a shared vision of the future.

As the Ambassador of Montenegro to Ukraine, I feel as responsible as I am honoured to work on strengthening these ties. Together with our Ukrainian partners, I will continue looking for and developing new ways of cooperation, believing that the following years will see an even deeper enhancement of ties, not only between our states but between our peoples. The future we share must be full of peace, stability, and prosperity. I'm confident that the coming generations will continue to build bridges of understanding, cooperation, and friendship, which will bring us together at the levels of the state, as well as at the human level, in the spirit of peace, solidarity, and a shared European future.

May this cordial partnership live on, not only as the past's echo but also as a foundation for our bright and worthy common future.