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## **MONTENEGRO BACKS BALKAN TRUTH COMMISSION RECOM**

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Balkan Insight (2 July 2018)

The Montenegrin government has committed to signing up to a declaration on the establishment of RECOM, the Regional Commission for the Establishment of Facts on War Crimes and Other Serious Violations of Human Rights in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia.

According to a government document, which BIRN has seen, Montenegrin Prime Minister Dusko Markovic met the coordinator of the Coalition for RECOM, Natasa Kandic, on June 22 in Podgorica and pledged support for RECOM.

The document said that Kandic also met Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic and Kosovo Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj in April and May and received their support for establishing RECOM.

The government document also said that in relation to Montenegros foreign policy stance and in the context of the importance of regional cooperation, there is no obstacle for Montenegro to express its willingness to sign a declaration on the establishment of RECOM as a confirmation of Podgoricas commitment to displaying responsibility on sensitive wartime issues.

Montenegro has continuously had a positive attitude towards RECOM \* and it has contributed to shaping the statute of RECOM and its alignment with the constitutional and legal frameworks of the countries of the former Yugoslavia, the government said.

When Markovic met Kandic in Podgorica on June 22, he expressed full support for RECOMs establishment and called on all the other countries in the region to support the commission, according to a press release.

Montenegro wants this initiative to receive the support of every country in the region so that the coming generations have a clear picture about the ugly part of our past and so that they try hard not to repeat it. Well do our best to implement this initiative, Markovic said.

The Coalition for RECOM presented its action plan on May 22, which said that the Balkan truth commission should be constituted by 2021 and start work on April 16, 2022.

RECOM intends to put together a name-by-name list of all the people killed, missing, imprisoned and tortured people in all the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia.

The action plan envisages that Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro, which have already pledged support for RECOM, should sign a Declaration on RECOM in July this year during the London summit of the Berlin Process, a diplomatic initiative linked to EU enlargement.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia should sign up to the declaration by July 10, 2019, and the necessary steps towards setting up RECOM by June 2020 should then be undertaken by all the countries involved, according to the action plan.

By the end of May 2021, the presidents of former Yugoslav countries should sign RECOMs statute, which should come into force by the end of that year.

The Coalition for RECOM started gathering signatures of support for the initiative in 2011 in all the capital cities of the republics of the former Yugoslavia, as well as online.

It set out to get a million signatures, and has so far got over 600,000.

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/montenegro-backs-balkan-truth-commission-recom-07-02-2018>

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