



İzmir, 25/02/2026

DECLARATION OF THE PLATFORM FOR VICTIMS OF FORCED MONTENEGRIN MIGRATION

Subject: Official Meetings, Demands, and Resolutions in Montenegro

To Whom It May Concern,

I. Historical Context and the Šahovići Tragedy

In 1924, a premeditated and systematic ethnic cleansing was carried out against innocent, unarmed civilians—our ancestors—in the Šahovići (modern-day Tomaševo) region of Montenegro. These atrocities, supported by local authorities during a period of peace, forced the surviving Montenegrin citizens to flee their ancestral lands due to the total collapse of security and justice.

Throughout this forced migration, countless lives were lost, and those who survived were never able to return. To date, no formal investigation, prosecution, or judicial remedy has been initiated regarding these events, representing a profound violation of the principles of the rule of law.

II. Establishment of the Platform

In 2024, the Platform for Victims of Forced Montenegrin Migration was established under the leadership of the International Balkan Association. The platform is a coalition of 5 NGOs, 4 legal experts, and academics from 3 universities in Turkey, alongside 2 lawyers and academic representatives from Germany. Our mission is to advocate for the social, cultural, and legal rights of forced Montenegrin migrants on international platforms.

III. Diplomatic Initiatives and Official Meetings

Engagements in Turkey: The Platform has held three separate official meetings with the Embassy of Montenegro in Ankara, the Turkish Parliament, and relevant state institutions to formalize our grievances and demands.

Official Visit to Montenegro (February 3 - 8, 2026): A high-level delegation from the Platform conducted the following meetings in Podgorica:

Parliament of Montenegro: An inaugural meeting was held in the "Red Hall" with Ms. Nađa Laković (Chair of the Committee on International Relations and Emigrants) and Committee Member Mr. Seid Hadžić.

Government & Religious Authorities: Discussions were held with Mr. Aldin Muratović (Deputy Minister for Diaspora), representatives of the Islamic Community in Montenegro, and Mr. Mirsad Rastoder (Vice President of the Bosniak Council).

International Organizations: Meetings were conducted with the UN International Organization for Migration (IOM), HRA (Human Rights Action), and CEDEM to discuss legal frameworks.



IV. Key Demands and Clarifications

Our delegation has formally submitted the following demands to all relevant authorities:

Official Recognition: The Parliament of Montenegro should formally acknowledge the 1924 Šahovići atrocities and issue an official statement of regret.

Access to Archives: Opening of state archives to allow victims to retrieve ancestral birth, census, and property records.

Dual Citizenship: Implementation of legal arrangements to grant dual citizenship rights to victims of forced migration and their descendants.

Clarifications:

Scope: This demand is specifically limited to victims of the Šahovići atrocities and subsequent forced migrations. It does not include those who emigrated under standard bilateral agreements.

EU Integration & Human Rights: While we support Montenegro's EU path, we emphasize that future Schengen visa requirements must not hinder the right of victims to visit their ancestral graves and maintain their cultural heritage.

Social Project: We have proposed the project "Journey from Memories to Hope" to foster reconciliation and peace.

V. Conclusion

Our platform prioritizes dialogue and sincere attempts to find solutions before resorting to international legal mechanisms. We believe that the State of Montenegro will approach these requests constructively and resolve our issues in line with European Union values and its commitment to multiculturalism.

A second round of official talks is planned for three months from now in Podgorica to follow up on the issues discussed. We are closely monitoring the process.

Respectfully,

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