

Ministry of Interior
Minister Raško Konjević
Bulevar Svetog Petra Cetinjskog, broj 22
81000 Podgorica,
Montenegro

26.06.2013

Dear Minister Konjević,

On behalf of Transparency International (TI), I want to express my support for the representatives of MANS, our associate group in Montenegro. MANS is part of our global coalition of more than 100 non-governmental organisations that make up the global TI anti-corruption movement.

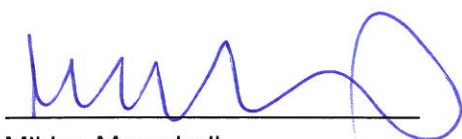
TI is a non-partisan organisation with a Secretariat based in Berlin. Our work raises public awareness of the devastating effects of corruption and we provide research for policy makers committed to fighting against corruption.

MANS uses street theatre as a public protest to highlight the effects of corruption. Last week six members of the group were arrested for putting on such a performance outside the Parliament. They were held for almost six hours and released with no criminal charges but were subsequently charged with disturbing public order and damaging of public property, which we believe is disproportional to their actions.

Arresting peaceful activists sends a disturbing message and can act to stifle public opinion. The authorities should give civil society organisations the space to raise issues of public concern without intimidation. The performance was peaceful and we hope that the charges against MANS will be dropped before the July 8 court date.

We expect that a European Union candidate country strives to respect human rights, especially freedom of expression. The Government of Montenegro should provide safe conditions for NGOs fighting corruption and organised crime.

Yours sincerely,



Miklos Marschall

Deputy Managing Director
Transparency International