



Honorary Consulate of Ukraine in Montenegro

EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE FOR NATIONAL MEDAL OF MERIT AWARD

In the collective mind of my nation, back in history and for thousands of years Gorski vijenac (The Mountain Wreath) had been sleeping. And then it was documented thorough Petar II Petrovic's hand. So, Petar II Petrovic became the most famous poet of my nation. The Mountain Wreath reads that medals and national orders used to be the Montenegrin heroes *lorica suqamata* (scale armor, breastplate) decorating their chests. Some of the heroes had so many medals that they covered their chests completely and like armors protected them against gun bullets. And the Poet says: "*O scowling Vuk, lift your moustache for me and let me see the breastplates on your chest,...*". Proudly our heroes wore them because each of them was earned in hardship of battles where no care was taken of life itself but the only care was for heroism and feats.



However, they also easily gave them up if anybody, and even the Lord of Montenegro, challenged their honor and integrity.

And again, the Poet speaks through Serdar Jole Piletic who, offended, was returning to the Montenegrin King Nikola one by one national orders from his chest, and then put his sword upon them: "Take this iron, my Lord. Not this sword is Jole Piletic, but Jole Piletic is the sword."

It is my honor to receive this order to my chest and to wear it proudly, like my Montenegrin ancestors did. I hope it will be for our mutual proud. I will enshrine your confidence in me, since I have the genes of one heroic outlaw, namely Stevan Prdeklija who used to be the most famous one in Montenegro and Herzegovina and who, probably, is still riding through celestial fields along with Cossack chieftains or Indian Chiefs. They as well knew what the Poet says in his verses: "the battle is not won by bright weapons, but by brave hearts of heroes"... or, in other words "... in Vuk Mandusic's hands, each gun is a deadly weapon... "

I will do my best, as they did, to keep the significance of this national order.

Thank you very much my dear friends for this honor and confidence in me.
