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EU Commissioner Várhelyi on situation in Montenegro: All sides should display restraint, respect for fundamental rights, including freedom of religion



European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Olivér Várhelyi, was asked this week about the tense situation in the small Adriatic country of Montenegro, in the wake of continued protests there against a controversial law that the Serbian Orthodox Church charges is a thinly veiled attempt by the Montenegro state to seize its assets and relics.

Asked how he views the latest tension between Montenegrin authorities and the Orthodox Church over the legislation, dubiously named the “Law of Freedom of Religion” by the government, he stated:

“I have repeatedly encouraged all stakeholders in Montenegro to establish an inclusive dialogue on the Law on Freedom of Religion or Beliefs and its

implementation…it is important that the Montenegrin authorities and the Serbian Orthodox Church find a mutually acceptable solution. I said this to both sides while in Montenegro. I attach great importance to the establishment of a climate conducive to dialogue and call on all sides to display restraint and respect for fundamental rights, including freedom of religion.”