



## **WEEKLY REPORT ON COMMUNITIES AND RETURNS**

### **WEEKLY REPORT** **20-26 January 2009**

#### **Highlights:**

- **MoU between MCR and KAAD on RAE Camps**
- **Renewed Efforts by UNHCR to Identify IDPs interested in Return**
- **Outreach to Minority Communities on Rule of Law in Kosovo**

#### **MoU between MCR and KAAD on RAE Camps**

On 20 January, the Ministry of Communities and Returns (MCR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Kosovo Agency for Advocacy and Development (KAAD) for the management of camps Osterode and Cesmin Lug in northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. With a timeline of six months (January to June) and possibility of extension till the end of 2009, the MoU states that MCR would provide 58,838.41 Euro to KAAD for infrastructure support, basic medical services and staff management in the camps. In addition to funding, MCR would work closely with KAAD on possible solutions for provision of shelter, including land issues and income support for individual families upon permanent relocation.

It may be recalled that the Minister of MCR, Sasa Rasić, had informed UNMIK/OPA on 16 January that he is committed to ensure proper management of the RAE camps in the north, noting that he plans to allocate some 158,301.39 Euro to KAAD for 2009. The signing of the MoU ensures smooth transfer process of camps management to KAAD, given that Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) had officially handed over the management of the camps to KAAD on 1 January.

#### **Renewed Efforts by UNHCR to Identify IDPs interested in Return**

To better facilitate returns to Kosovo, UNHCR offices in Belgrade and Pristina have agreed on the need to identify ways for a new strategy, which would enable UNCHR to work more collaboratively as intermediaries between Kosovo Serbs and the Government of Kosovo. According to UNHCR Kosovo, a main component of the new strategy would include renewed effort to identify IDPs in Serbia interested in return and their needs upon return. Those identified as interested in return would be submitted to the Government of Kosovo for action according to procedures developed, UNCHR stated.

It may be recalled that UNCHR Kosovo had, on 19 December, informed members of the Coordination Committee about the IDP profiling that is ongoing in Serbia. The profiling exercise is expected to last eight weeks targeting some 4000 IDPs particularly in collective centres.

### **Outreach to Minority Communities on Rule of Law in Kosovo**

The Youth Dialogue Programme (YDP), an indigenous non-governmental organization would soon embark on an outreach project to minority communities in Kosovo and Serbia, particularly the Kosovo Serbs, to educate them on the mandate of EULEX mission in Kosovo. Speaking to UNMIK/OPA representative on 22 January, the Director of YDP, Srdjan Vezmar, informed that their goal is to educate the minority communities about the importance of the rule of law, hence the need to accept EULEX by the minority communities. Furthermore, the project would contribute to increasing the capacity of minority civil society organizations (CSOs) in Kosovo to effectively represent and advocate for the interests of diverse constituencies through improved engagement in the policy process at both municipal and central level.

Costing some 99,580 Euro, the project will be implemented in three phases over 12 months period, initially targeting 12 local non-governmental organizations in six municipalities of Kosovo.

Headquartered in Serbia, the YDP was formed in 2005 by a group of young local Serbs and Albanians from the University of Novi Sad in Serbia and University of Pristina in Kosovo with the aim of reviving the cooperation between young local Serbs and Albanians after the conflict in 1999. According to Vezmar, over 500 young people from Serbia and Kosovo have participated in YDP programmes since 2005. The activities of YDP include interethnic dialogue within Kosovo and Serbia, dialogue among young Serbs, Albanians, Roma, Gorani and Bosniaks, dialogue among youth from Serbia and Kosovo, lobbying and advocacy for minority rights, etc.

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