



YDP Newsletter

The Youth Dialogue Programme Serbia - Kosovo
Promoting partnership among Serbs and Albanians

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January 2009.

Meeting of Kosovo Serb civil society on the start-up of the project "EULEX Mission and Minority Communities in Kosovo"



Brezovica, January 25th, 2009 - The project on "EULEX Mission and Minority Communities in Kosovo", jointly developed by the Youth Dialogue Program and experts from the EULEX mission, which will be implemented in partnerships by both organizations, officially started with a meeting of a number of Kosovo Serb civil society organizations on mount Brezovica between January 23 and 25, 2009. The purpose of this meeting was to inform the CSOs about the project and to define their role in its implementation. Through this initial

phase, the most relevant aspects of the EULEX mission were brought to the closer attention of minority CSOs, representing the initial step in engaging Kosovo Serb and other minority CSOs in establishing closer ties with the EULEX mission throughout Kosovo. The criteria for the selection of minority CSOs at the first coordination meetings was: (a) the organizations' credibility in their local communities; (b) the type of activities they implement in the field; (c) the significant number of successfully implemented projects, and (d) their sufficient organizational capacity for mana-

Graphite on the streets of Pristina

ging the implementation of the broad-based and multi-faced project. The meeting brought together organizations from all parts of Kosovo, from Leposavić and North Mitrovica from the north of Kosovo to Gračanica, Orahovac, Štrpce, Osojane, Goraždevac, Novo Brdo, Gnjilane and Istok, from the rest of Kosovo. After a number of failed attempts in the past, this meeting represents the first successful event that gathered representatives of Kosovo Serbs and other minorities from different parts of

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Participants of the meeting

Continued from Page 1
mission Kosovo-wide, strengthening the capacity of Kosovo Serbs and other minority CSOs and improving mechanisms for effective civil society – local institutions (government, police, judiciary) – EULEX cooperation. The current needs of minority organization related to the implementation of the project were discussed alongside the perception of the EULEX mission in the areas inhabited by Serbs and other minority communities. Participants' feedback will be of a great importance in strategizing the implementation of the next project phase. Their concerns and recommendations have been summarized in the report which can be obtained from our website on <http://www.ydprogramme.org>. Representatives of minority organizations from across Kosovo have supported the project and expressed their willingness to

actively participate in the implementation of the proposed activities in their local communities. Readiness to organize initial encounters between local minority organizations and representatives of local communities, on one side and representatives of the EULEX mission, on the other, has been clearly expressed in Leposavić, Orahovac, Štrpce, and Parteš. Additional assessment and further consultations are expected in Kosovska Mitrovica, Gračanica, Novo Brdo, Osojane and Gnjilane and meetings of local CSOs and representatives of local community with the EULEX mission will also be organized there. The partner organizations have concluded that there is a need for lobbying at a local level within Kosovo Serb and other minority groups to change the existing resistance and create a more positive climate for accepting the EULEX mission in the protection of minority rights and the implementation of the rule of law in Kosovo. This is particularly important for North Mitrovica, since, given the generally precarious situation and recent developments in this part of Kosovo, this could lead to resistance during the implementation of the project. Finally, we would

like to highlight that this project will be implemented by a group of young people who have expressed enormous energy and enthusiasm for the implementation of the project. This is the first time in ten years that the Kosovo Serb community has organized itself, proactively facing events that are still in expansion and directly influence the position of local communities, both Kosovo Serb and other minority communities in Kosovo. This initiative, a jointly defined set of activities that will contribute to the faster implementation of the EULEX Mission in Kosovo, represents a positive step towards easing the tensions and solving the most important problems faced by minority communities Kosovo. By implementing the project, we are moving towards new challenges, taking a step ahead in the process of formulating a strategy for joint action between minority CSOs, local institutions dealing with the rule of law, and the EULEX Mission. For all further details vis-à-vis the Brezovica meeting, please contact us via e-mail office@ydprogramme.org. The implementation of the first phase of the project has been supported by the [Soros Foundation in Kosovo](#) and the [EULEX Mission in Kosovo](#).

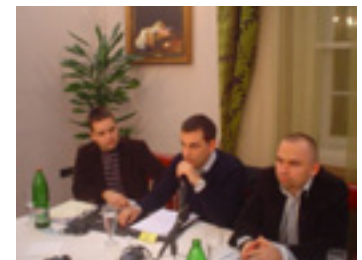
“Perspective of Serbian – Albanian Relations and Position of Minorities in Kosovo”



Plenary session - Ečka conference

Organised by the Youth Dialogue Programme, from 12th to 14th of December 2008 in Ečka, regional conference “**Perspectives of Serbian – Albanian relations and Position of Minorities in Kosovo**” took place. The con-

ference gathered around thirty participants from Serbia and Kosovo. Themes that were addressed by the project were: “**Initiative for normalisation of Serbian – Albanian relations: the role of youth in the process of reconciliation**”. Speaker Mr. Vuk Mitrović from the Independent Student Union of the University in Kosovska Mitrovica and Mr. Aleksandar Stojanović, programme director for Kosovo – the Youth Dialogue Programme, tried, through their introductions, to give a clearer perspective of the situa-



Lecturer's: Mr. Vuk Mitrovic, Mr. Aleksandar Stojanovic

tion of students at the University of Kosovska Mitrovica, as well as the position of minority communities and return of refugees in Kosovo. The second topic that



Lecturer Mr. Dragisa Krstovic

was addressed during the conference was **“Position of minority communities in Kosovo”**. Speaker covering this topic was Mr Dragiša Krstović, former member of the delegate group „Povratak“ in Kosovo Assembly.



Lecturer Mr. Omer Karabeg - Radio Free Europe, Prague.

The next topic at the conference was **“The role of media and interethnic intolerance in the region”**. This topic was elaborated by Mr Omer Karabeg, journalist at Radio Free Europe from Prague and editor of the programme „The Bridge“, broadcasted at this station. As one of the most eminent journalists and media expert, Mr Karabeg endeavoured to present to the participants the ways in which media can, in a destructive manner, influence interethnic intolerance. Mr Karabeg elaborated his presentation through the examples of media coverage during conflicts in former Yugoslavia, as well as during the conflict in Kosovo in 1999.

The next panel covered the topic **„Perspectives of Serbian – Albanian Relations“**, with the speakers: Ms Jelena Milić from the Centre for Euro-Atlantic Studies and Mr Randel Nojkić, analyst from Kosovo and a former representative in Kosovo Assembly.

The last topic that was covered by the conference was **“European Integration of Serbia and Copenhagen criteria”**. Speaker covering this subject was **Professor Vladimir Pavičević** from the Faculty of Political Science in Belgrade. Mr Pavičević presented further steps of Serbia on the road to



Lecturers; Mrs. Jelena Milić, Mr. Randjel Nojkic

European integrations within the context of Copenhagen criteria. During the discussion, participants of the conference expressed special interest for certain parts of the Copenhagen document, i.e. whether Serbia in its path towards EU integrations will be obliged to recognise the independence of Kosovo in order to become a full member of the European Union.



One of the conclusions of this panel discussion was that Serbia can not count on being accepted in the EU before 2017/2018. In order to get to this conclusion, further elements were taken into consideration: administrative capacities of Serbia, inner questions of the EU – Lisbon Agreement, budget of the EU, European Parliamentary elections, but also cooperation of Serbia with Hague tribunal, i.e. arrest of two remaining fugitives, Ratko Mladić i Goran Hadžić.



Participants of the conference

In addition to the panels, participants were taking part in the discussion that encompassed following subjects: interethnic intolerance among youth and rise of fascistic and rightwing movements; cooperation between students from the Universities in Serbia and in Kosovo;



issue of UNMIK travel documents, i.e. is there a way to avoid problems which will be created by issuing passports of Kosovo that Serbian Government is not going to recognise at least in the nearer future; question of founding second RTK programme that would be broadcasted in the minority language; issue of return of refugees and IDPs; capacity building of minority organisations in Kosovo etc.

Realisation of the conference has been supported by the **German Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and **German Embassy in Belgrade**.

Channels of communication and dialogue of youth in Serbia and Kosovo have been possible owing to years of cooperation between the Youth Dialogue Programme and Germany Embassy in Belgrade.

VISIT TO THE OFFICE OF THE EU SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN KOSOVO - ICO



Mr. Sehadin Shok, Mr. Louis J. Crishock

On November 18, 2008, fifteen young people from Kosovo and Serbia visited the Pristina headquarters of the International Civilian Office / European Union

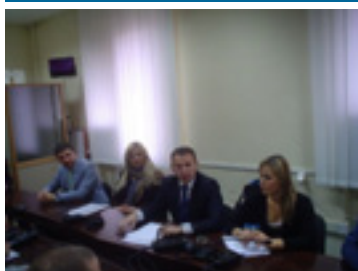
Special Representative in Kosovo (ICO/EUSR), organized by the Youth Dialogue Program. The group included representatives of civil-society organizations from Kosovska Mitrovica, Prizren, Pristina, Novi Pazar, Kragujevac and Novi Sad. This visit was organized with the aim of improving the knowledge and awareness of the ICO/EUSR office's mission and activities to be implemented in Kosovo over the forthcoming period. The visit was hosted by Mr. Louis J. Crishock from the Policy Unit and Mr. Sehadin Shok from the Community Affairs Unit.



Participants of the study visit

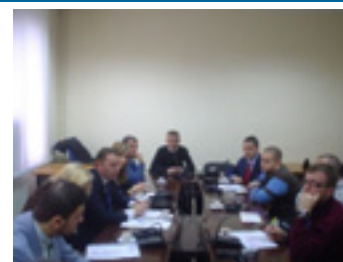
The visit was organized as a part of the project "New Generations of Youth for Serbia and Kosovo", supported by the Embassy of Germany in Serbia and the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

COOPERATION INITIATED WITH THE INFORMAL PARLIAMENTARY YOUTH GROUP IN THE KOSOVO ASSEMBLY



Initiated by the Youth Dialogue Program, the first official meeting between members of our organization, representatives of youth from political parties in Serbia, representatives of Serbian and Bosniak minority communities in Kosovo and the informal parliamentary youth group from the Kosovo Assembly was held in Pristina on November 18, 2008. This meeting was initiated in the hope that youth collaboration

within the environment of the Kosovo Assembly would have positive influence on the status of youth from the minority communities in Kosovo. The goal of the meeting was also to strengthen and extend cooperation between the Youth Dialogue Program and other young people from Serbia with this informal parliamentary group. This informal parliamentary group of young people, which hosted the meeting, was represented by the members of the Assembly, [Mr. Armend Zemaj](#), [Mr. Memli Krasniqi](#), [Mrs. Anita Morina-Saraci](#), and [Mrs. Njomza Emini](#), and [Mr. Bujar Maxhuni](#) from OSCE. The informal youth group in the Kosovo Assembly gathers together parliamentary members



under 35 from the Kosovo Albanian political parties. It was established on July 21, 2008 with the support of the OSCE mission in Kosovo. The visit was organized as a part of the project "New Generations of Youth for Serbia and Kosovo", supported by the Embassy of Germany in Serbia and the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

YDP JOINS THE CAMPAIGN FOR A COMMON LIFE IN KOSOVO

The Youth Dialogue Program has joined the initiative of the Novi Sad-based Center for Regionalism and Pristina-based Mother Theresa Society aimed at promoting the idea of a common life in Kosovo. This project will be focused on the promotion of the concept of common living between

the Serbian and Albanian communities, with particular focus on Kosovo. However, the project will be implemented throughout Serbia and Kosovo. This initiative has gathered together twenty non-governmental organizations from Kosovo and Serbia, who will profile their activities over

the forthcoming period and implement them in a campaign. Part of the project will include lobbying visits to the institutions in Kosovo aimed at raising institutional support for the project. The project is supported by the Balkan Fund for Democracy.

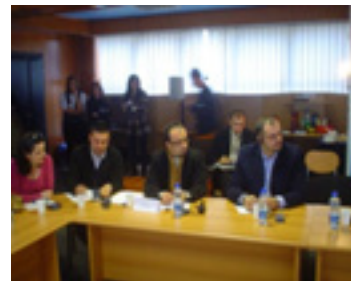
Cooperation initiated between students from the Universities in Pristina and Kosovska Mitrovica and the Universities in Serbia



The Youth Dialogue Program and its partner organization Ligo Lex Legis, organized the panel discussion on “Cooperation between Students from the Universities in Pristina and Kosovska Mitrovica and the Universities in Serbia” at the Law School in Pristina on

November 17, 2008. This event was attended by students from Pristina, Kosovska Mitrovica, Novi Pazar, Kragujevac and Novi Sad. The following topics were discussed: problems arising from the absence of official cooperation between the governing bodies of the Universities, problems of students’ documentation and recognition, and perspectives of future relationships and student cooperation.

The public discussion was attended by a huge number of students and representatives of the media as well as representatives of the EULEX Mission,



German Embassy and ABA CEELI. The public discussion was organized as a part of the project “New Generations of Youth for Serbia and Kosovo”, supported by the Embassy of Germany in Serbia and the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

SEMINAR ON “THE STATUS OF MINORITY COMMUNITIES AND INTER-RELIGIOUS YOUTH DIALOGUE”



The Youth Dialogue Program, in cooperation with its partner organization NGO Reintegration (Reintegracija) from Novi Pazar, organized a one-day seminar on [Inter-Religious Youth Dialogue and the Status of Minority Communities in Sandzak, the Presevo Valley and north Kosovo](#). The seminar was held in the “Tadz” hotel in Novi Pazar on October 29, 2008. Participants were

addressed by Mr. Ramiz Crnišanić (Sandzak Intellectual Circle), Mr. Aladin Imamović (Member of the Cabinet of the Mayor of Novi Pazar, responsible for culture and youth), Mr. Fahrudin Kladićanić (Reintegration), Mr. Aleksandar Stojanović (Center for the Development of Civil-Society, Kosovska Mitrovica



Mr. Vuk Mitrović from (Independent Student Union of the University in Kosovska Mitrovica) and Mr. Srđan Vezmar (Executive Director of the Youth Dialogue Program). The participants also visited institutions of the Islamic community in Novi Pazar: the main office of Mešihat,



the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Medresa “Gazi Isa-beg” and the Media Center in Novi Pazar. The participants were hosted by the director of Medresa, [Nedžad -ef. Hasanović](#), Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies, [Mr. Mustafa-ef. Fetić](#) and the director of the Media Center, [Mr. Hajrudin-ef. Balić](#). The seminar was supported by the Embassy of Germany in Serbia.



Peace Exchange Program – Visit to Israel and Palestine.



Following the invitation from the Youth Dialogue Program's partner organization, **Fractal from Belgrade**, the YDP Program Director, **Snezana Baclija**, participated in a study visit to Israel and Palestine within the framework of the Peace Exchange Program. This pilot-project brought together civil society activists from Serbia, Kosovo, and Macedonia for a five-day study tour to Israel and Palestine.



The program included direct work with civil society groups on the ground, and offered participants an opportunity to learn more about conflict-transformation efforts in this conflict-affected area, compare their experiences and share lessons learned. The exchange program has increased their professional capacities and allowed them to further engage and work, promoting the differences, deepening relationships with like-minded groups and further contributing in the prevention of destructive and violent conflicts. The visit took place between September 24 and 29, 2008 and it brought together a group of four activists: **Mr. Filip Pavlovic** (NGO Fractal, Serbia), **Ms. Valdete Idrizi** (Community Building Mitrovica, Kosovo),

(Community Building Mitrovica, Kosovo), **Mr. Sreten Koceski** (Community Development Institute, Macedonia) and **Mrs. Snezana Baclija** (The Youth Dialogue Programme). The main organizer of the visit to Israel and Palestine was **Mr. Michael Raphael**, peace activist and manager of the Euro-



pean Campaign **"All Different – All Equal"**. The participants visited a wide spectrum of civil society organizations in Israel and in the Palestinian territories: the Gevim Group; Palestinian/Jewish organization Sadaka-Reut; the School for Peace Neve Shalom – Wahat Al-Salam; The Palestinian Center for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation (CCRR);



World Union of Jewish Students; Young Israeli Forum for Cooperation (YIFC); The Peres Center for Peace. Getting familiar with Israeli and Palestinian cultures, approaches and ways of life was an equally important aspect of the exchange program. Therefore the second part of the study visit was



dedicated to discovering different places in Israel and Palestine, such as Tel Aviv, Jaffa, Village of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, Ein Gedi Kibutz, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem.

The goal of this program was to develop a long - term project aimed at initiating, promoting and encouraging permanent joint ventures and youth exchanges between two regions affected by a conflict: the Western Balkans and the Middle East.



With this in mind, all organizations that participated in this program have expressed their interest in developing an exchange program and establishing a network of organizations from the Middle East and the Western Balkans. A follow-up meeting and a visit of civil society activists from Israel and Palestine to the Western Balkans, developed on the outcomes and results of this pilot-project, is being planned for 2009.

*Mrs. Snežana Bačlija
The Youth Dialogue Programme
Program Director Serbia*

Study visit program organized by European Movement - "Welcome to Germany".



In the organization of the German Embassy in Serbia, the European Movement in Serbia, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Bavarian Academic Center for Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe (BAYHOST) and five German political foundations – Friedrich Ebert, Konrad Adenauer, Friedrich Naumann, Heinrich Boll and Hanns Seidel – the board member of the Youth Dialogue Program, **Mr. Vanja Milanović**,

participated in the study visit to Germany in November 2008. On that occasion he visited Berlin, Potsdam, Munich, Regensburg and Nurnberg, where he had the opportunity to meet with numerous youth, governmental and non-governmental organizations from all over Germany. During the study visit in Berlin he spent time at the German Bundestag, where he was engaged in discussions with several members of the German national parliament. The program **Welcome to Germany** was organized during the German presidency of the European Union in 2007. This two-week program was initiated based on the idea that "first hand" experience would substantially increase the evident lack of knowledge about the EU among young generations in Serbia. The first week of the study visit was organized in Berlin



where participants were introduced into the political spectrum and economic system of both Germany and the EU. Each foundation, visited during this period, organized high quality educational programs, presenting a broad range of political views in today's Germany. The second week, organized in Bavaria, was focused on an introduction to the German educational system and meetings with German students.

*Mr. Vanja Milanovic
Project manager*

International Security and NATO - Jagello 2000.



Jagello 2000

Mr. Srdjan Vezmar – Executive director of YDP, took part in programme called "International security and NATO". It was held in Prague in the period from November 2 till 9, 2008. and organized by the Jagello 2000. The aim of this project was to provide participants from Serbia, with an orientation into recent developments in NATO concerning the relationship between NATO and

the EU, and an insight into the Czech experience with NATO and EU membership as well as Czech current domestic and foreign policy.



Meeting at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Participants had exclusive opportunity to meet high ranking political practitioners, military representative as well as leading academics and to hear their opinions as well as to discuss some interesting issues.



Meeting at British Embassy in Prague

Participants also had opportunity to visit Tactical Air Base in Čáslav, the Institute for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Prevention in Píbram.



The programme was supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.



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Partner organizations:

- The Center for Regionalism;
- Civic Dialogue Initiative;
- NGO Fractal, Beograd;
- ELSA Novi Sad;
- ELSA Mitrovica;
- Media Pulse, Leposavic;
- NGO Zenit, Prizren;
- NGO Ligo Lex Legis, Pristina;
- NGO Konak, Orahovac;
- Communication for Social Development, Gracanica;
- NGO Future without fear, Strpce;

The Fred J. Hansen Summer Institute on Leadership and International Cooperation



In July 2008, Director for international relations of The Youth Dialogue Programme, **Mr. Davor Jancic**, participated in the three-week Hansen Summer Institute on Leadership and International Cooperation, organized by San Diego State University.



The program was realized thanks to the generous support of Fred J. Hansen Foundation from San Diego. During this program, he attended a number of lectures on peaceful conflict resolution and methods of negotiation and he participated in several practical simulations of leadership skills of presentation and communication. main goal of the program was to create a network of young future leaders from developing and post-

conflict countries and to lay the basis for furthering peaceful coexistence and cooperation by instilling the global spirit of interethnic understanding. The participants visited many youth, non-governmental and charity organizations, such as: Tariq Khamisa Foundation, International Rescue Committee, Reality Changers, Junior Achievement, and so on. A reception was organized at the San Diego City Hall and the Office of Mayor, Mr Jerry Sanders, as well as at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice at University of San Diego.



Very informative was the visit to the border between the United States of America and Mexico, which was comple-

mented by a lecture on US immigration policies and border issues. Perhaps the most inspiring was the celebration of American Independence Day at Coronado Island, which was aggrandized by the performance of more than 150 orchestras and other bands and groups.

During this program, Mr. Davor Jancic gave a presentation on the history of Serbia from the earliest days to the latest events in the Western Balkans, including Serbia's EU integration and the resolution of the status-related crisis in Kosovo.

A special part of the lecture was devoted to presenting The Youth Dialogue Program, its past activities and future projects.



*Davor Jancic
Director for international relations
The Youth Dialogue Programme*

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