

# governmentdonor*dialogue*

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A Joint Effort of the Donor Technical Secretariat  
and the Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination

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Photo: Government-Donor Roundtable held on 14 November 2008

## Government-Donor Round Table

On 14 November 2008, the Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination (DSDC) in cooperation with the Donor Technical Secretariat (DTS) held a Government - Donor Roundtable attended by Government Ministers and senior donor representatives. The Deputy Prime Minister, Genc Pollo, who chaired the roundtable, presented an overview of the progress towards the EU and NATO integration process, and pointed out issues related to the process of donor co-ordination and further steps to be taken for the implementation of Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Accra Agreement for Action. Minister of European Integration, Majlinda Bregu presented issues relating to the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, IPA programming and the need to strengthen co-operation on financing SAA related priorities.

The Director of the Aid Co-ordination Unit in the DSDC, Valbona Kuko spoke about the implementation of the Integrating Planning System and on the results of 2008 DAC Survey on Monitoring the Aid Effectiveness in Albania. She spoke about the need to adopt a joint strategy and a harmonized action plan for improving donor co-ordination and aid effectiveness. Donors appreciated Government efforts in NSDI implementation and revitalization of the sector working groups. The roundtable discussed issues related to ensuring a stable public administration, the need for facilitating the process of VAT reimbursement, increasing the role of sector working groups and the need for identifying the priorities in order to meet the targets set out in the Paris and Accra agendas. For more information about the roundtable, please click [here](#).

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## Consultation of the NSDI Progress Report 2006-2007

On 4 and 6 November 2008, the DSDC held two roundtables for civil society and the donor community to discuss the NSDI Draft Progress Report 2006-2007. The document which is prepared by the DSDC in cooperation with the line ministries and other main institutions focuses on the progress made on the indicators defined in the NSDI, and on the further steps that are needed to be undertaken. Participants in both meetings appreciated the major work involved in the preparation of this draft and made recommendations on important sectors. Both events not only offered valuable suggestions to be reflected and included in the report, but also gave orientations and concrete ideas on dealing with the problems of the NSDI implementation. The draft of NSDI Progress Report 2006-2007, now sent to the Parliamentary Commissions for further comments and discussions, will be published in December 2008.



Photo: Consultation of the NSDI Progress Report with the donor community



Photo: National Conference on Information Society on 20 November 2008

### National Conference on Information Society

The EU through its Partnership with Albania, is supporting the Government with the encouragement and strengthening of ICT. A part of this support is given through an EU funded project Support to the National Agency on Information Society (NAIS) whereas 800,000 Euros are already invested in ICT related hardware for all public administration while 200,000 Euros is being used for assistance in ICT legal framework. On 20 November 2008, a National Conference on Information Society was held in the presence of the Prime Minister Sali Berisha. Prime Minister Berisha said that the Government's hard work on improving the ICT situation had lead to a major increase in internet access. Initiatives such as providing internet at every school and promoting on-line services for tax administration, procurement and the civil registry help make Albania more effective in ICT. The Head of the EU Delegation, Ambassador Helmut Lohan stressed the importance of ICT for governance, economic growth and EU integration.

### Switzerland and the Netherlands support One UN Programme

The One UN Coherence Fund, which supports the One UN Programme in Albania, recently received funding

from Switzerland (CHF 1,500,000) and the Netherlands (900,000 Euros). International donors channel resources to this fund without earmarking to specific programmes, for joint allocation by the Government and the UN Team so that a more strategic allocation of funds according to national priorities is made possible. The joint monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the One UN Programme provide the Government and donors with a more comprehensive picture of UN activities in the country. Switzerland already supported the One UN Programme in 2007 with a single contribution for supporting change management and gender equality. Based on the strong commitment to UN Reform and on its bilateral programme in Albania, Swiss Cooperation is now supporting the One UN programme with a second, multi-year contribution to the Coherence Fund. The Joint Programme on Gender Equality is one of the several programmes that recently received support from the One UN Coherence Fund. It aims to support the implementation of key laws to ensure gender equality including: assistance to the Government in the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in Society; support in improving the co-ordination, collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data; support to the implementation of domestic violence legislation, focusing on improving the state's response to female victims of violence, the introduction





Photo: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation Country Director, Daniel Züst and the Ambassador of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands, Mr. Henk van den Dool signed the agreement to support the One UN Programme with the UN Resident Co-ordinator, Gulden Turkoz-Cosslett, respectively in December 2007 and October 2008



of gender responsive budgeting; and ensuring the participation of women in elections. These key objectives of the Joint Programme are expected to provide an important contribution to increase women rights in Albania.

### **Germany supports water supply and wastewater sector**

During Prime Minister Sali Berisha's visit to Germany in October 2008, a Loan and Project Agreement was signed between KfW, Albania and the Water Supply Company Korca worth 15 million Euros for the fourth phase of the Water Supply and Wastewater Disposal in Korca. After the drinking water supply of the population had been ensured for the population in the first two phases, the third and fourth phase will focus on measures to collect and treat waste

water and rainwater from Korça City. Activities have included improving collection levels, the introduction of a computerised accounting system and the improvement of customer relations through information campaigns. The projects will contribute towards reducing health risks and protecting natural resources. Korca water works currently has the best performance indicators within its sector and has been noted as a good example of sustainable business practice.

The Intergovernmental Agreement between Germany and Albania was signed during German – Albanian Intergovernmental Negotiations which took place in Tirana in October 2008.

### **German financial cooperation in the energy sector**

On 4 October 2008, KESH/OSSH, the new electrical substation in Gjirokastra, financed in the framework of the Electricity Supply in Southern Albania project, supported by the German Financial Cooperation, was inaugurated. The ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Berisha, the German Ambassador to Albania Bernd Berthold and the Director of KfW Office Tirana. The new electrical



Photo: The Intergovernmental Agreement between Germany and Albania was signed during German – Albanian Intergovernmental Negotiations which took place in Tirana in October 2008.

## **Spanish support for Gerdec affected communities**

Recently the Spanish Government, through AECID, committed 180,000 Euros to implement some short term support for the Gerdec area. Some of the actions identified during the August mission were: the reforestation of the forestry belt around the military area, supporting the waste management system in the villages, support in the greening of the road infrastructure as well as some support to the education system. The activities will be implemented in 2009 by the Regional Environmental Centre Albania. The support is planned in co-operation with central and local government which is expected to have its own active contribution and support to this intervention.

## **Italy organises the First Media Tour on Development Projects**

On 26 November 2008, the Italian Office for Development held a Media Tour on Projects and Programmes. The tour aimed to provide Albanian media direct information about Italian-funded projects, by providing the possibility to visit them and to directly speak with beneficiaries. A group of journalists visited the infrastructural work of Lapraka, the social educational Centre Primavera, the landfill in Sharra, the electrical substation in Kashar and the Lushnja – Fier road.



» substation has multiplied the energy conversion and distribution capacity of the power supply system, resulting in improved reliability of supply and lower technical losses. This is a joint project between KESH and the Government of Albania, co-financed by the German Government through KfW to the value of 34,57 million Euros. The project includes the rehabilitation of two hydropower plants over the Bistrica river, and the building and extension of transmission and distribution networks for Saranda and Gjirokastra. These projects have stabilized the power supply system in southern Albania. The energy sector is a pillar of the German Financial Cooperation with Albania with the German Government committing some 100 million Euros. KfW Development Bank supports the sector with a broad range of activities. These include the connection of Albania to the European high-voltage-net via a 400 KV line from Tirana to Podgorica, the expansion of energy production, transmission and distribution in southern Albania (Saranda-Gjirokastra) and the creation of a guarantee facility for investments in small hydropower plants. With the signing of two Financing Agreements for expert services between KfW and OST Sh.a (that have been approved by the Government) the basis for the projects 400 kV Transmission Line Tirana Pristina/Kosovo and the 110-kV Circuit Line South Albania has been laid. The grants enable OST to continue project preparation. The projects aim to expand the transmission capacity of the cross



Photo: Ceremony of signing two financing agreements for expert services between KfW and OST Sh.a

boarder high voltage line between Tirana and Kosovo by adding a 400 kV overhead line and energy transformation and by distributing the capacity of the power supply system in southern Albania.

### OSCE Presence hold conference on challenges facing Albanian media

The OSCE Presence in Albania marked World Television Day with a conference on media challenges and Albanian television on 21 November 2008. The event brought together the Albanian media community to discuss freedom of expression, editorial independence, communication between media stakeholders, self-regulation, digitalization and labour relations. Officials of state institutions in charge of media development, such

as the National Council of Radio and Television and the Assembly Media and Education Committee, as well as from the OSCE Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media participated in the event. The conference was part of a project to support the creation of a media self-regulatory body which is being implemented by the OSCE and the Tirana Office of the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, financed by the European Commission Delegation in Albania. On 23 November 2008, the OSCE held another conference focusing on the work and functions of the Albanian Public Broadcaster.

### Celebrating the completion of the Strengthening Public Expenditure Management Project

When public expenditure planning doesn't run smoothly, people don't get the services they need. The building of new schools, hospitals and roads can only go ahead if money has been set aside to pay for them. The Strengthening Public Expenditure Management project [SPEM], supported by DFID, Swedish SIDA and the Netherlands Embassy, set out to tackle the problem. The six-year programme introduced new budget planning software for all ministries, as well as new management structures with clear performance and accountability measures, designed to meet EU standards. The project has been implemented by a consortium of three companies – REPIM,

Photo: The Chair of the National Radio and Television Council, Mesila Doda, Director of the OSCE Media Freedom Representative's Office, Roland Bless and the Head of the OSCE Presence, Ambassador Robert Bosch at a conference on 21 November 2008. (OSCE/Fabiola Haxhillari)







Photo: Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, Ambassador Robert Bosch and Deputy Prime Minister Genc Pollo address the launch of Albania's new electronic National Register of Citizens on 27 November 2008. (OSCE/Fabiola Haxhillari)

Oxford Policy Management and Intech+. It has helped to reinforce the Government's public finance reforms particularly in the implementation of its Integrated Planning System, which is aimed at ensuring that it has budgets that are clearly linked to its policies. The project is due to end in December 2008. To mark the occasion of the completion of the project a press conference was organised on 25 November 2008 where present were the Minister of Finance, Ridvan Bode, Deputy Minister of Finance, Sherefedin Shehu; British Ambassador Fraser Wilson, Head of Swedish Office in Tirana, Elisabeth Stam, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Henk Van Den Dool and SPEM Project Director, Martin Johnson. "Albanian citizens and their elected representatives now have clear physical indicators of what the Government intends to achieve in terms of service delivery over three years using the money that the National Assembly votes to it. And the Government has a stronger system of performance management that ensures its policies can be achieved in full and on time with good value for money." – said Fraser Wilson, British Ambassador.

For more information about the event, please click [here](#).

### Albania launches new electronic National Register of Citizens

On 27 November 2008, the Ministry of Interior, the OSCE Presence in Albania and the Delegation of the European Commission, presented the new National Register of Citizens. Starting in December, all civil status offices will start using the new electronic Register. Assistance in modernizing the civil registration system was made possible through an EU-financed project (2.5 million Euros), with additional funding from the OSCE and the US Government. Statistic Norway also contributed to the development of the new system. The Head of Presence, Ambassador Robert Bosch, said the true test for the new system would be the accurate day-to-day implementation by the civil status offices. "We acknowledge and commend the great amount of work carried out by the staff of the Ministry and the General Directorate of the Civil Status in introducing the new Register,"

## Decentralisation and regional development sector:

### Promoting development in northern Albania - a joint Swiss-Austrian initiative

From 19 November to 3 December 2008, in the spirit of Paris Declaration and based on achievements and confidence built up through ongoing projects in northern Albania, Switzerland and Austria jointly combined efforts for a feasibility mission, in Shkodra, Kukës, Dibra and Lezha. The mission assessed the status of relevant strategies, the link with the decentralisation process and existing regional development with a focus on future EU challenges. Potential future joint programme were identified, with intervention at central and regional/local level. The overall goal of such a programme would be to support sustainable economic and social development in northern Albania, with a focus on enhancing the access to economic opportunities and social services. This mission was the first step in the drafting terms of reference to the final debriefing with 36 interested stakeholders. Based on the final feasibility study, Austria and Switzerland are intending to start a participatory planning process in the spring of 2009.

he said. Luigi Brusa, Chargé d'Affaires of the European Commission Delegation to Albania, added: "A sound civil registry and address system is the cornerstone of reliable voters' lists and of reliable documents. Sufficient human and financial resources must still be allocated to ensure coordination and sustainability of this key European Partnership priority." During the event, the OSCE's Technical Assistance Project launched a public awareness campaign that aims to inform citizens about the new system and stress their responsibilities to register civil status acts on time. The introduction of the National Register of Citizens is the final step in establishing a modern civil registration system. The software that forms part of the system was developed with support from the Austrian Ministry of Interior.



## OSCE Presence and People's Advocate project to support detainees' rights

On 18 November 2008, the OSCE Presence and the People's Advocate launched a project to install 70 sealed mailboxes in every detention site in the country, enabling detainees to file complaints about perceived violations of their rights. "The overall goal of the project is to protect the human rights of people in detention," said Ambassador Robert Bosch, the Head of the OSCE Presence. "I encourage the Albanian authorities to take an active interest in the issue of prison reform and the rights of detainees in particular, by taking all the necessary steps to support their rehabilitation and reintegration into Albanian society." The People's Advocate is legally required to guarantee protection mechanisms for detainees, as provided by the UN Convention against Torture. The mailboxes will be opened only by the Office of the People's Advocate. The project was launched at the Vqarr Detention Centre by Minister of Justice, Enkelejd Alibeaj, Ambassador Bosch, and the People's Advocate Emir Dobjani.

## OSCE and UNECE hold workshop on public access to environmental information

Helping countries in South-Eastern Europe implement a UN Convention on public access to environmental information and justice was the aim of a two-day regional workshop for senior judiciary officials was held in Tirana on 17-18 November 2008 under the auspices of the OSCE and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The event brought together senior judges from South-Eastern Europe with leading international experts. Participants exchanged views, shared experiences and discussed the application of the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. The workshop aimed to help enforce the Convention, particularly provisions meant to give the public access to justice in environmental matters.



Photo: Sector Working Group on Decentralisation issues held on 7 November 2008

### Sector working groups on decentralization and local governance and water and sewerage

On 7 November 2008, the Sector Working Group (SWG) on decentralization took place to support the implementation of the crosscutting Strategy on Decentralization and the related action plan. It was co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Ferdinand Poni and Rahel Boesch, Deputy Country Director, Swiss Cooperation and SWG Donor Bilateral focal point. Mr Poni presented Government priorities as well as the progress concerning decentralisation reform. Mrs. Boesch gave an overview of donor projects involved in the decentralisation reform and pipeline projects. While the DSDC representative, Oriana Arapi provided information about the role of the DSDC in co-ordinating donor efforts. The meeting discussed the terms of reference for the group and defined the next steps. For more information about this SWG, please click [here](#).

On 11 November 2008, the SWG on Water and Sewerage was held in order to provide a forum for a dialog on issues in the water and sewerage sector. The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Minister of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication, Stavri Ristani and co-chaired by Christopher Opancar, Attaché for Technical Cooperation of the Austrian Embassy as the bilateral focal point for this SWG. Mr. Ristani and the director of the General Directorate of Water Supply and Sewerage (GDWSS) Mr. Taulant Zeneli spoke about the priorities and investments in the water and sewerage sector. The need for stronger harmonisation among numerous actors in this field, alignment with the strategic approach of the country and the need for new aid modalities

such Programmes, Sector Wide Approaches and Budget support were underlined. Minutes and presentations from this meeting can be found [here](#). The next SWG will be held in January 2009.

### Technology transfer and organization of producers in Arboriculture

On 26 November 2008 a national seminar entitled Fruit producers, major players in the performance of branches was held in Tirana. It was organized by ADAD, a young producer organization focused on the tree, Mountain Area Development Agency (MADA) and FERT an organization of cooperation of French professional organizations operating for over 10 years in Albania with the support of the French Embassy in Tirana. The seminar provided an assessment of the "Initiatives Mountain" led since 2003 by FERT and MADA and its aimed to present the results achieved in arboriculture, to identify new issues and define priorities for a possible new phase. The few hundred participants at the event included producers, officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, bilateral co-operation agencies and other programme partners. Two major lessons were identified during the interventions: Significant results in the hundred members of ADAD from 3 regions of Kukes, Dibra and Korça, both among nurserymen (enlargement of the range and development of production) than among tree growers (mastery of new techniques





for conducting orchards, increased quality and productivity, organization first nuclear producers around office supplies, counselling, storage, processing, ect.) A low impact on the regional level, only 5% of orchards planted thanks to state subsidies to meet these improvements and on the eve of the entry of Albania in the European Union, only 1 % of apple orchards are organized and conducted in ways competitive in terms of quality and profitability, further technical advice and support investment is insufficient and inadequate, and finally, the endorsement is dimensioned and incapable of absorbing the next tripling of production, In conclusion, three main recommendations made by ADAD were discussed: developing tools and devices to support financial investment, ADAD involvement in the definition of the specifications of parcels eligible for state subsidies and ADAD contribution in accompanying actions, advice and training of producers and technicians. More information about this event has been posted [here](#). To know more about ADAD and FERT, please contact: Liliane ISAKU and Hafuz DOMI at: [adad@gmail.com](mailto:adad@gmail.com) and Jean Charles DERONGS at: [j.c.derongs@fert.fr](mailto:j.c.derongs@fert.fr)

### Government officials visit German Institutions in project *Advise on IPS*

From 23 to 27 November 2008, a team from the DSDC and MoF visited Germany invited by the GTZ Headquarters and accompanied by the Director of Co-ordination Office in GTZ for Albania, Ulrike Gántzer-Sommer. The Delegation, headed by the Director of Aid Coordination Unit at the DSDC, Valbona Kuko met with senior officials in the main German Institutions operating in Albania. During this visit meetings took place at GTZ offices for the Mediterranean, Central Europe and Asia, at KFW headquarters, Ministry of Economic Cooperation, BMZ, Eastern German Economy Commission, German Association on Foreign Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Albanian-German Economic Association. The Delegation discussed about the technical



Photo: On 24-26 November 2008, a delegation from the Albanian Witness Protection Directorate attended a three-day Witness Protection study visit at the Italian Central Protection Service (Criminal Police Central Department)

and financial support that the German Government is giving to Albania and the volume of assistance which will reach the amount of 90 million Euros for 2008-2009. KFW project proposals will be focused more on energy efficiency, and water and sewerage system in Shkodra and other cities of the country. Meanwhile in December 2008, GTZ will discuss with the European Commission and the Austrian Development Cooperation three new EU/IPA projects that will be implemented by GTZ.

### Regional Conference on European Integration held in Zagreb, Croatia

On 17 and 18 November 2008 a regional conference on EU integration was held in Croatia. It was supported by GTZ and saw the participation of countries involved in SAA. The aim of the event was to exchange experiences between countries of the region in the process of EU Integration. The main issues discussed were related to the implementation of Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA) and the measures taken in the fight against corruption. The delegation from Albania was headed by the Deputy Minister of Integration, Albert Gajo and was composed of officials from the Ministries of Integration, Finance and DSDC. Mr Gajo led the panel on the Implementation of the SAA by Albania. Members of the delegation gave an overview of the challenges for the setup of Decentralised Implementation System and spoke about the progress with anti-corruption visa liberalisation reforms. The delegation proposed to inform the EU structures about the conclusions. The conference was an instrument that countries will use to strengthen regional co-operation. With the support of GTZ, the conference will be organised again in 2009 in Macedonia and in 2010 in Albania. ■

## OSCE Presence organizes witness protection study visit

On 24-26 November 2008, an Albanian delegation composed of four Serious Crimes Court prosecutors and five members of the Albanian Witness Protection Directorate attended a three-day Witness Protection study visit to the Italian Central Protection Service. Organized by the OSCE Presence, the visit focused on the Italian legislative and institutional framework for the protection of witnesses and collaborators of justice, as well as operational practices of the Italian Central Protection Service. The study visit aims to contribute to the drafting and adoption of better legislation in this area, as well as of more effective institutional and operational practices, resulting in enhanced practical implementation of the Witness Protection Law. The lectures, which were delivered by senior officials of the Italian Central Protection Service, included: typologies of protective and assistance measures; competence of regional protective organs; as well as aspects of co-operation with justice authorities and protection in locality of origin.

Photo: DSDC team during their meetings with German officials



## In-country Missions

### Italy

In November 2008, a joint mission from WHO and the Istituto Zooprofilattico delle Venezie took place within the scope of the project Strengthening Food Control Institutions, financed by Italy through a grant of 2,000,614.00 Euros. The mission supported the start-up of the inception phase of this initiative that will be implemented by the WHO. The aim was to support the capacities of national authorities to control the quality and safety of the food chain. In November 2008, an expert from IUCN visited Albania in the framework of the Italian-funded Programme of Assistance to the Ministry of the Environment, Forests and Water Administration. The project, whose aim is to strengthen the operational capacities of the above-mentioned Ministry, will be financed through a grant of 2,200,000.00 Euros and implemented by IUCN.

the progress related to the Social and Vulnerability Assessment and worked with the World Bank-hired law firm on the legal due diligence.

A World Bank Mid-Term Review Mission for the Health System Modernisation Project visited from 17 to 23 November 2008. The aim was to conduct a Mid-Term Review of the project, and identify measures to strengthen the performance of the project.

A World Bank supervision mission for the Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Project and proposed Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option visited from 17 to 19 November 2008. The main aim of the first mission was to insure that all effectiveness conditions are met so that the project can become effective by the end of November 2009. The aim of the second was to advance preparation of the project, including updating the

Ministry of Finance on current status and planned preparation activities, discussion of the likely impact of the global financial situation on the project, discussion of the project development objectives.

A World Bank mission for the Albania Institutional and Governance Review took place from 10 to 21 November 2008. The aim was to collect data and consult with relevant interlocutors from the Government, international development partners, experts and civil society for the preparation of an institutional and governance review.

A World Bank supervision mission for the Water Resource Management Project took place from 19 to 29 November 2008. The aims were to review the project activities towards the achievements of the project development objectives and to finalise the project activities and the resulting re-allocations between components to maximize the impact of the project by the closing date of 30 June 2009. ■

### World Bank

Doing Business Reform Mission to Albania took place from 24 to 26 November 2008. The aim was to determine the progress in the implementation of the action plan agreed with the Government in March 2008 as well as to agree on the next steps. The main topics discussed were the areas of starting a business, dealing with construction permits, employing workers, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and closing a business.

A World Bank Supervision Mission for the Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Clean-up Project took place from 11 to 22 November 2008. The mission met with Government officials and project staff, travelled to the southern coast to meet with the beneficiaries, focused on

## governmentdonor*dialogue*

As of October 2008, the UNDP is the current Chair of the Donor Technical Secretariat.

Any comments regarding Government-Donor Dialogue (both positive and negative) are strongly encouraged – and we promise to print all such comments received!

### Want to contribute?

If you would like to contribute, send your text to the Donor Technical Secretariat (DTS) Office ([nevila.como@aidharmonisation.org.al](mailto:nevila.como@aidharmonisation.org.al)) by the 1st of every month. An ideal word count for submissions is around 100 words.

### Frequency

Each edition will be sent to you on the 15th of every month.

### Who are the donors in Albania?

There are over 40 donors operating in Albania. To find out who they are please click [here](#).

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STUDIO GRAFICE  
ELI KONGO [ekongo@icc-al.org](mailto:ekongo@icc-al.org)

