

donordialogue

ISSUE No. 12, Monthly E-briefing - November 2007

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

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Minister of Integration Ms.M. Bregu and Deputy Prime Minister Mr. G. Oketa

National Strategy on Development and Integration

The public consultation draft of the National Strategy on Development and Integration (NSDI) was launched by the Deputy Prime Minister Mr. G. Oketa in a press conference on October 20. This has initiated a round of consultations, which consisted of the following activities:

Three thematic workshops, one per strategic priority: European and NATO Integration (October 30); Economic and social development (November 6); Democratisation and the rule of law (November 13). These workshops were supported by GTZ and had the participation of different interest groups.

Two *group-specific* workshops: for the Donor community that was held on November 19 and was attended by Development Counsellors and a selective set of advisers from various technical assistance projects; for civil society that was held on November 23 and was attended by representatives of each Advisory Group that supported the

preparation of sector and crosscutting strategies and by representatives of nationwide NGOs. These workshops were supported by DFID.

Four regional workshops: in Lezha (November 9), Pogradec (November 14), Fier (November 15), and Peshkopi (November 21). These workshops were supported by the UNDP and SNV.

As of October 17, a series of ten TV debates are being broadcast on public television every Wednesday at 8.45 pm. The first seven debates feature a sector theme and have been recorded in different cities across Albania. The last three will focus on the overall strategic priorities of the NSDI and will be recorded in Tirana. The Government, the opposition, technical experts and local community representatives are taking part in the debates.

A closing conference will be held in mid December to launch the NSDI.

In this issue

- 1 National Strategy on Development and Integration (NSDI):**
- 2 ONE UN Programme**
- 3 External Assistance Orientation Document**
- 3 2008 DAC Survey**
- 3 First Test of New Procurement System**
- 4 Fourth ECA Education Conference**

Integrated Planning System Immediate Phase (IPS)

External Assistance Orientation Document

The DSDC has continued to work on the External Assistance Orientation Document. Some further consultation with Ministries has taken place to help to justify the orientation within sectors and the projects proposed for particular attention. The DSDC have been analysing past trends in external assistance, the priority needs identified by NSDI and the current programming directions of donors. This provides a basis for future orientation across sectors, both for external assistance and for the early stages of the budget cycle, which are about to start. Some informal discussions have taken place with donors and a working draft will be shared with key partners during the beginning of December.

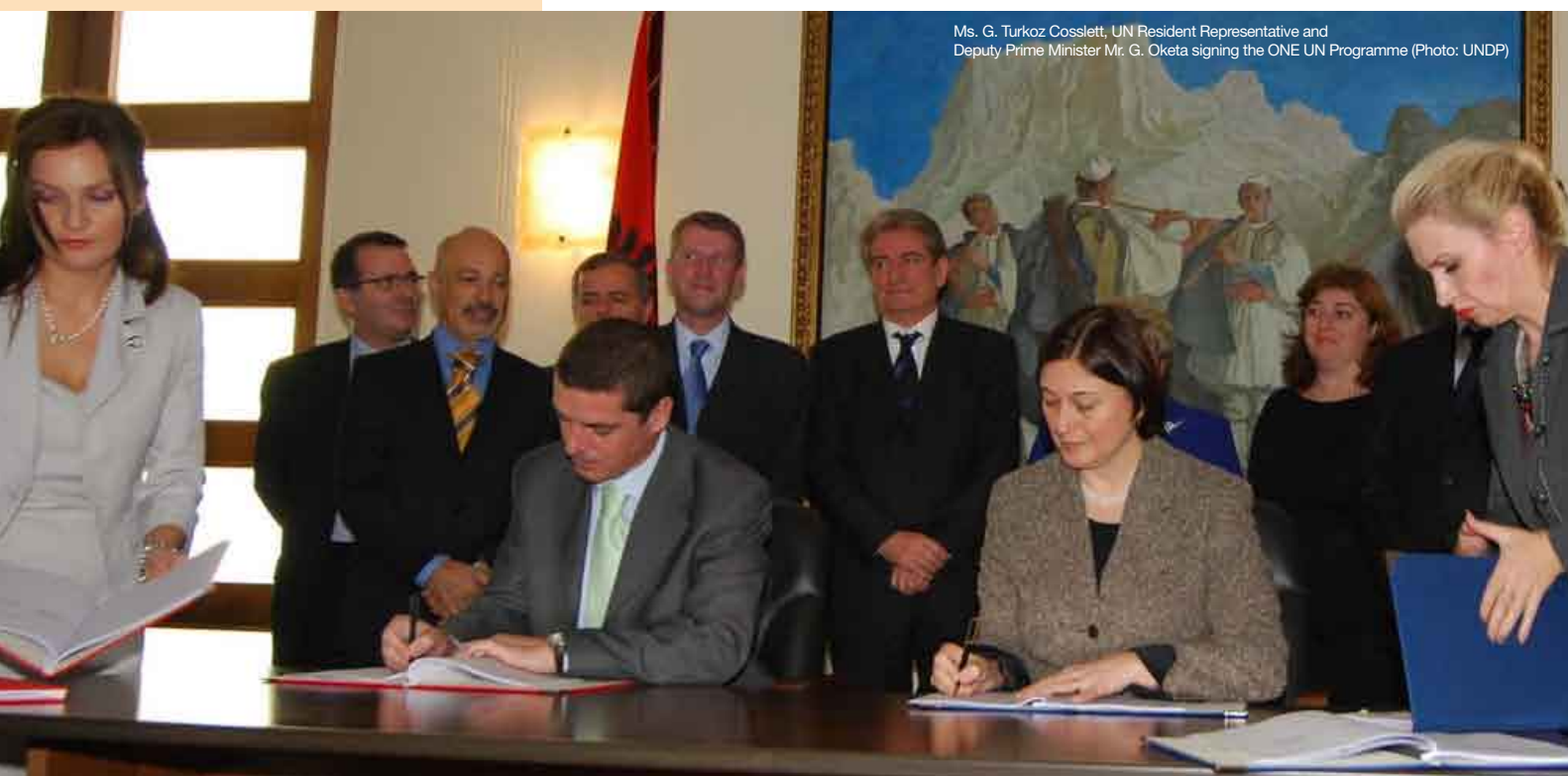


The UN Team (Photo: UNDP)

ONE UN Programme

The Government of Albania and the United Nations signed the One UN Programme on October 24. The objective of the Programme is to better support Albania in achieving its goals as expressed in the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU, national priorities expressed in the NSDI and the IPS, and programmes of international partners. Led by the Government of Albania and building on strengths of participating UN

Agencies, the One UN Programme aims to maximize the UN's impact in five main areas: more transparent and accountable governance; greater inclusive participation in public policy and decision-making; increased and more equitable access to quality basic services; regional development to reduce disparities; and environmentally sustainable development. Albania is one of eight countries piloting UN reform at the country level.



Ms. G. Turkoz Cosslett, UN Resident Representative and Deputy Prime Minister Mr. G. Oketa signing the ONE UN Programme (Photo: UNDP)

Sector Related Activities

Anti-Corruption

USAID/OSCE Support Regional Parliamentarians Fight Against Corruption:

MPs from the parliaments of: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Romania, took part in a two-day conference with the international chapter of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) and formed the first regional GOPAC chapter, the South Eastern European Parliamentarians Against Corruption (SEEPAC). Prime Minister S. Berisha, the Assembly Speaker, J. Topalli and US Ambassador J.L. Withers II gave the opening remarks. Two former U.S. congressional representatives, J. Moody and R Franklin were also present.

GOPAC is an international network of parliamentarians dedicated to good governance and combating corruption throughout the world.

Business Registration

300 Businesses Per Week Registering at New One-Stop Shop Service Windows: Businesses across Albania are lining up to legally register their new and existing businesses. To date the National Registration Centre has registered 1,667 new businesses, completed 796 changes in business registration data, and is now averaging registrations of over 300 businesses per week. In addition to the NRC headquarters in Tirana, service windows have opened in the Municipalities of Tirana Durrës, Elbasan, and most recently Shkodra, with four more windows expected to open in November (Gjirokastra, Fier, Kukës, and Vlora). In the coming months, the project will assist the NRC to develop the "Apply Online" feature and e-signature recognition features for the NRC website.

First Test of New e-Procurement System a Success

On 12 November, four international

energy firms logged onto the new e-Procurement System at the Albania Public Procurement Agency website and submitted their bids electronically – in tandem with paper bids—in response to a solicitation from KESH. This competition marks the first live electronic bidding under the new e-procurement system developed through Albania's Millennium Challenge Threshold Agreement. The solicitation was for the purchase of Albania's 2008 energy imports. With this successful test, the Public Procurement Agency should be well underway to being able to begin fully electronic procurements by 1 December. e-Procurement should increase market competition, reducing by 5% to 25% the prices paid by the Government for goods and services procured.

Business Development

OSCE Presence and Albanian organizations host regional workshop on attracting investment

A regional workshop on encouraging business development took place on October 17 in Tirana. The Albanian version of the OSCE Best-Practice Guide for a Positive Business and Investment Climate was launched and discussed at the event that included senior central and local government officials and business associations from South-Eastern European countries. The workshop was organized by the OSCE Presence, the Centre for Research and Development and the Albanian Agency for Business and Investment.

UNDP Albania in cooperation with Vodafone Albania and Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo, organized a panel discussion on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on October 30 – as part of the Global Compact, an initiative spearheaded by the United Nations, supporting fundamental social values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment, and anti-corruption. The forum brought

Monitoring Paris Declaration

2008 DAC Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration

In line with the Paris Declaration's commitment, Albania has officially accepted the invitation to participate to the next round of monitoring which is scheduled in early 2008. The results of the survey will provide an important contribution for assessing progress at the Third High Level Forum (HLF-3) to be held in Accra, Ghana from 2 to 4 September 2008, and even more importantly, the survey will contribute to improvements in the way aid is delivered in Albania. The survey will be conducted in the first quarter of 2008. The Government is providing OECD/DAC with the names of the National Coordinators who will manage the Survey and the Donor Focal Point who will coordinate donor inputs at the country level.





Minister of Education and Science Mr. G. Pollo, the Prime Minister Prof. Dr. S. Berisha and World Bank Country Manager for Albania Ms. C. Nuamah. (Photo: World Bank)

» together representatives from the business community, the Government, the academic community and the media. It aimed to raise the overall awareness of CSR in Albania; inform stakeholders, the Government and the media on their role in promoting CSR; and increase knowledge and engagement of the business community in CSR practices. Currently 21 companies and organizations in Albania are members of the Global Compact.

On November 5, the Board of Directors of the Italian Cooperation has approved the revised project “Support to the Albanian Small and Medium Enterprises through the creation of a credit line and correlated services”. The revision was carried out by the Italian Cooperation Office in Tirana and the Department for Small Business of the Ministry of Economy Transport and Energy. The revised project is in the amount of 30 Mill Euro soft loan. The programme aims at underpinning the effort of Government for the development of the private sector in Albania through: the establishment of an SME Credit Line to be disbursed by the local Albanian banking system for approximately 25 Mill Euro, and the establishment of a Loan Guarantee Scheme for 2.5 Mill Euro. In addition, 1.8 Mill Euro will be granted to the Government to provide it with technical assistance and provide the drafting of the related legislation.

Education

“The Missing Link: Rethinking the Role of Technical Vocational Education in Upper-Secondary Education”

On 24 to 26 October the World Bank and the Ministry of Education and Science hosted the fourth Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Education Conference “The Missing Link: Rethinking the Role of Technical Vocational Education in Upper-Secondary Education”. The Conference aimed at to providing a learning forum to policy makers and education experts from the ECA Region to explore, together with World Bank staff and selected international experts, different options for reform of upper-

secondary and technical vocational education. The Conference had the participation of approximately 150 people, including senior policy makers from ECA ministries of education, representatives of education project management units, education agencies and NGOs, academics, international experts and World Bank specialists. The participants, involved in the design and implementation of education projects and programs in the ECA region, were able to share their experiences and learn from each other.

On October 23, Western Union, the Ministry of Education and Science, and UNDP Albania announced the successful completion of a joint project in support of the e-School Programme, which brings computer laboratories to public schools. Western Union provided support to five public high schools in different regions of Albania with the installation of five computer laboratories, and Internet connectivity for two years. The e-School programme, initiated by the Government in 2005, and implemented by UNDP Albania, is supporting the Ministry of

Education to provide computer labs to all primary and secondary schools in Albania.

At the end of October, the Italian NGO CIES hosted the ceremony of the finalisation of the project “Intervention in favour of children under risk of school abolishment in Romanat & Valias zones” created by the NGO itself with the contribution of the Italian Development Cooperation. The intervention aimed at analyzing possible solutions for this issue. One of the project objectives was

to involve the families of these children at risk of school drop-out through awareness raising activities. For the development of the project activities two centres have been created near the schools of Romanat and Valias.

Energy

On November 7 the first meeting of the Steering Committee on Italian Cooperation activities in the energy sector was held. The Committee was established following an agreement between the Italian Government and the Albanian Government in order to coordinate the activities of the Italian Cooperation in Energy sector. It is designed to foster collaboration among parties and ensure efficiency in the implementation of Italy-funded projects. The Italian Cooperation is currently funding two major Programmes, at the value of 93 Mill Euro, with the aim to strengthen KESH management and organization and to upgrade transmission and distribution networks. An action plan will be prepared to address the most urgent issues regarding the Italian contribution to the restructuring of KESH and the strengthening of the energy sector. This action plan will be monthly verified by a Technical Committee composed by representatives of Italian Cooperation, KESH, (TSO), as well as representatives from TERNA and AEM companies (that are offering technical assistance to KESH and TSO). The Technical Committee will submit a detailed report to the Steering Committee of its next meeting.

Justice and Home Affairs

The European Assistance Mission to the Albanian Justice System (EURALIUS), a CARDS 2002 project, funded entirely by the European Union and implemented in a consortium of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Justice as the lead partner and the German Federal Ministry of Justice, will be completed by 15 November. However, the tender for the follow-up Mission EURALIUS II is close to its

completion and it is expected that there shall be an immediate continuation of EURALIUS II without any time gap. In addition to pursuing the same objectives as EURALIUS I, the work scope of EURALIUS II will also encompass Criminal Justice – an area to be taken over from PAMECA.

OSCE Presence trains Albanian police in interview and investigation techniques

On October 22, the OSCE Presence in Albania completed the training of 162 mid-level police officers from 12 police directorates on interview and investigation techniques. The training programme was developed in collaboration with the Police Academy of the Albanian State Police, the Police Assistance Mission of the European Union to Albania (PAMECA) and the International Crime Investigation Training Assistance Programme (ICITAP). It focused on the training of mid-level police officers who are currently conducting interviews in Police Directorates. The OSCE Presence in Albania and the United States government provided the financial resources for the programme, which consisted of a series of four-day training courses taking place across the country over the past two months.

OSCE Presence publishes handbook for victims of domestic violence

As part of the Women's Access to Justice Project, the OSCE Presence published the handbook "Seeking protection from domestic violence: A Handbook for Victims and NPOs". The handbook aims at raising awareness on domestic violence and presents the new law "On Measures against Violence in Family Relations" that entered into force on 1 June 2007. The handbook provides practical guidance to victims of abuse and NPOs on the procedure for filing requests for civil protection orders, and contains information on Albanian organizations providing psycho-social and legal support in domestic violence cases.

OSCE Presence encourages law enforcement co-operation in fight against trafficking and organized crime

The OSCE Presence facilitated a discussion forum in Shkodra on November 14 and 15 on enhancing co-operation among police, prosecutors and judges in the fight against translational organized crime. The event was attended by Albanian and Montenegrin experts. On December 12, focal points from the two countries will meet with the OSCE Presence experts in Vienna to present a final paper on good practices, which

OSCE Presence assists the work of the police in Albania with training and expertise. (Photo: OSCE/Jack Bell)





Handbook on Domestic Violence, published by the Presence, which provides information to victims and NGOs on how to deal with domestic violence issues.

will be made available to all OSCE participating States.

UNODC opens refurbished Border crossing facility

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Albania has opened the refurbished vehicle examination facility at Qafe Thana Border Crossing, a primary gateway between Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The refurbishment has been carried out under UNODC Project – “Strengthening of Enhanced Border Control Capacities and Criminal Justice Response to Fight Illicit Trafficking and Organized Crime in Albania”, funded by the Government of Italy and assisted by the European Union Customs and Fiscal Assistance Mission to Albania. The investment offers a multidisciplinary nature not only for the friendly working environment and detection techniques, but also for the fact that it is being used by well trained border police alongside with their customs colleagues on an interagency basis. Present at the ceremony were the Deputy Minister of Interior, Deputy Minister of Finance, General Director of Customs Administration, Adviser to UN Resident Coordinator in Albania, of local government representatives, customs and police authorities from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,

UNODC and IOM support citizen access to services

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) support citizen access to services in cases of trafficking and for those requesting information on legal migration. UNODC and IOM assisted the Office of the Deputy Minister of Interior with setting up the National Trafficking Help Line. On October 16, Deputy Minister of Interior Ms. I. Zajmi gave an interview in which she talked about the helpline.

Civil Registration

OSCE Presence organises a conference on the modernisation of the Address and Civil Registration Systems in Albania. On November 15, through its technical assistance project, the OSCE Presence in Albania held a conference on the modernisation of the Address and the Civil Registration Systems. The aim was to inform interested institutions on the ongoing and future developments regarding the address and civil registration systems, as foreseen in the project of the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The MoI is implementing the project with the Presence with funds from an EU technical assistance project and additional funding from the OSCE Presence and the US Government. Within the framework of the project of the MoI additional assistance is provided by Statistics Norway, funded by the Norwegian Government.



People in queue, waiting to receive identification documents at a civil service office in Tirana. The OSCE Presence in Albania is assisting the Albanian authorities computerise the fundamental registry books as well as establish address systems. (Photo: OSCE/J.Karapataqi)

Health

During November, Italian Cooperation took two important initiatives in the Health sector: A study unit/centre was established in Tirana in order to provide technical assistance and support to the Ministry of Health. It will be formally inaugurated by the Italian Minister of Health, Ms. L. Turco on November 19.

In the framework of the Programme “Rehabilitation of five polyambulatories in Tirana, Korca, Gjirokastra and Peshkopi”, on the first week of November started restoration work for the Poliambulatories Tirana 2 and Tirana 3. This programme includes a loan of 5 Mill Euro financed by the Italian Cooperation.

Social Inclusion

Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disability: On November 23, the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF) will hold the first national conference to discuss the Government’s progress in implementing the National Disability Strategy. Through USAID’s Supporting Persons with Disabilities Programme, ADRF has monitored the GoA’s progress and organized a six-city public awareness campaign to inform the public and local government officials of the Strategy and Action Plan. For more information, contact ADRF at www.adrf.org/al or visit USAID’s website at www.usaid.gov/al.

Transport

On November 8, the Italian Cooperation held a meeting about the project “Design, construction and supervision for the rehabilitation of the road Shkoder -Hani Hotit” in order to prepare for the preliminary presentation of the project. Representatives of the Transport Project Implementation Unit, projectors of this work and local authorities participated, providing useful observations for the development of the project.

Tourism

Tourist operators sign Code of Conduct for Protection of Children from Sexual

Exploitation: On November 19, some two dozen tourist operators signed a Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism. The event was held by the OSCE Presence, together with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Tourism.

Austria and UNDP cooperate to educate tourism industry on tourist guiding standards in Europe

A workshop was held on October 30 at the Tirana International Hotel on Tourist Guide standards and classification for the tourism industry, funded jointly by UNDP and the Austrian Development Cooperation. A senior expert from the Vienna Chamber of Commerce, Dr. K.C. Vögl, delivered the presentation, covering topics from the proper definition of "tourist guide", the Austrian model for training, licensing and regulation, and the emerging European Standards tourist guides and training. Dr. Vögl is the author of the input paper for the aforementioned European Standard and is a member of the working group for drafting the European Standard.

Thirty-four participants attended this workshop, including the Austrian Ambassador to Albania, H.E. Mr. Klaus Derkowitz, officials from the Ministry of Tourism, the National Tourism Organization, international organizations working in tourism, such as SNV, the World Bank, OSCE Presence and USAID/EDEM, representatives from the private sector, the National Association

of Tourist Guides in Albania (NATGA), the Alpine Federation, the University of Tirana, Environmental Centre for Administration and Technology, Butrint National Park and a number of museums. It also had the participation of a representative from KulturKontakt Austria. Dr. Vögl met with Ministry of Tourism staff to make further suggestions for amendments to the recently approved regulation on tourist guides.

Parliament

Support to Albanian Parliament

OSCE Presence launches project to support Assembly's role in EU integration On October 24, the OSCE Presence held a joint conference with the Albanian Assembly to mark the start of a project to strengthen the oversight role of the Assembly in the EU integration process. The Conference, organized in co-operation with the European Movement, an international civil society organization, supported a new project that aims to enhance the role of the Assembly in the EU Stabilization and Association Process. Participants discussed a gradual increase of the parliamentary oversight in the EU Stabilisation and Association process, and the role of the European Integration Assembly Committee. Participants included the Assembly Speaker, J. Topalli and other MPs. It will be followed by a national tour by the Assembly Committee on European Integration, during which its members will discuss challenges of the integration process with citizens.

In-Country Missions

Two experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs General Directorate for Development Cooperation (MAE/DGCS) visited Albania on mission from 15 to 19 October. The aim of the mission was to define the strategic course and some preliminary details for the new phase of the ArtGold programme, refinanced by the Italian Cooperation with a grant at the amount of 2 Mill Euro. The Programme aims at fostering regional development through a better planning at local and central level and at promoting decentralised cooperation initiatives.

On October 22 an Italian expert from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs General Directorate for Development Cooperation (MAE/DGCS) visited Albania, with the mission of providing assistance for the Water Supply and Sewage Systems sector. The expert will follow sector programmes until the end of the year.

A mission from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs General Directorate for Development Cooperation (MAE/DGCS) responsible for the management and distribution of scholarships' offered by the Italian Government, visited Albania from November 1 to November 3. The mission analysed the effectiveness of the scholarships for Master programmes and post graduate courses in Italy attended by Albanian young people and assessed the effective re-insertion of these youngsters into the Albanian society.

Swiss Cooperation Office in Albania: Two External Evaluation (EE) missions took place in Puka and Pogradec in November. The first EE mission focused on assessing the achievements of the current third phase of AGROPUKA agriculture project (supported by the Swiss Government with a non-reimbursable grant of CHF 1.5 million) against its objectives as well as on analysing the potentials for scaling it up towards a joint programme on rural



Speaker of the Assembly, Ms. J. Topalli, Deputy Head of OSCE Presence, Mr. A. Finnen and Head of the EC Delegation in Tirana, Ambassador H. Lohan discussing on the role of the Assembly in the integration process (Photo: OSCE/F. Haxhillari)





development and strengthening the livelihoods and value chain approach with other donors including the development of synergies and cooperation with the Sustainable Agriculture Support in Albania (SASA), which is also supported by the Swiss Government with a non-reimbursable grant of CHF 2.1 million.

The second mission assessed the achievements, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the modernisation of the Pogradec water supply project, which is supported by the Swiss Government with a non-reimbursable grant of 7.2 million Euro.

A World Bank Supervision Mission for Natural Resources Development Project visited from 5 to 15 November in order to: review all aspects of project implementation with project's counterparts and co-financiers, assess the current status of project implementation, and address any possible need to restructure the project as result of under performance.

A World Bank Supervision Mission for Transport Project and a Preparation Mission for the Secondary & Local Roads project took place from 5 to 14 November in order to undertake a supervision mission for the Transport Project, to continue the policy dialogues in the sector and to undertake a preparation mission for the forthcoming Secondary and Local Roads Project.

A World Bank Natural Gas Mission took place from 31 October to 2 November. The World Bank is promoting regional gas trade and infrastructure developments in the Balkans and it is currently in the process of issuing the final report on the South East Europe (SEE) Gasification Study. The aim is to identify gas infrastructure projects that are economically and financially viable. Albania has recently signed a Ministerial Declaration with the governments of Croatia and Montenegro for the preparation and implementation of the Ionian-Adriatic Gas Pipeline (IAP). As such, the World Bank team would like to

discuss opportunities to support Albania in facilitating the IAP project and in developing a domestic gas market.

A World Bank Technical Supervision Mission for the Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Clean-Up Project (APL-1) visited from 22 October to 1 November aiming at improvement of the management and conservation of Albanian Coastal resources. It reviewed all components under the ICZMP project.

A World Bank mission for the Education Excellence and Equity Project (EEE-P) took place from 22 to 30 October in order to support the Ministry of Education and Science team on implementation of Information & Communication technology activities of EEE-P, and discuss the plans for the next year.

Two World Bank follow-up missions for the Albania Investment Climate Assessment (ICA) and Business Environment and Institutional Strengthening (BERIS), projects took place from 19 to 26 October in order to follow-up on the progress of the

ICA and BERIS projects. In the context of the ICA, the team updated the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy and ALBINVEST on the progress of the study, notably concerning the ongoing enterprise survey and the preparation of enterprise case studies. In the context of BERIS and in order to follow-up on the implementation progress, the team met with the project implementing unit (PIU) and the institution of the Metrology, Standards, Testing, and Quality (MSTQ).

A World Bank Pre-appraisal Mission for the Proposed Second Development Policy Operation (DPO2) took place from 8 to 19 October in order to review with the Government team and other stakeholders progress against DPO2 policy matrix laid out since the July preparation mission, and review broader developments on the macroeconomic and structural reforms. The Mission also assessed progress in activities financed under the Policy and Human Resources Development (PHRD) grant and agreed on steps to resolve any institutional bottlenecks in implementation.

donor*dialogue*

As of 1 October 2007, the World Bank took over from the OSCE Presence as the Chair of the DTS Secretariat.

Any comments regarding 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) by the 1st of every month. An ideal word count for submissions is around 100 words.

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