

# governmentdonordialogue

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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: The conference on Launching the Crosscutting Strategy of Science and Innovation 17 June 2009 (photo: DSDC)

## Launching the Crosscutting Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation

The Conference on launching the Crosscutting Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation was held in Tirana on 17 June 2009, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, Genc Pollo. The aim of this conference was to present and consult the Strategy with partners and different stakeholders. The Italian Ambassador, Saba D'Elia and UN Resident Co-ordinator, Gulden Türkoç-Cosslett, congratulated the Government on the consolidation of such an important document for the development of science and technology. Co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), assisted by the United Nations Educational,

Scientific and Culture Organisation (UNESCO) and its consultants, the Strategy is cross-sectoral in nature and based on consultations and meetings with representatives of a broad panel of ministries and the scientific community. The Crosscutting Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation (SSTI) is the first document of this kind that comprises the long-term platform of development, research and innovation in the country for the period 2009–2015. An effective STI policy is necessary to complement other measures supporting economic modernization. The Strategy is already approved by the Council of Ministers.

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## IPA 2010 priority list of projects and Macroeconomic Fiscal Framework approved in SPC meetings

Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) held two meetings during the month of August 2009. The 29th meeting of SPC that took place on 19 August 2009 discussed the list of priority projects to be submitted for funding under the IPA 2010 programme. Prime Minister Berisha reiterated the importance of IPA assistance for Albania by mentioning that for the three-year period 2009-2011 it will allocate an amount of 269.4 million Euro. The work for the preparation of IPA 2010 programming and identification of priority projects has started early on May 2009 coordinated by the Ministry of Integration in cooperation with DSDC and line ministries. The strategic Planning Committee approved in principal the most priority projects which will be further discussed and agreed during the next negotiation with the EC which will take place on September-October 2009. Meanwhile the 30th SPC meeting held on 26 August 2009 approved the revised Macroeconomic and Fiscal Framework 2010-2012. The revised framework consists in updating macroeconomic and fiscal indicators during 2008 and for the first seven months of 2009, as well as updating the forecast for the macroeconomic and fiscal indicators.



Photo: Inauguration of the Joint Border Crossing Point in Muriqan/Sukobin, constructed through a fund of 1.1 million Euro of the European Commission, on 18 June 2009

### EC facilitates the movement of goods and persons between Albania and Montenegro

The Joint Border Crossing Point in Muriqan/Sukobin, built through a 1.1 million Euros fund from the European Commission, was inaugurated on 18 June 2009. This is the first border crossing point in the Western Balkans and will encourage trade and integration between Albania and Montenegro, and assist the countries in their fight against organised crime, corruption and illegal migration. Albania and Montenegro also signed an agreement to simplify the operation of this joint border crossing point as regards police and customs control, and phytosanitary and veterinary inspections. As border activity between both countries is jointly regulated, results will come in the form of trade and economic development. The facilitation of the movement of goods, services and persons enabled by harmonised and faster procedures at the border will foster economic and social exchange. During the ceremony, the Head of the EC Delegation to Tirana, Ambassador Helmuth Lohan, stressed the political significance of this initiative, saying that this joint border crossing point "is an initial step to replicate between two potential candidate countries the vote of confidence that EU Member States have given each other by eventually abolishing their borders altogether to allow the free movement of goods and

services, persons and capital. As Albania and Montenegro run this border crossing point harmoniously, as they jointly enforce the same standards of border control and management, they build confidence in each other opening the way to further cooperation." The Joint Border Crossing Point forms part of a network of 12 border crossings between Albania and its neighbours that are being built with EC funds totalling 5.4 million Euros.

### ADC workshop to discuss future areas of cooperation

Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) office in Albania is in the process revising its current country strategy 2006-2009. In this context a workshop was held on 8 July 2009 to present and gather comments for the input papers prepared by ADC in its focal areas: Water & Sanitation, Vocational Education and Training, Gender Equality, Tourism, Good Governance and Civil Society strengthening. New areas such as waste management and social inclusion may be looked at for potential increased engagement. The workshop contained several presentations by the ADC as well as from panellist recommendations. Officials from the Austrian Foreign Ministry, line ministries, DSDC, local government, civil society and bilateral and multilateral donors took part in the workshop.



### One UN Governance Programme Working Group

An extended Programme Working Group (PWG) meeting was held on 25 June 2009 with the participation of UN Agencies, DSDC, Ministries and NGOs to strengthen ONE UN Programme efforts towards social inclusion and poverty reduction. The PWG was opened by the UNDP Country Director, Norimasa Shimomura, who said that the aim was to discuss the recommendations of the Social Inclusion expert mission and identification of the path forward for UN work in the area of social inclusion. Current efforts support the Government and other stakeholders in measuring social exclusion and identifying vulnerable groups and causes of their vulnerability, designing, implementing and monitoring appropriate social inclusion strategies. It was noted that UN support for social inclusion should: focus on vulnerable/excluded groups in line with the national cross-cutting strategy on social inclusion.

### The meeting of Inter-ministerial Committee for Visa Liberalization

The Inter-ministerial Committee for Visa Liberalization chaired by Prime Minister, Sali Berisha held a meeting on 29 July 2009 to approve the Visa Liberalization Action Plan and define tasks for drafting the response to the EU as regards the report on the implementation of the roadmap for visa liberalization. The meeting discussed also issues relating to the implementation of the strategy on organized crime, focusing on a better co-ordination between institutions. The lack of indicators for measuring anti-corruption, organized crime and trafficking was also addressed. The anti-discrimination law is already prepared by civil society and is now in the process of being finalized. The full country report relating to visa liberalization will be sent to the EC in October 2009.

### Meeting of the Health Forum

The health sector working group was held on 14 June 2009. The issues discussed related to: (1) Human Rights

to Health where a UN Human Rights adviser presented the topic of health as a fundamental human right and the role of the government followed by discussions that stressed how laws that regulate health care system might violate the right to health; (2) Counselling Services under the new HII funding scheme, and (3) Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals in Albania. It was noted that the Ministry of Health would like to keep the same targets as currently stated for Albania for MDGs on health. It was felt that there was a need to clarify the definition of Infant Mortality Rate and Child Mortality Rate as the targets currently do not agree with MDG indicator definitions.

### Workshop on launching the Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Project (DRMAP)

On 21 July 2009, the Ministry of Interior held a one-day workshop on launching the Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Project attended by line ministry officials, World Bank representatives and employees from involved national and international institutions. The Senior Country Operation Officer at the World Bank, Greta Minxhozi, highlighted the importance of this project in enabling Albania to better deal with disaster situations. The aim of the Project is to strengthen institutional capacities: to reduce Albania's vulnerability to the natural and manmade hazards;

and to limit human, economic, and financial losses due to these disasters. The five components of the project are: 1) the disaster risk management and preparedness; 2) the strengthening of hydro meteorological services; 3) the development of a building code in order to reduce risks from seismic activities; 4) the catastrophe insurance to households and small and medium enterprises and the project management costs, monitoring auditing etc.

### Spain supports the strengthening of Agricultural Extension Service in the region of Dibra

On 17 July 2009, the Spanish Ambassador, Manuel Montobbio and Minister of Agriculture, Jemin Gjani, inaugurated the equipment in the Centre of Agricultural Information in Dibra. Spain has supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection in the project Strengthening of Agricultural Extension Service in the region of Dibra developed by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation in co-operation with Regional Directorate of Agriculture. Experts in the region received technical assistance in order to adopt their capacities. At the closing ceremony in Dibra, Ambassador Montobbio said that this project contributed to the strengthening of the Agricultural Extension Service in Dibra in order to effectively deal with the needs of local farmers. He said that this project was in line with another project implemented

Photo: A view from the workshop on launching the Albania Disaster Risk Mitigation and Adaptation Project (AL-DRMAP)



## Meeting of Development and Integration Partners (DIPs)

A meeting of the Development and Integration Partners (DIPs) took place on 18 June 2009, the current DTS Chair and Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Netherlands, Ardi Stoios-Braken, introduced participants to the joint DSDC and DTS work in identifying the areas for common action to meet Paris Declaration targets. The Director of Aid Coordination Unit, Valbona Kuko provided an overview of the draft Harmonization Action Plan (HAP) that was the result of this joint work. The aim is to improve the efficiency of aid management, based on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The drafting of such documents reinforces the DSDC's role in aid co-ordination. In the framework of joint work, a Procurement Assessment Mission for conducting an OECD/DAC procurement assessment took place on 25-28 May 2009. The assessment will be held during the last half of 2009 by a joint assessment team led by the Government with support from external consultants and donors. Mrs. Kuko also introduced the External Assistance Progress Report 2000-2008 that provides an overview of donors' activities. The report is prepared in the framework of continuous joint efforts to improve co-ordination and effectiveness of external assistance and synchronize the work of donor and Government agencies.



Photo: The ambassador of Spain in Albania and Minister of Agriculture during the inauguration of the equipment in the Centres of Agricultural Information in Dibra region.

in Shkodra. In this way, he said Albania continued to make progress in the modernization of its public institutions and in its approach to European standards in the area of rural development. Minister Gjana said that this project was further evidence of Government goodwill to increase the capacities of Agricultural Extension Service, influencing directly in the rural development of the country. He expressed gratitude to the continuous efforts of Spain for contributing in this sector.

### EBRD supports the electronic communications sector

A major technical assistance project in the electronic communications sector is now well into its second year having kicked off in May 2008. Funded by the EU and managed by the EBRD, this project has brought in a part-time team of senior advisers who have helped the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunications formulate a draft policy paper for the sector that is currently out for public consultation and ready for finalisation in the autumn. Most of the team's work has been devoted

to supporting the new Electronic and Postal Communications Authority (AKEP) in implementing the Electronic Communications Law. Much training has been provided in up-to-date EU regulatory techniques that helped AKEP achieve some successes. The five Parliament-appointed members of AKEP's Governing Council have full powers to direct this independent authority and the EU/EBRD team will continue to support them in bringing AKEP's professional practices into line with the law and EU expectations. The team will also propose improvements to the law to strengthen its alignment with the EU acquis.

### Inauguration of "ÇLIRIM 2" Kindergarten in Berat

On 1 June 2009, in Berat City, the project of rehabilitation and equipment of Çlirim 2 kindergarten to benefit 200 children was concluded. The inauguration ceremony was held during the Children Festival. The Mayor of Berat, Fadil Nasufi, Deputy Prime Minister, Genc Pollo, the Co-ordinator of TİKA Tirana Programme Coordination Office, Ali Özgün Öztürk, the Director of Çlirim 2 kindergarten, Monika Cana, the President of Albania-Turkey Friendship Foundation, Nazmi Starova, directors of some other kindergartens in Berat and many other officials and citizens were present. Mayor Nasufi thanked TİKA for their support in rehabilitation and



Director of AKEP's Market Regulation Department, Altin Rrapaj; senior legal expert from Development Dynamics Ltd, Dieter Kronegger; and team leader from Development Dynamics, Mr Richard Harris





Photo: Inauguration of Çilirmi 2 Kindergarden supported by TIKa

equipment of Çilirim 2 kindergarten and for their support to the Centre for the Mentally Disabled Children that was inaugurated last year. Deputy Prime Minister, Pollo expressed his appreciation for TIKa's projects focusing on assistance on education services. TIKa Tirana PCO Coordinator, Ali Özgün Öztürk, said that TIKa was undertaking various technical assistance projects to enhance Albania's economic, social and political development.

### Roundtable on Fighting Corruption by Anonymous Information

On 22 June 2009, Government officials, members of the judiciary and prosecutors, donor agencies and international experts participated in a roundtable organized by EURALIUS to speed up the fight against corruption. EURALIUS Expert on Criminal Justice, Marina Thode, and Christoph Kulenkampff, a consultant to the Albanian Ministry of Justice, former State Secretary and General Prosecutor, Land of Hesse made

presentations regarding the German experience on how to fight corruption by anonymous information.

### CEB representative meets with the DSDC Director

On 30 July 2009, the Director of DSDC, A. Vokshi met with the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), Country Manager for Albania, Cristian Tabacaru to discuss co-operation and the further activity of CEB. CEB is a multilateral development bank contributing to strengthening social cohesion in Europe. It represents a major instrument of the policy of solidarity in Europe as it uses its resources for the financing of social projects in order to help member states achieve sustainable and equitable growth. Albania accessed CEB on 24 June 1999 and the first projects followed in 2000. In Albania, CEB is the biggest contributor in education and health, but also active in spatial planning and employment. Until now, they have funded 10 projects with a total fund of 119 million Euros.

### Visit of JICA representatives

A roundtable meeting was held on 16 June 2009 by the DSDC and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), with the participation of line ministries. It was chaired by Director of Aid Coordination Unit at DSDC, Valbona Kuko and Deputy Chief Representative of JICA Balkan, Ken Yamada. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss possible projects from line ministries to be financed by JICA. JICA has expressed interest in the development of the private sector through promoting Small and Medium sized Enterprises in the areas of education, agriculture, medical care as well as tackling environmental problems in Albania and the region. The project application process is ongoing and will be concluded and presented to JICA office in Rome by August 2009.

### Children from Gërdec Spend Summer Holidays in Switzerland

52 underprivileged children from Gërdec and Marqinet villages as well as 6 disabled children from Tirana are invited, along with 12 teachers to spend their summer holidays at the famous children's village in Trogen in eastern Switzerland from 28 July to 11 August 2009. This is the third time that Albanian youngsters have been invited free of charge to spend their vacation in Switzerland. The Swisscor Foundation ([www.swisscor.ch](http://www.swisscor.ch)) each year holds a holiday camp in Switzerland with medical care



Photo: Roundtable on Fighting corruption by anonymous information, held on 22 June 2009 (Photo/EURALIUS)



Photo: View from picturesque Pestalozzi Children's Village Trogen-Appenzell, where 58 children from Gërdec and Tirana spent their fortnight summer holidays

that welcomes underprivileged children, disabled or abandoned boys and girls, aged between 9-14 years old, and helps victims of crisis or even war. In 2009 they invited 58 children from Albania, together with 20 children from Bosnia-Herzegovina. The programme includes focusing on multiculturalism, a wide range of activities: sports, games, culture events, boat trips on Lake Constance, exchanges with Swiss school classes. This fortnight includes the airfares, all food and accommodation, excursions, medical and accident insurance, and specialised supervision. Together with help from the Swiss Embassy in Tirana on arranging the Schengen-visa and logistical support from the Swiss Cooperation Office Albania, the Swisscor Foundation is spending CHF 175'000 on the Albanian children alone.

### World Bank Regional Coordinator for Southeast Europe, visits Albania

Mrs. Jane Armitage, the Country Director and Regional Co-ordinator for South East Europe visited Albania from August 2-6, 2009. The aim of her visit was to assess the progress in implementation of World Bank-financed projects. She discussed the macroeconomic and fiscal situation, the impact of the international financial crisis and the World Bank programme for the next four years with senior Government officials. During her visit, she met with Prime Minister Sali Berisha, Minister of Finance, Ridvan Bode, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Albania, Fatos Ibrahim, other government officials, project beneficiaries, private sector and civil

society representatives. She commended the Government on the good progress in implementing bank financed projects and expressed appreciation for the strong co-operation. They discussed the priorities for the upcoming Country Partnership Strategy 2010-2013. She stressed some of the challenges facing the economy, in particular the current fiscal performance, including the budget deficit and debt levels, reduction of the credit to the economy, and current account deficit. She noted the importance of a prudent fiscal policy particularly in the context of the international financial crisis and the diminishing trend observed in remittances. She visited and met project

beneficiaries in Tirana, Fier, Vlora, Jale and Berat on projects on Education Excellence and Equity, Avian Influenza and Human Pandemic Preparedness and Response, Power Sector Generation, Energy Community of South East Europe APL 2 on Transmission, Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Clean-Up, Secondary and Local Roads. She also visited the Intensive Care unit at the Mother Teresa Hospital, the Virology Laboratory in the Institute of Public Health and the proposed site of the Animal Health Laboratory, all of them funded under the Avian Influenza and Human Pandemic Preparedness and Response project.

## governmentdonor*dialogue*

As of April 2009, the Netherlands 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)) or the Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination (DSDC) ([agerxhani@km.gov.al](mailto:agerxhani@km.gov.al)) by the 5th of every month. An ideal word count for submissions is around 100 words.

#### Frequency

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