



POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

On 29 June, Kosovo officially became a full member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). Membership is assessed to be an important step for development of Kosovo and the possibilities that Kosovo will take loans supported by the IMF and WB, as well as to be offered expertise for development of the economy, infrastructure and society.

During the reporting period, the majority of 325 suspended Serb police officers have returned to work after 16 months of refusing to take orders from Kosovo authorities who declared independence last year. On 24 June, the first generation of 106 Kosovo Security Force (KSF) graduated. Representatives from NATO and KFOR, Minister of the KSF Fehmi Mujota, KSF General Sylejman Selimi and his deputy General Rrahman Rama attended the ceremony. During the reporting period, the North of Kosovo remained a problem area with Serb protestors blocking the roads leading to Border Points 1 and 31 as a protest against new customs measures introduced by the EULEX mission. EULEX officials strongly condemned these actions and stated that they have a mandate to fulfil their duties throughout Kosovo. They also reminded that new measures established at Gates 1 and 31 resulted in a sharp decrease of smuggling which is to the benefit of all communities living in Kosovo.

On 16 June the President of the Republic of Kosovo, Fatmir Sejdiu, after concluding three rounds of consultations with the political parties and consulting with all the agencies involved in the organising of the elections has decided that the next local elections in Kosovo should take place on November 15. Announcing his decision, President Sejdiu expressed hope that Kosovo Serbs are going to participate in the elections, as it is important for the people to understand that they should be able to decide for themselves by electing their legitimate representatives.

ECMI KOSOVO PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Consultative Council for Communities

Three important events were recently conducted with the CCC. On Tuesday, 16 June ECMI Kosovo organised a workshop for members of the CCC at Villa Gërmia in Prishtinë/Priština. The aim of this workshop was to initiate the drafting of the CCC Work Plan through the conduct of a SWOT analysis. On 29 June, ECMI Kosovo supported the CCC Secretariat in organising the CCC's fourth plenary meeting. The agenda of the meeting centred on reviewing the preparations of the Ministry of Education, Science and Education (MEST) for the beginning of the school year 2009/2010, with a special emphasis on education in the languages of Kosovo's communities. On 30 June, ECMI Kosovo organised a workshop for members of the CCC in Reçanë/Rečane in the municipality of Prizren. The aim of the workshop was to set the

strategic objectives for CCC's annual working plan. These activities



CCC Workshop in Reçanë/Rečane

concluded the current project in support of the start-up operations of the CCC, funded by the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany approved the 'Institutionalisation of the Consultative Council for Communities in Kosovo' project. The project will enable ECMI Kosovo to continue its support for the CCC, focusing on two priority areas: the establishment of Community Representative Organisations and functional



support and capacity-building for the CCC. The project will start shortly and continue through December 2009.

Support to the Office of the Prime Minister

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo finalise the concept of a conference entitled Community Engagement and Institutional Cooperation, which will be held on 25 July in Pristina, Grand Hotel. Representatives of key institutions for communities will present their strategies and discuss mechanisms of cooperation.

The drafting of the study on the employment of minority communities' members in public institutions and publicly owned enterprises is ongoing and expected to be completed by mid-July 2009. ECMI Kosovo and the Office for Community Affairs will then present the findings and recommendation in a workshop.

Progress have been made in the operationalisation of the Office fund. The Office for Community Affairs, supported by ECMI Kosovo, has been designing a strategy for allocation of the large scale cooperative projects and community needs projects funds, which will serve as basis for the 2010 and 2011 budget planning. Regarding the scholarship fund, ECMI Kosovo assisted the Office in designing the programme, which will be implemented by the Office for Community Affairs.

ECMI Kosovo has also been working on the public outreach component of the project, which is the result of all the researches conducted during the project. A publication intended for professionals working on community issues, which will contain information on Kosovo communities and the legal and institutional framework is currently being finalised. In addition, a booklet for communities aiming at raising community members' awareness of their rights and procedure to claim violations has been produced by ECMI Kosovo's consultant, Katherine Nobbs, and will be published current July.

Support to the Decentralisation Process

ECMCI Kosovo has, in cooperation with local Women's NGOs, organised several round tables in the Novobërdë/Novo Brdo, Gračanica/Gračanicë, Fushe Kosove/Kosovo Polje and Lipjan Municipalities. These activities were aimed both at informing women on decentralisation and giving them the opportunity to voice their opinions on decentralisation. The recommendations from these round tables will be published in a short report next month. At the same time ECMI Kosovo organised a meeting with RAE community members on decentralisation in Gračanica/Gračanicë and a meeting with village leaders in Donja Budriça.

UNICEF

Ms. Virginia Stephens has been engaged by ECMI Kosovo for the remainder of the one-year project. Ms. Stephens began conducting the second phase of the project, which includes the drafting of a manual for municipal officials on how to actively promote minority educational rights through service delivery and a guidebook for civil society on lobbying the local government to protect minority educational rights. In addition, Project Manager Kelley Thompson continued meeting with relevant UNICEF partners, specifically Save the Children and Catholic Relief Services to guide the projects implementation.

Other Developments

At the end of June, Aljaž Šetinc completed his internship. ECMI Kosovo would like to thank him for his contribution. At the same time ECMI Kosovo has welcomed Alex Duncombe as a new intern.