



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – August 2011

### Political developments

#### **Border control dispute**

The border control dispute continued during August, with opposing positions of the two main parties involved. While the central-level Kosovo political representatives continued to insist on a solution to the north of Kosovo only in full accordance with the Ahtisaari Package, those of the Serb community in this area continued to express their objections to deployment of Kosovo Customs and Kosovo Police staff at the Jarinjë/Jarinje and Bërnjak/Brnjak border checkpoints.

The Kosovo top political leadership publicly reiterated, on various occasions, their insistence on abolishment of the Serbia-backed parallel structures in the north and compliance on the side of Kosovo's rule of law authorities with their constitutional obligation to establish rule of law in this part of the territory.

There were also calls, by the AAK leadership, on the Kosovo Government to establish an inter-ministerial body geared to improve conditions in the north, in which every government ministry would outline a strategy specific to the north, alongside extra resources in public emergency and security services.

Support to Kosovo's territorial integrity and establishing rule of law in the north was also expressed by political representatives of various countries, both those visiting Prishtinë/Priština and those present in it, such as the Foreign Affairs Ministers of Germany and Turkey, Westerwelle and Davutoglu, the Prime Minister Kosor of Croatia, and the French Ambassador Fitou.

EULEX declared that it continued the investigations and found some proof in connection with the late July death of the Kosovo Police officer at the Jarinjë/Jarinje border checkpoint, in July, stating that it has issued six indictments. NATO reiterated that no further reduction of its KFOR troops shall take place, with COMMKFOR Erhard Bühler stating that the alliance has suspended its previously stated plans for troop reduction.

#### **Kosovo – Serbia talks**

Kosovo stamps were set to be the main topic of discussion in the next round of Pristina – Belgrade talks, planned for September. The EU mediator, Robert Cooper, visited Prishtina in end-August. He met the Deputy Prime Minister Tahiri and other Kosovo political leaders, stating that it is definite

that the dialogue will continue in September.

The UNSG Ban Ki-moon, referring to the situation in the north, appealed the parties to refrain from actions that would undermine the progress achieved through the Prishtina – Belgrade technical dialogue.

#### **Further recognition of Kosovo**

Three African countries, Niger, Guinea-Conakry, Benin and Saint Lucia, in August officially recognised Kosovo as an independent state. In August 2011, a total of 81 countries had recognised Kosovo independence.

#### **Appointments update**

In August, Farid Zarif, a career diplomat from Afghanistan, took up his new role with UNMIK as the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General. In his Security Council address, he underlined that the situation over the Kosovo border dispute has improved, and appealed the parties to avoid a rhetoric that would potentially heighten inter-ethnic distrust and division, also thanking KFOR for their contribution in stabilising the situation and supporting continuation of Pristina – Belgrade talks.

#### **Prosecutions update**

ICTY continued its trial against Haradinaj, with two key witnesses testifying. The ICTY also issued a press release stating that allegations on assassination of potential witnesses of Haradinaj and Limaj cases are untruthful. An indictment was also filed by the Special Prosecution of Kosovo against the former Governor of the Central Bank of Kosovo, Hashim Rexhepi, on charges of corruption and money laundering. EULEX appointed a US prosecutor, John Clint Williamson, to lead investigations into allegations of organ-trafficking concerning Prime Minister Thaçi and other former KLA members in late 1990s.

#### **Other developments**

At the end of August, the Kosovo Assembly MPs voted, in majority, to return the draft-Laws on Hoqa e Madhe/Velika Hoča and the Historical Area of Prizren to the Government, for substantial review. These draft-laws are part of the cultural heritage legal package foreseen by the Ahtisaari's package.

### Legal Aid to Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups

During August, ECMI Kosovo continued with the implementation of the project: 'Enhancing the Positive Impact of the Law for Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups in Kosovo', funded by the EU and managed by the European Commission Liaison Office to Kosovo.

ECMI Kosovo met with representatives of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and the Municipal Office for Communities and Returns regarding a possible case of segregated education in Gjakovë/Đakovica affecting mostly Egyptian children. Moreover, ECMI Kosovo and CLARD have initiated strategic litigation related to a domestic violence case. In this case, a Kosovo court failed to issue the requested protection order within the legal deadline, with fatal consequences for the victim. On 23 August, ECMI Kosovo submitted a letter to the Kosovo Judicial Council requesting action to be taken.

Lastly, legal aid lawyers provided free legal assistance to 51 beneficiaries in 8 municipalities: Gjilan/Gnjilane, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Sкендерaj/Srbica, Prishtinë/Priština, Klinë/Klina, Suharekë/Suva Reka, Leposavić/Leposaviq and Gračanica/Graçanicë.

In August, ECMI Kosovo also started with a project funded by the Office of The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). This project enables us to expand legal aid coverage to four new municipalities: Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Klokot-Vrbovac/Kllokot-Vërboc, Parteš/Partesh and Ranilug/Raniilug. As part of the project, ECMI Kosovo visited these municipalities and reached agreements with them on the provision of office space for legal aid clinics.





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### Consultative Council for Communities

During August, ECMI Kosovo continued with the implementation of the project 'Institutional Support to the Kosovo Consultative Council for Communities 2011', funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

Activities during this period focused on providing technical and legislative support to the CCC Secretariat in giving CCC's input to the draft-Law on Government and Government revised Rules of Procedures. ECMI Kosovo also designed the CCC website, to be launched in September.

ECMI Kosovo also supported the Secretariat to prepare the CCC budget proposal for 2012, submitted to the Ministry of Finance as part of the whole budget proposal of the Office of the President. The project is set to continue with a CCC Steering Group training on "How to Chair a meeting".

### Language Training for Municipal Officials

ECMI Kosovo continued providing Serbian and Albanian language courses to Štrpce/Shtërpçë municipal official. Participants' language skills were assessed and their feedback on course usefulness was gathered through a midterm evaluation and self-assessment.



ECMI Kosovo representatives also met the Municipal Director of General Administration, Mr. Havzi Ahmeti, and the Advisor to the Mayor, Mr. Dalibor Jevtić, presenting the results of three months of teaching. The latter reiterated their satisfaction with and support for the courses.

The project, which foresees provision of regular classes over six months, is funded by the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities.

### Building Sensitivity for Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian Communities in Schools

ECMI Kosovo continued implementing its project aiming at increasing the inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in schools, funded by the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities. Following the June training workshop for teachers and school directors, visits of teachers to the parents of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian pupils were organised in Lipjan/Lipljan and Ferizaj/Uroševac. Teachers in each municipality were divided into groups, each accompanied by a local civil society member.



Altogether, 62 families were visited over four days, in Medvec/Medvece, Magurë/Magura and Gadime (in Lipjan/Lipljan), as well as in Dubravë/Dubrava and Ferizaj/Uroševac). These visits were aimed at increasing awareness among parents on the importance of education for their children and further solidifying teachers' understanding of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and challenges impacting their education.

ECMI Kosovo also drafted a report analyzing the impact of the last year's 'Building sensitivity' project implemented in Prizren, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Gjakovë/Đakovica. The report will be finalized by early September. Visits to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian parents in Obiliq/Obilić are planned for September.

### Improving the Delivery of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Education

In August, ECMI Kosovo started implementing a new, UNICEF-funded, project on "Improving the Delivery of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Education in the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje". This project will support municipal institutions by providing training and support to municipal officials to implement the municipal action plan. It also foresees to assist the establishment of an effectively functioning Task Force on RAE education within the municipal structures.

At the end of the project, the results of the project will be widely shared with relevant public through organization of a conference.

In August ECMI Kosovo recruited experts to assess municipal officials' capacities and needs in implementing the education component of the Municipal Action Plan, as well as to conduct a baseline study to map the current situation in delivery of education to RAE communities; both documents will serve as a basis for future ECMI Kosovo's support.

### Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process

In August, ECMI Kosovo and the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed the contract for implementation of the extended project on 'Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process', funded by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This three-year project will support the establishment of the Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North Municipality, through outreach. It will also support socio-economic development in five new Municipalities (Gračanica/Graçanicë, Klokot-Vrbovac/Kllokot-Vërboc, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Parteš/Partesh and Ranilug/Ranillug), focusing on policy research on socio-economic issues, SME registration and development, tax policy and establishing business associations, the aim being to increase capacities and expertise of municipal structures and contribute to improving inter-ethnic relations by supporting integration of the business community at the central-level business associations and facilitating their access to the Kosovo-wide market.

