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**Consultative Council for Communities in Kosovo Launches Involvement in
Education Process**

29 June 2009



The Consultative Council for Communities in Kosovo (CCC) held its fourth plenary meeting on Monday, 29 June 2009. The meeting was organised by the CCC Secretariat within the Office of the President (OP), supported by the European Centre for Minority Issues Kosovo (ECMI Kosovo). 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. The meeting was attended by CCC members from both civil society and political parties from the Serb, Gorani, Turk, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians communities, as well as representatives from the Ministry for Communities and Returns (MCR), Office for Community Affairs within the Office of the Prime Minister (OCA/OPM) and MEST.

Chairman of the CCC, Mr. Bojan Stojanović, officially opened the meeting by thanking the participants for attending and presenting the agenda. He then gave the participants the opportunity to raise issues among their community in the field of education and to ask questions to Ms. Enesa Kadić from MEST. The participants then raised a broad range of issues that their communities are facing in the field of education, focusing on the following areas: 1) the need to provide positive discrimination to increase enrolment of students from communities at universities; 2) the need to take concrete steps towards the implementation of the 'Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians Communities in Kosovo' and the 'Strategy for the Development of Pre-University Education in Kosovo' and to monitor progress; 3) the absence of opportunities for Roma children to study in Romani and the disadvantage this causes; 4) the need for financial assistance through stipends for poor families to enable to attend school; 5) the lack of adequate textbooks in minority languages, especially Turkish and Bosnian and the need to bring in books from abroad and produce books in nationality related subjects (history, language, music, arts); 6) insufficient opportunities for tertiary education in minority languages, the need for cooperation with universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey and problems for Bosniak students to study in Bosnia and Herzegovina because their travel documents are not recognised; 7) need for clarification on the amount of funds dedicated to community education by MEST and within the Kosovo Consolidated Budget; 8) the need to produce school certificates in multiple languages, at least in the official languages of Kosovo; 9) the need to improve the quality of teaching in community schools through increased training for community teachers and to facilitate the qualification of teachers from abroad; and 10) the need to reconsider the threshold for community classrooms to avoid mixing students of different levels in one class.

Following the questions and issues raised, Ms. Kadić presented the work of MEST on these issues to date and their upcoming plans for the next school year. It was agreed by the CCC

members and Ms. Kadić that ongoing cooperation between the CCC and MEST was important to address all the issues raised. Chairman Stojanović proposed the creation of an education working group within the CCC, which the CCC members agreed to by voting. Members were then asked to propose members of working group, who were confirmed by voting. The resulting membership of the working group on education is: Xhevdet Neziraj (Egyptian Community); Cerim Bajrami (Bosniak community); Murselj Haljilji (Gorani community); Myfera Sinik (Turk community); Kujtim Paçaku (Roma community); Muhamet Arifi (Ashkali community); Stanisa Petrović (MCR) and Bashkim Ibishi (OCA/OPM). Mr. Paçaku, as one of the deputy chairpersons of the CCC, was nominated as chairman of the education working group. The participants then agreed that MEST should select a permanent representative to participate in the education working group, to which Ms. Kadić agreed.

Mr. Stojanović then concluded the meeting by addressing other developments within the CCC. First, he mentioned that CCC Secretary Nafiye Gaş has sent requests to the remaining ministries with a seat on the CCC and they are waiting for confirmation of their representatives. To date, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports has already selected their member. Second, he acknowledged that two members, Mr. Aleksandar Gvozdić and Mr. Nenad Rikalo have relinquished their positions on the CCC and stressed the need to respect their decisions, while taking action immediately to fill their seats to ensure the adequate representation of all communities in Kosovo. He pledged to work with Ms. Gaş and ECMI Kosovo to find a solution to this problem. In conclusion, he reminded the participants of the workshop in Reçanë/Reçane organised by ECMI Kosovo on 30 June to set the strategic objectives for the CCCs working plan and thanked everyone for their participation and contributions the this meeting of the CCC.

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