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Newsletter 2004/II May – September 2004
Association of Local Democracy Agencies
Further news on LDAs' activities on www.ldaaonline.org

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ALDA Activities

1. Proactive ALDA Membership of European Policy Centre

Following the recent decision by ALDA to become a member of the European Policy Centre, a Brussels based EU Affairs Think-Tank, the ALDA Director, Ms Antonella Valmorbida, and Mr Per Vinther met with Chief Executive of the EPC, Mr Hans Martens, on 27 April 2004.

The main purpose of the meeting was to explore ways of ensuring a proactive membership on the part of ALDA and how ALDA could benefit the most from its membership. Invitations to conferences and panel discussions organized by EPC will be extended to ALDA and the LDAs as a matter of course, and ALDA will receive reports of the various events as well as analyses of major developments on the EU agenda.

One interesting possibility would be for ALDA to contribute actively to the new Integrated Work Programme of EPC on "Enlargement and Neighbourhood Europe". This 2004-2005 work programme will examine the EU's relations with its neighbours, incl. the Balkans, paying particular attention to the development of the EU's Action Plans within the Wider Europe policy. The EPC will also monitor the continuing enlargement process. One main theme will be conditionality, e.g. how the EU might make better use of its instruments to promote its goals of democracy and human rights.

It was agreed to organize some time this autumn a presentation of ALDA and the LDAs to the various other NGO members of EPC. Further information about the EPC can be found on www.theepc.net

2. ALDA present at Serbia-and-Montenegro-Meeting in Paris

At the invitation of Cités Unies France, Dorothee Fischer, press officer and joint-project manager of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies, presented the work of the Local Democracy Agencies at a meeting of the French Serbia-and-Montenegro-group in Paris on 14 May. Representatives from various French local authorities were present. All of them have been involved in town-twinning or other co-operations with Serbian or Montenegrin cities in the past four years.

The Serbia-and-Montenegro-group meets annually to exchange their experiences with such town-twinning. The initiative was given impetus by Cités Unies France in the year 2000 to foster the bilateral cooperation between French and Serbian/Montenegrin towns. Up to the year 2000, only four such cooperations had existed, while at present there are more than 14 of them. ALDA made new contacts during the meeting and intends to intensify the involvement of French local authorities in its network.

3. Meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group of Local and Regional Representatives of South-East Europe in Strasbourg

The 6th meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Local and Regional Representatives of South-East Europe was held in Strasbourg on the 24th of May 2004. The working group presented an overview of its ongoing activities.

Among other projects, the preparation of the 5th Forum of Cities and Regions of South-Eastern Europe (11th Economic Forum) which will be organised in Budva (Serbia-Montenegro) from the 11th to the 12th of October 2004 were discussed. Another relevant issue was the announcement of the signature of the statutes of the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South East Europe (NALAS) in Strasbourg on 27 May.

The ALDA President, Mr Gianfranco Martini, informed the members of the Working Group that the Association of LDAs will open an LDA in Mostar (Bosnia-Herzegovina). This new LDA will start its activities in June and the official opening will be organised in October.

4. EU Mayors seminar on sustainable development held in Carlow, Ireland

In partnership with Carlow County Council, the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) organised an international seminar on "Sustainable regions under global rules: Implementing UN environmental standards and EU practices locally" in Carlow, Ireland, on 24 and 25 June 2004. The seminar was the third in the series of EU Mayors seminars in 2004 which aims at making local authorities in the old and new EU member states more aware of the benefits and challenges of EU enlargement.

Twenty representatives of local authorities from the core partner countries of the project, namely England, Ireland, Italy, Poland and Lithuania attended the event in order to exchange best practices in environmental policy. Through this and the other EU Mayors events, ALDA seeks to build up a network of policy experts among local authorities throughout Europe.

In addition to the local representatives, the environmental experts Arnau Queralt Bassa, Assessor for Sustainable Development from Catalunya, Spain, and Elisa Rivera, Administrator of the Council of Europe's Natural Heritage and Biological Diversity Division, gave presentations during the seminar.

More information on the EU Mayors programme including the most important case studies can be found on the ALDA websites dedicated section: http://www.ldaonline.org/12-EUmayors/index_EUmayors.htm

5. Barcelona Conference on local decision-making gathered more than 80 experts

The Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) organised a major conference on "Including civil society in the decision-making process at the local level: a common added value for local authorities in Europe" in Barcelona on 1 - 2 July 2004, which gathered more than 80 experts and representatives from local authorities and NGOs all over Europe.

One part of the conference, which was sponsored by the City of Barcelona, the European Commission and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe, consisted of a round table discussion on "The participation of civil society in the decision-making process: a common European value". Renowned speakers such as Elisabeth Gateau, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Government; Wiggo Lauritzen, Chief Executive, City of Fauske, Norway; Geza Kucera, Mayor of Subotica, Serbia and Montenegro, Lo Bianco Luca, Director of the Department of Economic and Politics, Municipality of Rome, Ezio Beltrame, member of the Government of Region Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy, and Jaume Saura, Director of the Catalan Institute of Human Rights, presented how their local authority or institution contributed to an improvement of the local decision-making process in Europe.

On the basis of an inquiry which had been conducted prior to the event, ALDA had prepared a working paper on local decision-making which served as a basis for the discussions during the second part of the conference. Different working groups debated the topic in more detail and their final results will be published on ALDA's website in the following weeks.

Corruption is not a culture but a system

This is the conclusion that the keynote speaker of the conference, Ronald MacLean-Abaroa, former Mayor of La Paz, Bolivia, and currently working at the World Bank Institute Washington, drew from his experience in the fight against corruption. Starting his political career in 1985, MacLean-Abaroa was elected Mayor of La Paz four times in a row, which makes him the longest democratically tenured Mayor in Bolivia's history. In this period, he changed the whole administrative system in La Paz to tackle corruption which was widespread at the time. Later he became the Minister of Planning and Foreign Minister of Bolivia and founded Transparency International, an international NGO fighting corruption.

MacLean-Abaroa is convinced that corruption has nothing to do with culture, but is due to the political system. As a Mayor of La Paz he introduced several strict measures to prevent people from abusing their system. The results of his success story are summed up in this book "Corrupt Cities" published by the World Bank Institute.

6. "EU Mayors" at West Midland Regional Assembly, UK

Following the fourth EU Mayors seminar on "Local decision-making...Lessons learned from an enlarged EU" at Warwick University, England, from 15 - 17 July 2004, the participants were special guests at the West Midlands Regional Assembly Conference 2004 on the 16 July. This event gathered more than 200 local authorities from the West Midlands (UK) at Warwick University

The EU Mayors participants from England, Lithuania, Poland and Italy were given the opportunity to present the main results of their best practice exchange on local decision-making from the previous day, including examples of strategic planning in Vilnius, Lithuania; Reggio Emilia and Trento, Italy. Moreover, participants from Mogliano Veneto, Italy explained how they gave foreigners a voice in their local community and participants from Olsztyn, Poland presented how they made the difficult decision to improve their health care system.

"We can all learn from our European neighbours when it comes to local government issues and this includes the new EU member countries," Bransby Thomas, Chair of the West Midlands Regional Assembly, stressed the importance of such an exchange of best practices.

This seminar was the last in a series of four EU Mayors seminars organised in 2004. The year-long programme will come to an end with visits to Lithuania and Poland in Autumn 2004. Through these visits the core partners of the programme from England, Ireland, France, Italy, Poland and Lithuania will learn about the challenges and benefits EU enlargement had on local authorities in the new EU member states.

7. New Governing Board elected by the ALDA General Assembly

The Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) organised its General Assembly on the 2 July 2004 in Barcelona, Spain. According to its statutes, the General Assembly elected ALDA's new Governing Board. After a fair and transparent process, the following members were elected: representatives of Bellinzona (Switzerland), Kragujevac (Serbia-Montenegro), East Staffordshire

Borough Council (UK), Prijedor (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Mogliano Veneto, Region of Friuli Venezia, Italian Consortium of Solidarity (Italy), Suresnes (France), Carlow County (Ireland) and Mr Per Vinther (Denmark).

The newly elected members of the Governing Board appointed the members of the Bureau who are: Mr Martini (Italy), President; Mr Vinther (Denmark), First Deputy President; Mr Milovanovic (Serbia-Montenegro), Second Deputy President; Mr Testud (France), Treasurer and Mr Jones (UK), Secretary.

The elected members joined the statutory members which are the appointed member of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the member appointed by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, the representative of the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the representative appointed by the European Commission and the President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

8. LDA staff got trained in conflict management

"Managed conflicts can be constructive", was the conclusion of participants of the Training of Trainers (TOT) "Building Bridges between Citizens and Local Governments through Managing Conflicts and Differences", 1 – 10 September 2004 in Palic, Serbia and Montenegro. The training was the first in a series of five TOTs of the 3-year project "Actions of capacity-building for local authorities and NGOs in South-East Europe" financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and supported by ANCI, the Italian Association of Municipalities.

The training goal was to make the 25 participants, representing the 11 Local Democracy Agencies (LDAs) in the Balkans (including the new LDA in Mostar to be opened this autumn), capable of conducting interactive training courses that promote a new culture of conflict management in local government. The main issues dealt with included the causes of conflict, negotiation and mediation skills as well as aspects of power and communication dynamics.

The TOT was conducted by two trainers from the renowned Romanian NGO FPD (Partners for Local Development Foundation) which is member of the International Professional Association and is supported by UN Habitat, the World Bank and other international organisations.

The participants will use their new skills and knowledge for their own training courses which they will conduct for local authorities and civil servants in their areas this October.

The next training of trainers within this programme on capacity-building will take place in Ohrid, Macedonia, this November and will deal with participatory planning processes of local authorities.

LDA Activities

1. The Association Project for Prijedor, lead partner of the LDA Prijedor, launched a website on responsible tourism

The Association Project for Prijedor, lead partner of the LDA in Prijedor, launched a website on responsible tourism. For the moment, it is only available in Italian, but it will soon be translated into English.

Tourism is a fundamental aspect and can be a resource for communities with little economic development. It can be a way to development, it does not harm the local context from a social, historical and cultural point of view and it is a meeting point of different cultures.

Responsible tourism is:

- far away from the "old fashioned" understanding of humanitarian help
- in a new understanding of equal exchanges
- in a project for the development planned by local communities
- sustainable

Travelling is also an opportunity to meet different cultures and it makes one aware of the need to get to know other people.

The people of the Balkans have an absolute need to do this, that is to start a slow, difficult but fundamental development also through a process of understanding their past (personal and collective) in order to face a long lasting reconciliation process. To do this, it is important that they escape a situation of isolation. The website will help making people more aware of these aspects.

If you want to suggest some spots that could be visited by tourists, please contact directly: Mr. Michele Nardelli, sol.tn@tin.it

2. New Delegate and lead partner for the LDA of Central and Southern Serbia (LDACSS)

The LDA of Central and Southern Serbia (based in Nis and working also in Kragujevac and Kraljevo) has a new Delegate and a new lead partner. Mr. Emiliano Bertoldi was appointed by unanimity by the partner meeting that was held in Suresnes (France) on the 28th of April, 2004. Suresnes itself, through his Deputy Mayor Mr. Jean-Louis Testud, accepted to assume the role of lead partner, after this task was held for almost three years by the Irish Carlow County.

The "mission" of the new Delegate is to re-structure the LDA on the basis of three main objectives: to improve the communication within the network of partners (the LDACSS has more than 20 partners from 9 Countries), to involve at least one or more partners in every LDA activity and to spread the presence of the LDA in the whole area of reference.

Mr. Emiliano Bertoldi has gained experience in the field of International Cooperation, notably in "Decentralised Cooperation". He has worked in Albania, Kosovo, Iraq and - above all - he has been involved in the LDACSS since its foundation (November 2001), as coordinator of the Tavolo trentino con la Serbia and of the "Network of Italian Partners of the LDACSS".

3. Salon Initiative de Paix

The Local Democracy Agency in Kosovo presented its work and the activities of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) at this year's first « Salon International des Initiatives de Paix » which was held in the Science Museum in Paris from the 4 – 6 June 2004. The fair was organised by several French NGOs including Caritas and Secours Catholiques among others and gathered more than a hundred French and international organisations as well as NGOs. Under the patronage of the UNESCO the fair was devoted to the United Nations' « International decade for the culture of peace 2001 – 2010 ». The organisations present at the fair demonstrated to the public how their initiatives foster

peace and a non-violent culture on the local as well as national or international level. It showed that peace can be promoted by everybody, everyday through activities in the field or through institutional changes.

The LDA Kosovo presented how ALDA and the LDAs contribute to the fight against violence and ethnic conflicts through their decentralised cooperation.

4. Round Table on information resources for journalists in Macedonia

Information resources in the Republic of Macedonia are often not accessible for journalists. This is the main result of the round table "Access to information resources" which was organized by the Local Democracy Agency in Ohrid on 10 June 2004. The round table resulted as a follow-up activity of the training of trainers on communication skills held in Osijek last March.

Macedonian journalists are often not in a position to provide the citizens with relevant and objective information. Taking into consideration these facts, participants of the round table agreed to lobby the government to adopt a new law in the Macedonian parliament for the free access to information resources.

37 journalists from private and public media from the cities of Ohrid, Struga, Kicevo and Debar participated in the round table. Moreover, several experts were present, including Dr. Zivko Andreski and Klime Babunski from the Institute for Political Science and Law at the University of Skopje. The moderator was Mr. Boris Georgievski, president of the Regional Association of Journalists, which was at the same time co-organizer of the round table.

Each expert gave a brief presentation on agreed topics. Mr. Andreski explained that the article 16 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, guarantees free access to information resources. He underlined the necessity for adopting a new law, which will regulate and encourage free dissemination of information in the country.

According to Mr. Babunski in all EU members laws for the freedom of access to information resources have been adopted. He said that the draft law in Macedonia is not in accordance with the international standards and experiences. This situation in Macedonia is a result of the illiberal and inappropriate political culture of the elite structure in all-political parties in the country.

5. Mock European elections held in Local Democracy Agency in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Following the motto 'I am also a citizen of Europe', the Local Democracy Agency in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, organised a mock European election for the citizens of their Municipality on 12 and 13 June 2004. On the same day, citizens of the 25 EU member countries went to the real polls. This symbolic vote was to express that Bosnia and Herzegovina belongs to Europe. More than 40 poll stations had been prepared in Prijedor for the event.

This initiative was co-organised by the Civic Forum of Prijedor with the support of the Municipality of Prijedor and it was launched on 7 June with a conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina's prospects for European integration. The conference provided the citizens of Prijedor an opportunity to debate the process of European integration and the benefits and challenges this can bring to the citizens and local authorities. Among the speakers were Professor Roberto Toniatti, Dean of the Law Faculty of the University of Trento, Italy; Professor Zeljko Mirjanic, Law Faculty of Banja Luka University; Mr Jean

Baptiste Fillol, Delegation of the European Commission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Patrizia Bugna, Delegate of the Local Democracy Agency of Prijedor.

6. Seminar on EU integration and communication strategies held in LDA Subotica

The Local Democracy Agency Subotica organized a one-day seminar on EU communication strategies and integration process on 25 June 2004 as a follow-up activity of the Training of Trainers Seminar in Osijek. The main objectives of the seminar were aimed at building local capacities in communication strategies related with public awareness-raising on EU integration processes, in particular after the accession of 10 new member states, including the neighbouring Hungary. In addition, the LDA Subotica initiated this programme considering the specific needs and interests of the host city in the proximity of the new EU border lands.

The seminar gathered around 40 participants from local media, NGO-s and local self-government and consisted of three main elements. The first part was dedicated to the work of local media outlets and their role in the public promotion of European standards; the second part was hosted by Mr. Bogdan Gavanski, the Program Officer in the Delegation of the European Commission in Belgrade, who presented the new call for proposals initiated by the Delegation in the sector of local democracy, rule of law and human rights.

The main guest of the seminar was Mr. Geoffrey Barrett, the Head of the Delegation of European Commission to Serbia and Montenegro. He underlined the importance of focusing civil society on EU integration. He also mentioned the important role of all stakeholders in the accession process of Serbia and Montenegro to the European Union.

First, a high level of financial and substantial assistance to the country has been provided by the European Union, second general access to the EU market is necessary in order to make the companies able to compete in line with the European standards as well as a high level of political engagement (a democratic state with rule of law in which the structure, the co-operation and the communication with EU members has to be changed and minorities, human rights, international obligations be respected). Finally, Serbia and Montenegro need to develop a larger European partnership.

According to Mr. Barrett, establishing and maintaining the partnerships is a very demanding process with a number of rules to be followed. The speed of this particular process depends on the country, but Serbia and Montenegro is still not sufficiently committed in this process and the only way to change it is to increase the number of people working on the EU integration process. In this particular context, the role of civil society is important because a continuous engagement is needed. The more the population is informed, the better it can influence the state policy. Indeed, EU integration is a process which affects the whole society. In conclusion, Mr. Barrett emphasized that there is a direct correlation between transition and accession. However, Serbia and Montenegro has already made the initial effort in order to get a step closer to EU membership.

7. Preparatory phase of the new LDA in Mostar started

Since June 2002 the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) has started its preparatory phase to establish a new Local Democracy Agency (LDA) in the city of Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The setting up of this new LDA in Mostar is of great importance to the Association because of the city's symbolic value as a divided city.

Three meetings between ALDA and the Municipality of Mostar, the potential partners of the new LDA, the representatives of some international organizations such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe and local NGOs have taken place so far. All the actors involved confirmed their common will to open the new LDA as soon as possible.

In July, Mr Martial Paris, assistant of the ALDA Director, arrived in Mostar to prepare the ground and to contact some local NGOs to participate in the start-up projects. The LDA is or will be involved in the following (ongoing) projects so far: 1) Capacity Building for local authorities and civil society, funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and supported by ANCI, the Italian Association of Municipalities, 2) Local economic development, funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and 3) Sustainable development, protection of environment and waste management, funded by the Canton of Geneva (CH).

At the end of August, a team was appointed to pave the way for the opening of the LDA and start a first phase of activities. The staff is composed of Mr. Tommaso Vaccarezza, representing ALDA, and Mr. Roberto Maselli (suggested by Regione Puglia, partner of the LDA in Mostar).

The official inauguration of the LDA Mostar will be held in the middle of November. During the event, the new delegate of the LDA will be appointed and the memorandum of understanding between the City of Mostar and the partners will be signed. For the moment the future partners of the LDA include the cities of Zaragoza (Spain), Montegrotto (Italy) and Vejle (Denmark) as well as regions of Puglia and Sicily (Italy).

8. Youth Parliament Exchange in Niksic, Montenegro

Four representatives of the Neuchâtel Youth Parliament (Switzerland) met representatives of the Niksic Youth Parliament (Montenegro) on 19 and 20 July 2004. This meeting was organised by the LDA Montenegro which is based in Niksic.

The staff of the LDA and the new Swiss intern, Ms Gaelle Lapique, were pleased to welcome the young Swiss, in order to enhance the communication between youth from different parts of Europe. The three main aims of the meeting were an exchange of experience, networking with the Neuchâtel Youth Parliament and identification of possibilities for mutual projects. The Youth Parliament representatives of both cities also had a meeting with the mayor of Niksic, Mr Labud Sjukic.

With this workshop the LDA Montenegro reaffirms its aim of setting up a large youth network between Montenegro and other European cities.

9. High Delegation from Liechtenstein visited LDA-Ohrid

The High Delegation of the Principality of Liechtenstein, led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Dr. Ernst Valch, paid an official visit to the Local Democracy Agency Ohrid. Mr. Valch was accompanied among others by Ambassador Roland Marxer, Head of office for Foreign Affairs, and by Ambassador Maria-Pai Kothbauer from Vienna.

The Delegate of the LDA-Ohrid, Ms Mirjana Lozanska, introduced the High Delegation to the mission, mandate and the network of partners of its LDA and the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA). Moreover, Ms. Lozanska presented a brief overview of the project activities implemented in the previous period with the financial support of Liechtenstein. During the meeting it was stressed that

the activities need to be continued which contribute to the developing of local democracy and to the process of stabilisation in SEE.

The official Delegation of the Principality of Liechtenstein, as a co-funder of some project activities implemented by the LDA Ohrid and ALDA, was very positively impressed and satisfied with the presentation and the results achieved. At the end of the meeting, His Excellency Dr. Ernst Valch confirmed that the Government of Liechtenstein would continue co-operation with the ALDA.

10. First Training of Trainers of the project "Italy-Balkans (IB) - Italian and Balkan Municipal Partnership"

The first training of trainers within the Italy-Balkan (IB) project "Italian and Balkan Municipal Partnership" took place in Rome, Italy, on 21 and 22 July 2004. The project has been initiated by ANCI, the Italian Association of Municipalities together with ALDA, the consulting firm EPF and the Italian organisation Cresme. The newly trained trainers will form a multi-territorial working group. They will be in charge of tutorship, assistance to identify and survey local needs, relationships with local authorities until the constitution of ten municipal technical units (MTU). These MTU will consist of twinnings of technical services between towns in Italy and towns in the Balkans.

The group of people is composed of representatives from the four countries involved in the project, namely Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania, and by professionals who have been collaborating in international co-operation in the Balkans for several years.

These first days of training were used to discuss the priorities of the working group in the IB project as well as the training programme, the methodology, expectations and availability of the participants in the IB Project.

In September, the remaining 8 days of specialised training will be carried out. They will strengthen the group, by assigning to everyone their specific role in the training of the local technicians.

Partners

1. City of Suresnes (France) new lead partner of LDA Central and Southern Serbia

The city of Suresnes near Paris, France, has become the new lead partner of the LDA in Central and Southern Serbia this spring and takes over the role that Carlow County Council played for the last three years.

Suresnes looks back on a long history of cooperation with Serbia. From 1967, it is twinned with Kragujevac in Serbia. Usual youth exchanges activities were organized until the "tragedy" of the war. The partnership had to be stopped between 1992 and 1997. From February 1997 on, however, the city of Kragujevac entered the opposition and Suresnes decided to recover its links. The very first activity concerned emergency needs, but it was soon followed by other more structured means of cooperation. Know-how and experience in several fields such as economy, education and the welfare system are shared with the Serbian partners up until today.

The aim is to develop a true partnership in all these areas. However, Suresnes is aware of the fact that the material needs are still strikingly high. Nevertheless or indeed because of this fact it is also very important to work on the mentalities and to communicate democratic values. The Local Democracy

Agencies are an essential tool to lead to this goal with a population racked by ethnic considerations. Suresnes shares ALDA's philosophy and has been supporting the network since 2002. In this history of cooperation with the city of Kragujevac and ALDA, it was obvious to us to accept the role of lead partner of the LDA in Central and Southern Serbia.

Jean Louis Testud, Deputy Mayor, Suresnes, France, lead partner LDA Central and Southern Serbia

Miscellaneous

1. Helping Central and South-East European Countries become stronger Members or potential Members of the EU

The meeting of the Central European Network (CEN) on 23 April 2004 in Bratislava provided an opportunity for the ALDA Director, Ms Antonella Valmorbida, to present to the members of CEN the activities of the LDAs, focusing in particular on the thinking behind the LDAs and their partner networks. The meeting took place in the Slovak Academy of Sciences, CEN being a platform for informal dialogue among the Presidents of National Academies of Science from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, although these Presidents participate in a personal capacity.

The presentation was made in response to an invitation by the CEN and was followed by an exchange of ideas on how the ALDA and CEN could possibly co-operate in the future. Ms Valmorbida extended an invitation to members of CEN to attend the EU funded conference on "The participation of civil society into the decision making process at the local level as a European value", supported by the DG Culture and Education of the European Commission, in Barcelona in early July. In conclusion, the CEN expressed a wish to maintain a mutually beneficial dialogue between the two organizations.

Contacts established

- Municipality of Trento intends to become a new member of ALDA
- Regio Sicily: formal decision to become a new member of ALDA
- Stefania Toriello attended the meeting of the Italian Committee on water issues ("Comitato italiano per un contratto sull'acqua")
- Kaunas municipality: formal decision to become a new member of ALDA
- Elvir Djuliman, Nansen Dialogue Centre (Mostar)
- Jasmina RApak, OHR, Office in Mostar
- Amir Vranic, OHR, Office in Sarajevo
- Hugh Chatwynd, Council of Europe, Office in Sarajevo
- Jonathan Lacôte, Head of the office of the French Embassy in Podgorica
- Mr Barrial, city of Lyon (France)
- Mrs Beurrier, city of Lille (France)
- Mr Nuttal, Programme coordinator Decentralized Cooperation-UNITAR

Agenda September – December 2004

September

1 – 10 September: Training of Trainers on Conflict Management, ALDA/ANCI programme on Capacity-Building in the Balkans, Palic, Serbia-Montenegro

13 – 17 September: World Urban Forum, Barcelona

21 – 22 September: EU Mayors visit “Local Democracy in the new EU Member States I” to Kaunas and Vilnius, Lithuania

29 September – 2 October: Second Field Mission to Georgia

30 September – 1 October: Oslo Conference on the participation of citizens (organised by the Norwegian Presidency of the Council of Europe)

October

7 October: Day for SEE, London, UK, LGIB

11 – 13 October: Seminar in Verteneglio (sponsored by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

11 – 12 October: 5th Forum of Cities and Regions in South East Europe in Budva, Serbia and Montenegro

20 – 21 October: EU Mayors visit “Local Democracy in the new EU Member States II” to Olsztyn, Poland

25 – 26 October: Stability Pact Ministerial Conference in Zagreb, Croatia

November

3 – 5 November: European Fair Compa in Bologna, Italy

6 November: Inauguration of the LDA in Mostar

Mid November: Training of Trainers on participatory planning process, Ohrid, Macedonia

End November: Press breakfast at the European Policy Centre, Brussels and EU Training Course for ALDA/LDA staff

December

9 – 10 December: 4th European Conference Cities for Human Rights, Nürnberg, Germany

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