

government **donor** dialogue

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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: Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Anastas Duro and Italy Ambassador to Albania Saba D'Elia signed the agreement in the field of labour and the follow-up enforcement protocol during the visit of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi

Photo: Minister of Finance Ridvan Bode signed with the Italy Ambassador to Albania Saba D'Elia the Framework Agreement for Cooperation and Development during the visit of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi visits Albania

On 2 December 2008, Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, visited Albania to strengthen bilateral co-operation. Prime Minister Sali Berisha and Italian Prime Minister attended the signing ceremony of six agreements and co-operation acts between the two Governments. Minister of Finance Ridvan Bode signed with the Italian Ambassador to Albania, Saba D'Elia the Framework Agreement for Development Co-operation that will set working conditions for the development sector. "We still need the Italian cooperation, a rather worthy co-operation in hundreds of projects throughout the country. A re-orientation of this co-operation is very important for us. Firstly, toward support for the small and middle size enterprises in Albania. Secondly, Albania agriculture needs Italy powerful support. More than 40 per cent of Albania population lives in the rural zones. We agreed to co-operate

closely even in the sector of education, culture and health; and I also demand the assistance of the Italian government for backing the Government initiative to reach the digital age," said Prime Minister Berisha. Prime Minister Berlusconi said that "Italy is a very close friend of Albania and that this had manifested itself in the last hard years characterizing the Albanian life. Italy, which has always been a powerful supporter of Albania over these years, will maintain this role in the next years." The framework agreement defines the terms and conditions through which Italy is committed to assisting Albania. The co-operation will be facilitated by Italian Development Cooperation. The signed agreements reach the value of 2 billion Euros and other deals worth 3 billion Euros are expected to be signed soon with other Italian companies that will pave the way to new Italian investments.

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Strategic Planning Committee approves the IPS Calendar

On 29 December 2008, the Strategic Planning Committee met to discuss and approve the 2009 Integrated Planning System (IPS) Calendar. The Director of Aid Unit at DSDC, Valbona Kuko presented the main activities and proposed data for the core IPS processes in 2009 (i.e. NSDI, European Integration, Medium-Term Budget Program, Public Investment and External Assistance). An inter-ministerial group will be set up for better co-ordination between key institutions involved in IPS implementation. The Committee approved the IPS calendar for 2009 by stressing the need to better link MTBP and European Integration processes.

Donor Conference to be held on 2 to 3 April 2009

On 2 to 3 April 2009, the European Commission Directorate-General for Enlargement and the Department of Strategy and Donor Co-ordination will host a donor meeting in Tirana in line with the conclusions of the last Donor Co-ordination Conference held in Brussels in October 2008. The meeting will bring together some 200 government and donor officials from the Western Balkans, Turkey and European Commission delegations in the region. It will focus on sharing best practices between countries on the mechanisms that ensure donor co-ordination, progress made in harmonising the donors' assistance programmes, and will present the European Commission's results of an evaluation on donor co-ordination systems.



Photo: Justice Matters show host, Gerti Shella, asks guests their opinions on the length of court proceedings and enforcement of court decisions in Albania.

USAID Supports New T.V. Programme on Albania's Judicial System

Throughout November and December, News 24 aired episodes of Justice Matters a five-part series on Albania's justice sector. The programme is supported by USAID through its Rule of Law programme. Justice Matters is the first TV show in Albania to be totally dedicated to the judicial system. We hope the show will give the Albanian public a better understanding of the Albanian legal systems and thus help improve the quality, transparency, and accountability of courts," said the show's host Gerti Shella. Guests on the show included judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, Government officials, law professors and students and representatives of other members of the Albanian legal system.

Inter-Ministerial Working Group meeting on anticorruption reporting

On 22 December 2008, the Inter-ministerial Working Group on the Cross-cutting Strategy on Prevention and Fight against Corruption and Transparent Governance held a follow up meeting to evaluate the implementation of the anticorruption measures taken in 2008 and to monitor the preparation of action plans for 2009. The meeting was chaired

by Deputy Prime Minister Genc Pollo, who stressed the importance of unifying reporting and action plans across line ministries in order to have a harmonized and standardized reporting system to EU institutions. A unified action plan will be reported to EU institutions in Brussels on 10 January 2009 that is also a pre-condition for the visa liberalization process. All line ministries have completed their reports on anticorruption measures for 2008 and prepared the action plans for 2009.

Meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Border Management

The IC Integrated Border Management working group met on 12 December 2008. The General Director of Albanian Customs, Perparim Dervishi, and Director of the Border and Migration Police, Pellumb Nako co-chaired the meeting. The meeting discussed the identification of areas where there is currently Customs/Police co-operation, identification of short-term actions in the area of joint customs/police activities and IBM awareness training for customs and police staff. Mr. Dervishi expressed concern over the continuation of technical assistance on customs and taxation administration for 2009. The meeting was told that a new directorate against trafficking has been set up in the General Directorate of Customs. The one-stop border control that involves both customs and police service will be the priority for 2009.

IC Working Group on Legal Reform

The International Consortium Legal Reform working group held a meeting on 18 December 2008. The Director of the Codification Department in the Ministry of Justice, Marsida Xhaferllari, presented the latest legislative reform developments, which is designed by MoJ as a process that involves rendering justice from the presentation of acts for trial to the execution of judicial decisions. The process consists of three components: improvement in the organization and functioning of the courts, operators who take part in trial; operators in the execution of judicial decisions. The meeting discussed the Assembly's legislative agenda, an update on juvenile justice and prison reform and other issues related to legislative reform.

Environment Sector Working Group

On 9 December 2008, a meeting of the Sector Working Group on Environment issues was held by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration in co-operation with the Netherlands Embassy, the DSDC and DTS. The aim was to discuss and finalize the terms of reference of the working group and to co-ordinate the implementation of the Environmental Crosscutting Strategy. The Deputy Head of Mission of the Netherlands Embassy and focal point for the SWG, Ardi Stoios-Braken presented the terms of reference and encouraged them to discuss and give

their suggestions. The next meeting will focus on waste management, air quality, environment monitoring and water resources management.

Health Sector Working Group

On 9 December 2008, the Health SWG meeting was held by the Ministry of Health and WHO. The Deputy Minister of Health, Zamira Sinomeri, presented an overview of the progress in this sector and highlighted the priorities and the areas that need funding in 2009. The accreditation and licensing of the institutions and professionals working in this sector was one of the topics discussed. Currently a project financed by World Bank facilitates the accreditation and licensing of institutions, while the Swiss Cooperation is involved with developing an accrediting system. The need for building capacities in the sector through offering scholarships and training was also discussed. While for hospital management, WB and GTZ are financing different projects. Another issue raised was the functioning scheme of Social Insurance Institution, its dependency by Ministry of Health, and its connection with hospital centres.

Germany facilitates the financing of Small Hydro Power Plants

On 11 December 2008, KfW and Banka Kombetare Tregtare (BKT) signed a Credit Guarantee Framework Agreement to facilitate the financing

Photo: KfW and Banka Kombetare Tregtare SHA (BKT) signed a Credit Guarantee Framework Agreement to facilitate the financing of small hydro power plants on 11 December 2008



Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Working Group

The Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Working Group met on 5 December 2008. The General Director of Agriculture and Rural Development Policies in the Ministry, Myslym Osmani, presented the main challenges and priorities, highlighting the areas for support: human resources, financial planning management, policy impact evaluation, market privatization, land management and marketing of the products. He pointed out the action that should be taken towards the protection from erosion, farm diversification as well as preserving organic farms. The Director at the Department of Extension Service, Research and Agricultural Information, Tatjana Dishnica, spoke about the need for extension service centres, strengthening of the role of women, and re-establishment of the agriculture professional education system and training courses for farmers, as well as the selection of pilot schools for farmers. The World Bank representative, Carl Von Essen discussed the challenges in accessing IPA-Rural Development funds, while presenting the case study of the IPARD framework in Skopje. In addition, the DSDC Co-ordinator, Migena Dako, pointed out the importance of orienting the discussions in the SWG toward achieving the objectives of terms of reference, and inviting the participants to provide their comments on the draft ToR until the next meeting in March 2009.



» of small hydro power plants. The agreement will facilitate the financing of small hydro power plants. KfW will provide part guarantees to BKT, which grants loans to investors in small hydro power plants. Thus, another barrier to the use of hydro power can be removed. This Agreement was the first credit guarantee framework agreement to be elaborated within the Programme for the Promotion of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energies. The programme is a key part of the German-Albanian financial co-operation to improve the energy supply and to contribute to global climate protection.

**Private Sector
Development: Swiss Import
Promotion Programme**

The Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO) financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs supports Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) from emerging markets and markets in transition in gaining access to the EU and Swiss markets. Since 2008, Albania has become one of priority countries of SIPPO with the aim to facilitate market access of SMEs to the EU and Swiss markets focusing on: fruits and vegetables, organic products, medical herbs and essential oils, fish and aquaculture as well as home textiles. The joint cooperation between Switzerland, through SIPPO, International Organisation for the Development of Fisheries in Eastern and Central Europe and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection is focused on

Photo: Albanian Seafood Company



Photo: Global Compact and Corporate Social Responsibility Roundtable held on 16 December 2008

training Albanian companies in fish and seafood sector on hygiene, food safety systems in compliance with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points standards. Swiss support has been provided to SMEs relating to seafood, fruits and vegetables as well as garments to participate in the European Seafood Exposition in Brussels, the Global Fashion Fair in Düsseldorf and the Fruit Logistica Fair in Berlin in 2009.

**UN brings Albanian
businesses together to
discuss Global Compact and
Corporate Social Responsibility**

35 members of the Global Compact and other leading companies active in promoting corporate social responsibility took part in a roundtable to discuss and promote responsible business practices in Albania. The event was organized by United Nations in Albania and the Global Compact Office in New York in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy. Participants shared information on the Global Compact Network, its partnerships, management, communication and operational structure. A special session focused on advancing sound employment and environmental practices through the principles of the Global Compact.

Companies with best practices in these areas shared their experiences and lessons learned with other participants. It was agreed that the empowerment of the private sector in Albania represents one of the main requirements to the acceleration of Albania's integration in the EU and the Albanian government has to include the CSR in the government policies as a tool that will help to create a better environment for the businesses. Following the event agreement was reached on the establishment of a Global Compact network in Albania through the support of UNDP.

**Conference on Social
Inclusion Cross-cutting
Strategy monitoring framework**

On 17 December 2008, the conference on Social Inclusion Cross-cutting Strategy (SICS) indicators was held. The aim was to present the monitoring framework for this strategy that was prepared through a process begun in September 2008 by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities in co-operation with the DSDC and the support of the Activity Agreement 4 Project of UNDP/SNV. Deputy Minister Sulka stressed the need for monitoring the implementation phase of the Strategy, approved by the Council of Ministers



Photo: Conference on Social Inclusion Cross-cutting Strategy monitoring framework held on 17 December 2008

in February 2008. The application of this framework by all institutions involved remains the challenge for the future. The continuity of LSMS implementation is also a crucial issue to be addressed, since LSMS is considered the main information source for the monitoring and evaluation of SICS.

Inauguration of the Italy Funded Dokita Rehabilitation Centre

On 3 December 2008, in the framework of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Tirana Centre for Rehabilitation Therapy was inaugurated in the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister, Genc Pollo,

Photo: Inauguration of DOKITA Rehabilitation Centre on 3 December 2008



the Minister of Health, Anila Godo, the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Anastas Duro, the WHO Representative, Anshu Banarjee, the Head of the Development Cooperation Office of the Italian Embassy in Tirana, Flavio Lovisolo, and other representatives from the academic community. Funded by Italy through a grant of some 700,000 Euros to the Italian NGO DOKITA, the project aims at improving the health conditions of those in need of rehabilitation therapy through increasing the availability of international standard physiotherapy assistance services. In order to extend the service to Shkodra and Lezha, Italy has recently funded another DOKITA's project Physiotherapy assistance in central and north Albania through a 800,000 Euros grant.

Support to the New Child Protection Unit on the Albanian-Greek Border

On 13 November 2008, the twelfth Child Rights Protection Unit was launched by the Saranda Municipality and Terre des Hommes Foundation, with the support of UNICEF and USAID through the **TACT III** project. The unit offers direct assistance through counselling and family support services to children identified as abused, neglected, trafficked or exploited. At the event, USAID's Anti-Trafficking Advisor, Kelly Cronen, spoke about the road ahead. Addressing the Prefect and Mayor, Cronen remarked that the "challenge is now to turn this administrative design for a cooperative and comprehensive child protection unit into concrete programs and services to serve the most vulnerable people in Saranda."



Photo: Conference "International day of persons with disabilities: Dignity and justice for all of us"





Photo: A well received Human Rights Debate, held on 12 December 2008 on the initiative of and financed by the Netherlands Embassy.

First Human Rights Debate

On 12 December 2008, as part of an initiative financed by the Netherlands Embassy, the first Human Rights Debate was organized by the Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania in co-operation with other NGOs, in the framework of International Human Rights Day. The human rights of children, women and sexual minorities were discussed among representatives from within the civil society, politics, government, universities, the international community and the media: It was for the first time the last theme was openly discussed openly in the course of a human rights debate. A list of recommendations put together in the event will give rise to a follow-up event later in the year.

Bio-Safe Farms Reduce Risk of Avian Influenza

In December, farmers from Dajc Village took part in an exercise organized by the Albanian Council of Agribusiness (KASH) to support better bio-safety measures in poultry farms. The bio-safe farm, near Lezha, is one of 20 model family farms created with the support of USAID's avian influenza programme in co-operation with UNICEF and KASH. The demonstration exercise is part of a larger campaign to help mitigate the risks associated with the H1N5 virus and avian influenza by improving bio-safety conditions through a public information campaign and education programme on the poultry farm model. Since 2006, USAID has provided over 800,000 USD to United Nations organizations to prevent the spread of the H5N1 virus in domestic poultry populations, limit its economic impact in Albania, and decrease the risk of its spread to humans.



Photo: The event took place at the farm of Mr. Cef Gjushi who volunteered to make adaptations to his current farm to demonstrate the low-cost, but effective ways farmers can meet bio-safety standards and protect their birds and families from disease.

goals for health, saying that activities implemented should be seen as part of the activities that the Ministry implements in order to ensure sustainability.

Maternal and Child Health Reform project begins

On 5 December 2008, the Ministry of Health briefed health staff in the Korca, Vlora and Shkodra region on the action plan for the project on Maternal and Child Health Reform that aims at reducing maternal, newborn and child morbidity and mortality, and hereby kicking of the start of the project. The project is financially supported by the Spanish Agency for International Development Co-operation and will be implemented through WHO. The Spanish Ambassador, Manuel Montobbio, said that support should help Albania achieve its MDG

USAID Supports 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

From November 25 until December 10 2008, USAID/Albania joined the global community in observance of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. Beginning on the International Day of Eliminating Violence Against Women and ending on the International Human Rights Day, the 16 Days of Activism provided a forum for advocating for support services for survivors, calling for greater prevention efforts, pressing for legal and judicial reform, and using international human rights instruments to address these issues. As one of the

Photo: Ministry of Health, WHO and Spanish Agency for International Development Co-operation kicked off the implementation of the Maternal and Child Health Reform project on 5 December 2008



largest donors in Albania focused on anti-trafficking and improving conditions for vulnerable citizens, USAID and its partners will continue to use innovative multi-sector approaches to change the laws, systems, and attitudes that perpetuate violence against women in Albania.

New Information Office for Gjirokastra's Court of Appeals

In December 2008, a ceremony was held at the District Court of Appeals in Gjirokastra to mark the start of construction of a public information office in the courthouse. The ceremony was attended by the Gjirokastra Prefect, Spiro Ksera, the Chief Judge of the Gjirokastra Court of Appeals, Maria Qirjazi, the Head of the OSCE Presence, Robert Bosch and USAID's Albania's General Development Officer, Sean Huff. The project, supported by the OSCE Presence and USAID, will establish a One Stop Shop for litigants, lawyers and citizens seeking information or assistance about court procedures—thus reducing both the time and costs of going to several offices within the courthouse. Through the project, the court hopes to improve access to information for citizens, increase transparency of court procedures, and increase trust in the court and the judicial system.

Probation services seminar

The OSCE Presence under its project to support the Albanian authorities to create a national probation service held a three-day training of trainers programme from 9 to 11 December 2008. Fifteen lecturers from five universities and four Ministry of Justice experts received training. As a result, 20 trained trainers are now capable to contribute to the drafting of a probation curriculum and can deliver training for future probation officers. The training was designed to facilitate relevant methodical and theoretical background necessary for probation officers to write pre-sentence reports and supervise offenders. On 12 December 2008, in co-operation with the Albanian School of Magistrates, a seminar was held for 24 judges and 16 prosecutors on the role of the probation services. The aim was to facilitate an increased use of



Photo: The inauguration ceremony of a bridge in Rubik, restored under a small grants project funded by the Netherlands Embassy

alternatives to imprisonment by starting an awareness campaign among law professionals on the costs and negative effects of imprisonment, the benefits of alternatives and the role of the probation services in the implementation of community sentences.

Italy finances a new rural development project

A new project was approved in December by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The 1,6 million Euros initiative, Integrated rural development in the municipalities of Kelmend and Shkrel, District of Malesia and Madhe, will be implemented by the Italian NGO VIS. The aim is to contribute to the improvement of living conditions for the population of the two municipalities through the development of economic activities, the protection of the environment and better access in bringing local products to the market. To this aim, a local development fund will finance economic and community based activities. The project will also provide technical assistance to the local Forestry directorate and to farmers.

Restoration of a bridge in Rubik

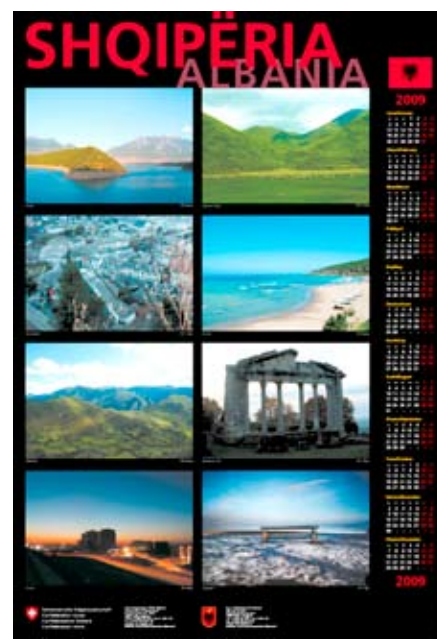
On 20 November 2008, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Henk van den Dool, took part in the inauguration ceremony of a bridge in Rubik.

The bridge was restored under a small grants project funded by the Netherlands Embassy and now allows children from the surrounding villages to attend school more easily.

Albania Calendar 2009

Rich diversity and colourful beauty of Albania landscape is mirrored in the Albania Calendar 2009. Photographers are students of the Albanian School of Photography "Photo-School project 5.6" (www.projekt56.com) implemented by "cultural center lindart Tirana" under Swiss Cultural Programme in the Western Balkans/SCP (www.scp-ba.net; www.scp-al.net). The electronic version of Albania Calendar 2009 in colour is accessible on the Swiss Cooperation Office in Albania website (www.swisscooperation-albania.ch) and its poster size is also available at the Swiss Cooperation Office in Tirana. ■

Photo: Albania Calendar 2009



In-country Missions

Italy

In December 2008, five experts from the Italian-Albanian Technical Steering Committee visited Albania in the framework of the Italy-funded project Water supply/demand assessment in Southern Albania. The initiative aims to assess the water resources in relation with the development processes. To this end, the initiative provides a trust fund to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) for water supply/demand assessment and other related feasibility studies.

In December 2008, a joint mission from two Italian experts for the Rehabilitation and equipment of five Polyclinics took place to help improve the quality and number of treated patients. The experts met with Government officials and project staff in order to provide technical assistance.

From 30 November to 7 December 2008, an Italian supervision mission for the Programme for Development of the Albanian Private Sector through a Credit Line for Small and Medium Enterprises took place. The aim was to contribute to the economical and social growth of Albania facilitating access to the credit system and enhancing formal economy.

World Bank

From 10 to 19 December 2008, a World Bank Preparation Mission for Proposed Partial Risk Guarantee (PRG) for Privatization of the Distribution System Operator visited, upon Government's request for privatization of the Distribution System Operator. It was focused on:

participation in negotiations between Government and CEZ company on the regulatory framework; discussion of the PRG Term Sheet with CEZ company and the Government; discussion with the Government and CEZ company of the selection of the commercial bank that would issue the letter of credit; and discussion of the PRG-related documents with the Government and the CEZ company.

From 12 to 19 December 2008, a World Bank Supervision Mission for the Transport Project took place. The aim was to confirm the satisfactory implementation of the Environmental Management Plan; to update the project performance indicators for inclusion on the Implementation Status Report; and to undertake a field trip to review the works on site.

From 10 to 17 December 2008, a World Bank Appraisal Mission for the Development Policy Operations

2 (DPO2) took place to finalize agreements on the remaining outstanding issues in all the different areas of the programme, including water sector, civil service, territorial planning, health, and pension system reform. The mission received Government data on the latest outcome indicators in different areas, latest macroeconomic performance indicators, details of the 2009 budget agreement, and an update on electricity sector financing for 2009.

From 1 to 5 December 2008, a World Bank Education Excellence and Equity Project (EEEP) took place: to support the Ministry of Education and Science in its semi-annual review of EEEP and complete the IDA mid-term review of the project; to co-ordinate IDA supervision efforts with the project development partners/co-financiers EIB and CEB; to review project achievements for 2008 and the challenges facing the implementation of reform activities; and to review the 2009 draft Annual Reform Plan. ■

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As of October 2008, the UNDP 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) by the 1st of every month. An ideal word count for submissions is around 100 words.

Frequency

Each edition will be sent to you on the 15th of every month.

Who are the donors in Albania?

There are over 40 donors operating in Albania. To find out who they are please click [here](#).

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