

# governmentdonordialogue

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On 13 May 2011, the Albanian Minister for Information, Communications Technology and Innovation, Genc Pollo, and UN Resident Coordinator, Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun signed, a new project that supports Albania's advancement towards the National Digital Agenda. Speaking at the event, Minister Genc Pollo, amongst others highlighted: "The Albanian Government has made ICT development one of its top priorities and introduced the "Digital Albania" initiative: it calls for an accelerated integration of ICT in governance processes throughout the country. Achieving the objectives of "Digital Albania" will require investment in infrastructure, institutional reforms, legislative improvements, capacity building and, above all, effective implementation of these policies. The project will also work to improve the legal and technical foundations for IT infrastructure. It will provide direct support to the Ministry for Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies to better manage the national information society agenda. This will include technical assistance to create a complete legal framework, strengthening public and private partnerships in this area as well as the application of the most advanced standards. The UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative noted: "This new project will support the institution of the Minister of Innovation and ICT to advance the reforms required in the ICT sector; it will support the National Agency for Information Society and other government institutions to introduce and apply more and more electronic services for citizens. This system will provide the country with a networking platform which will help Albanians become active players in a knowledge-based society and will help the country develop a knowledge based economy."

UNDP's technical support will also go towards the establishment of a national broadband network to help advance Albania's competitiveness and transparen-



Photo: UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun and Minister for Information, Communications Technology and Innovation, Genc Pollo during the signing of the new project.

## UNDP to further its support towards the Albanian National Digital Agenda

cy. The project will increase the provision of e-services, and promote new technologies that make local and national systems more transparent and accessible to the public. Support in this regard will go towards the line ministries and local government bodies to increase the number of online services for the citizens to ensure

qualitative delivery of public services. All these interventions will significantly improve the ICT infrastructure and electronic services which will in turn increase the government's interaction with citizens and businesses. This project is part of the One UN programme in Albania, financed through the United Nations Coherence Fund.

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Photo: The German Ambassador Carola Müller-Holtkemper during the recording in the studio

### EU-ambassadors as guests in a radio show

The Ministry of European Integration with the support of the Project “Support to the Ministry of European Integration – SMEI II”, is sponsoring a radio and TV show with the title “Welcome Mr./Ms. Ambassador of...”. This activity is part of MEI’s communication activities to inform the wider public about the different aspects of the EU integration process and to foster the public discourse about the process. The broadcasting started on 26 May 2011 and its first guest was the German Ambassador, Her Excellency Carola Müller-Holtkemper. In a very nice and cordial way Ms. Müller-Holtkemper talked with the CLUB FM and Club TV radio moderator Edi Oga about her life and experiences in Albania, her official tasks and also some private aspects of her responsible position. The concept of the radio show is based on a 30 minutes talk, interrupted with music pieces selected by every ambassador him or herself. The radio show delivers a variety of different personalities: all EU ambassadors based in Albania are invited to come as friends and talk about their countries and their lives. After the German Ambassador, guests of the show so far were the Italian Ambassador, Saba D’Elia, the Austrian Ambassador, Florian Raunig, the Swedish Ambassador, Patrik Svensson, and the Greek Ambassador, Nicolas Pazios. This will give all listeners and TV audience the possibility to learn more about Europe and its many facets.

The radio and TV show will be on air

during the whole summer on following days:

Radio show – Club FM

- Thursdays – 19.00 hrs (First broadcast)
- Sundays – 23.00 hrs
- Tuesdays – 12.00 hrs

Radio show – Club TV

- Thursdays – 19.00 hrs (First broadcast)
- Saturdays – 09.00 hrs
- Tuesdays – 16.00 hrs

### Swiss Ambassador Visits Areas and Communities Affected by Floods in Shkodër

Swiss Ambassador in Albania, H.E Yvana Enzler, visited several sites affected by the 2010 flooding around Shkodra. Accompanied by Swiss Cooperation Office staff and in the presence of officials from the water utility, Ambassador Enzler visited the sites on 11 May 2011 and met with local people who have received Swiss aid and assistance. As humanitarian kits and sanitary packages were distributed for approximately 360 people, the Ambassador met with local Roma families living in a settlement near Shkodra Lake. She acknowledged the relevance and significant effects these actions have for the region and the local community.

Switzerland provided a prompt response and contributions to the flooding emergency and assisted the areas most affected by floods. Around 83,000 Euro were invested in infrastructure improvement for protecting four pumping stations in the Zues, Bërdic, and Oblik communes. As a result, 8,600 citizens now have reliable and continuous access

to clean drinking water. In addition, 90 Roma families living in hard conditions exasperated by the floods received household and sanitary packages. The Swiss also developed an emergency action plan that will be operational for 8 communes as of autumn 2011. In a broader context, Swiss assistance in the area of Shkodër involves focusing on regional development and strengthening local government.

### Switzerland Provides additional funds to Increase Hydro Plant Dam Safety in Albania

The Swiss government, through the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) has approved a new grant of 4.3 million Euros to support the raising of safety standards for dams in Albania. On 24 May 2011, Swiss Ambassador Yvana Enzler, signed an agreement on dam safety with the Minister of Economy, Trade and Energy, Nasip Naço, the Minister of Public Works and Transportation, Sokol Oldashi, and the KESH Director, Engjëll Zeqo.

Switzerland – which has a long tradition in quality construction and safe dam operations – had previously committed 1 million Euro in order to study and analyse the situation in the Drin and Mat river dams, catchment areas and downstream conditions.

The new grant will be used for dam safety monitoring, rock fall prevention measures and the establishment of emergency preparedness plans.

In addition to conforming dam safety to European standards, the new grant will ensure the protection of people living downstream of Drin and Mat rivers. Moreover, this will also guarantee the continuous hydropower production from 5 hydro power plants that represent 90% of Albania's energy produc-



Photo: Swiss Ambassador Yvana Enzler, visits areas and communities affected by floods in Shkodër

tion.

In recent years there has been serious concern over dam safety in Albania as heavy rainfall has caused flooding in several areas in the vicinity of the Drin and Mat river basins

With the new Swiss grant, it is expected that by 2014 KESH will have a monitoring system in place, will have established measures that protect dam infrastructure and will have operational emergency action plans ready for implementation.

### Japan hands over medical equipment to 14 Regional Level Medical Emergency Centres

The Government of Japan has approved grant assistance in the amount of 718 million JPY (equivalent to 6.2 million Euro) for the "Project for the Improvement of the Medical Equipment of the Regional Level Emergency Centres". Through this project, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is providing emergency medical equipment, diagnostic imaging equipment, clinical laboratory equipment, ambulances and

emergency lifesaving equipment to the 14 medical emergency centres nationwide for the modernization of the medical emergency centres. The Government of Japan has approved this project on 2 February 2010. The ultimate goal of this project is to enable quick diagnosis and treatment at facilities nearest the patients, so as to improve the lifesaving rate in Albania. During April and May 2011, medical equipment such as advanced life support ambulances, CT scanners, patient monitors, imaging diagnostic equipment and other emergency lifesaving equipment, were donated to the Pediatric Hospital "Mother Theresa", the Regional hospitals in Lezha, Kukës, Dibra, Durrës, Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Vlora, Gjirokastra, and Korça, two district hospitals in Lushnja and Saranda as well as the Emergency Dispatch Centre in Tirana.. Handover ceremonies were held in Kukës Regional Hospital, and Lushnja District Hospital, in the presence of Mr. Yuzo OTA, Minister, Embassy of Japan to Albania, Resident Representative of JICA Balkan Office, Satoru Kurosawa, Minister of Health, Petrit Vasili, and other representatives of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Council of Ministers.

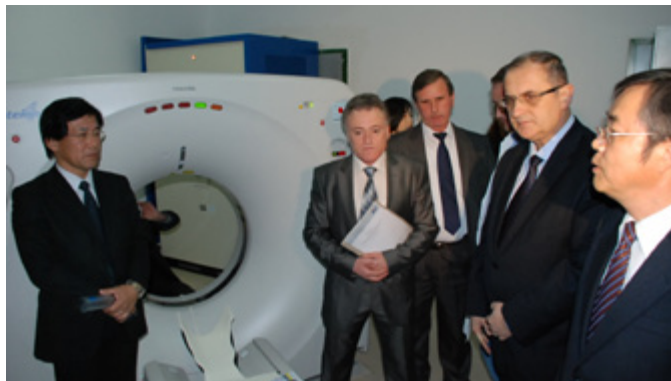


Photo: Handover ceremony in Kukes Regional Hospital, held in the presence Mr. Yuzo OTA, Minister, Embassy of Japan to Albania, Resident Representative of JICA Balkan Office, Satoru Kurosawa, and Minister of Health, Petrit Vasili.

**USAID Launches Program to Support Legal Education in Albania**

On 12 May 2011, USAID and the Albanian Chamber of Advocates signed a cooperation agreement to establish a Continuous Legal Education (CLE) program in Albania. USAID/Albania’s Mission Director, Joseph Williams, and the Chairman of the Albanian National Chamber of Advocates (NCA), Maksim Haxhia, signed a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines USAID and NCA activities to establish the program over the coming years. The CLE program is an important pillar of justice sector reform in Albania and will help strengthen Albania’s legal profession. It will help train and increase the professional standards of Albanian lawyers and bring them more closely in line with European standards. With technical support from USAID’s Albanian Justice Sector Strengthening Project (JuST), the CLE program will initially be piloted in the Regional Chambers of Vlora and Durres, and then rolled out nationally in 2013.



Photo: USAID/Albania’s Mission Director, Joseph Williams, and the Chairman of the Albanian National Chamber of Advocates (NCA), Maksim Haxhia, signed a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines USAID and NCA activities to establish a continuing legal education program (Photo Credit: USAID JuST).

**EU contributes to improving safety in the streets of Albania**

In May 2011, the 7 million Euro Police Assistance Mission of the European Community to Albania (PAMECA III) commenced a series of traffic education training activities in which traffic police officers jointly with school teachers will raise the awareness amongst pupils in all Albania’s schools of the importance of safe and responsible behaviour on the

roads. A result of an inter-ministerial agreement between the Albanian Ministries of the Interior and the Education & Science based on PAMECA’s initiative in 2010, this traffic education training will become a regular part of the curriculum throughout Albania.

Thirteen traffic police officers and thirteen representatives from the Ministry of Education had to undergo the training for one week in the ASP Centre of Police Education. The training was held by Austrian Traffic Police Experts in traffic education. On 19 May, the last day of the training, practical exercises with pupils in Tirana were held in the public school “Katër Dëshmorët”. The Minister of Interior, Bujar Nishani; Minister of Education and Science, Myqerem Tafaj; the Head of Operations of the EU Delegation to Albania, Luigi Brusa; the British Ambassador, Fiona McIlwham; and other senior representatives attended the event and underlined their support for such education in public safety, pointing out that

it would not only lead to fewer fatalities on Albania’s roads but also greater respect for the rule of law. Mr Brusa noted that “On the EU side, we are happy to help improve road safety for the benefit of Albania’s pedestrians, cyclers, passengers and drivers. But it’s a team work – our assistance will only bear fruit if children and adults will be conscientious and responsible drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclers”.

This training is a contribution of the European Union Delegation in Albania delivered through PAMECA III to help the Albanian State Police approach EU standards. This is the first time in Albania that it is mandatory for the Albanian State Police (ASP) Traffic Directorate and the respective teachers to hold joint lessons in traffic education in schools and this will reflect in the curriculum of the Ministry of Education & Science in the next school year. Such trainings will go on in the future in other relevant areas of Traffic Police.



Photo: PAMECA Road Safety Training at Schools



Photo: PAMECA Road Safety Training in the Field

### UNODC-WHO Joint Program trains practitioners on evidence-based drug dependence treatment and care

A two-day training on “Screening, Assessment and Treatment Planning” took place in Tirana on 16-17 May 2011. The training was attended by 27 participants from the primary health care service, toxicological centre, school nurses, prison staff and NGOs. The training was conducted by three Albanian trainers, who had benefited from a UNODC/WHO funded training in Zlatibor, Serbia, assisted by Prof. Raj Boyjoonauth from NHS Foundation, London. The whole two-day training was interactive, involving roles plays and other small group activities. During the training, the participants got very familiar with the MATRS Treatment Model based on the ASI Instrument. At the end of the training, the trainers concluded that a follow up plan needs to be developed in order to ensure a good and continuous use of the screening and assessment tools. The feedback questionnaire from the students indicated a high level of satisfaction. Participative training delivered by motivated and well prepared local trainers, the event was truly a great success. This training activity was organized in the framework of the implementation of the UNODC-WHO Joint Program on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care whose overall aim is to promote and support worldwide, with a particular focus on low-income and middle-income countries, evidence-based and ethical treatment policies, strategies and interventions to reduce the health and social burden caused by drug use and dependence. The capacity building component of the UNODC-WHO Joint Program is implemented jointly by UNODC and WHO. Both organizations make the best use of material and human resources already available in both organizations. These resources include a UNODC training package consisting of 4 volumes on different aspects of evidence-based drug dependence treatment and care (including the reduction of negative health and social consequences of drug abuse such as HIV and AIDS) and a body of trained professionals in Europe, to act as master-trainers for training in Albania and other countries. In order to ensure optimal results and enhance knowledge transfer, the UNODC training package is translated into Albanian.



Photo: UNODC-WHO Joint Program trains practitioners on evidence-based drug dependence treatment and care

### Youth discuss their role in responding to the challenges of climate change

On 3 May 2011, children from Ylber School in Tirana learned about the challenges of climate change and the steps they can all take in protecting nature and the environment. School Principal, Benita Prat Aguirre commented: “We have been working in ecology, incorporating didactic units in all the school subjects; planning very well the objectives, preparing the content, the structures and activities. We have to coexist with nature. We should think about the earth we are going to leave to our children.” Reflecting on her involvement in the awareness

raising activities, Kejsi Progni, an 8th Grade Student said: “We talked about greenhouse gases, the causes and effects of global warming. As children we can’t change the fate of climate change or avoid the damages, but we can offer our help in our families to improve the environment, our lives and the lives of our successors.” Simone Shahini, a 5th Grade Student, who also took part, commented: “It’s important to protect the environment, we are the future of this country, and maybe one day the effects of global warming will be huge. We are just kids but we can do small things that can help the world by joining together and making everyone aware of the issue.”

The activities were organized with the support of the UNDP EU Environment



Photo: Students from Ylber School in Tirana learn about the science of climate change during one of the environmental awareness activities.

Requirements Programme, to empower people to become active players in ensuring the preservation of the environment through the promotion of responsible lifestyle choices and the use of renewable energy sources. The UNDP EU Environment Requirements Programme is being implemented under the One UN Environment Pillar, which aims to accelerate the achievement of environmentally sustainable development in Albania (MDG-7) by integrating the principles of sustainable development into national and local policies and programmes, observing the commitments of the Albanian Government within the EU accession process. Specific objectives of the Programme include: supporting the Albanian Government to comply with certain requirements of the EU environmental *acquis*; establishing the basis for a formal mechanism to enable the financial self-sustainability of environmental activities; improving public participation in decision making; improving waste management systems in rural areas; and supporting the integration of environmental concerns into other sectoral policies.

### Fourteen New Actuaries Graduate from USAID Program in Albania

There is a growing number of professional actuaries in Albania, made possible through the USAID-funded Actuarial Training and Certification Program (ATCP). On 25 May 2011, fourteen graduates received diplomas and certification to be licensed as professional actuaries to support Albania's growing insurance and banking sectors.

Actuaries are risk managers who provide important services to banks and



Photo: Fourteen graduates received diplomas and certification to be licensed as professional actuaries to support Albania's growing insurance and banking sectors (Photo Credit: FSVC)

non-banking financial organizations and provide added security and transparency within the financial system. The eighteen month post-graduate diploma program was organized by the Financial Services Volunteer Corps (FSVC), in cooperation with Albania's Financial Supervisory Authority (FSA) and the Albanian Association of Actuaries (A). The program was based on the best practices of the UK Institute of Actuaries and consisted of 16 training modules, with eight basic-level and eight advanced-level courses.

### Workshop in Vlora concerning financial tools to support Albanian SMEs

On 19 May 2011, a workshop entitled "Financial Tools supporting Albanian SMEs" took place in Vlora as part of the

Programme for Private Sector Development funded by the Italian Development Cooperation. The Director of the Italian Cooperation in Albania, Aldo Sicignano, the Italian General Consul in Vlora, Sergio Strozzi, the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Vlora, Arben Breshani, and the Director of the Competitiveness Policy Department of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy, Bashkim Sykja, opened the workshop. It was attended by eight SMEs representatives, some coming also from Fier and Gjirokaster. The workshop aimed at presenting the main criteria and conditions for accessing the two financial tools set up by the Program in favour of Albanian SMEs: the 25 million Euro Credit Line and the 2.5 million Euro Guarantee Fund. Since 2009, the Credit Line has financed 48 SMEs investments projects, with a total disbursement of about 11 million Euros. The implementation phase of the Guarantee Fund started last April:



Photo 1: Director of the Competitiveness Policy Department of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy, Bashkim Sykja, President of the Chamber of Commerce of Vlora, Arben Breshani, Italian General Consul in Vlora, Sergio Strozzi and Director of the Italian Cooperation in Albania, Aldo Sicignano.



Photo 2: Italian Cooperation SMEs development expert, Fulvio Capurso, Director of the Competitiveness Policy Department of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy, Bashkim Sykja, and President of the Chamber of Commerce of Vlora, Arben Breshani

SMEs are encouraged to apply in order to benefit from the credit opportunities coming from this financial tool. In its role as main European donor for the development of the private sector, the Italian Cooperation actively promotes these workshops in order to improve the business environment and thus strengthen the development of Albanian SMEs and increase their competitiveness in the regional and European market. At the workshop, held in Vlora, the Director of Program Management Unit (PMU) of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy, Kino Buxheli and PMU staff informed participants about the technical procedures to apply for the soft loans yielded under the Italian Cooperation Program. The workshop has also been an opportunity for the entrepreneurs to discuss partnerships for joint-ventures and joint-investments. After the workshop, an evaluation mission, composed of Italian Cooperation and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy experts, visited three local SMEs (Serena Mobileri, Tecnoplast e Vlora Alumin), which benefited from the Program's financial instruments. The mission found that loans have been positively invested to increase the technological stock of the three SMEs.

### Launching of ALCDF Activities

On 17 May 2011, the Albanian Local Capacity Development Foundation (ALCDF) officially launched its activities in Albania. Participants included the Minister for Innovation and Information and Communication Technology, Genc Pollo, senior government representatives,



Photo: Launching ceremony of ALCDF Activities

representatives of national and local institutions, representatives from donor community, and members of nongovernmental organizations in the country.

In his opening remarks, Minister for Innovation and for Information and Communication Technology, Genc Pollo, congratulated the ALCDF for undertaking such initiatives, which enable rural communities to better address their needs and become partners in implementing innovative ideas. Mr. Pollo expressed his belief that this project will be successful. He added that implementation of this initiative in Albania can serve as example of success for other countries where the ALCDF initiative will be implemented in the near future.

The ceremony was also greeted by the Dutch Ambassador, Henk van den Dool GC, in his capacity as a member of the Board of Directors of ALCDF, the Executive Director of LEAA and one of the 6 (six) cofounders of ALCDF Founda-

tion, Valbona Ylli, and Director of SNV Albania and Kosovë, Elvana Zhezha. While the ALCDF Executive Director, Lindita Manga, and ALCDF Business Manager, Dhurata Thanasi, made an expose of ALCDF activities and explained to all participants how the new portal of ALCDF or as newly called PREX Albania was functioning and explained what PREX Albania stands for and how the Albanian expertise would be part of a regional, continental and, why not, a global network. All the phases of registering to PREX Albania portal were explained through a Power Point presentation.

### Gender is taken into account within GIZ projects

GIZ (which recently changed its name and is still probably better known as GTZ) is strongly committed to supporting gender equality. The new Gender Strategy 2010 - 2014 reiterates the importance of this topic and places it on the daily agenda of all its projects. Below are two project examples that illustrate the approach taken by GIZ when focusing on gender issues:

The Open Regional Fund for South Eastern Europe – Legal Reform comes within the remit of the component for the “Regional Implementation of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Instruments” and organised a seminar at the Law Faculty in Tirana. Throughout the summer term, from March to June 2011, law students were introduced, once a week for an hour, to the main national and international legal acts and were also exposed to a variety of legal discussions. The students had to actively participate by preparing exposes and/or by preparing discussion topics that were related to



Photo: Law Students at the seminar Gender and Law

typical aspects of gender issues. Within that context, and for the occasion of the Day of Justice in Albania, 10.05.2011, the students prepared some pieces of artwork that were exhibited for 10 days at the Hotel de Paris in Tirana.

The GIZ Human Resources Development/ Vocational Education and Training (VET) Program prepared a gender analysis of the program itself and also of the Albanian VET sector in general. The aim was to better understand the overall environment and to draft and organize activities accordingly. It is significant that, according to the gender global gap analysis of the world economic forum in 2010, Albania was deemed to have almost reached gender equality in the area of education (with a score of 0.9942, the best score of 1 denoting that equality has been reached) whereas a significant gap was still perceived in the area of economic participation (where the score was only 0.6808). In this situation, it is important for VET to reach high standards and a high level of quality as these factors contribute directly to preparation for the labour market.

### Albanian tax system and its effects on gender equality

On 22 February 2011, the cooperation project between the General Tax Department in Albania and the Swedish Tax Agency, organized a participatory workshop with tax officials, some line ministries representatives, and civil society organizations to present and discuss the findings and recommendations of a study conducted as part of the project on the Albanian tax system and its effects on women and men. The study met with high interest from the participants and the final report reflecting their feed-back is now ready for distribution. The report can be found in the official web-page of the [Swedish Embassy in Tirana](#).

### ILO Marks World Day for Safety and Health at Work

On 4 May 2011, to mark World Day for Safety and Health at Work, the ILO in Albania, in cooperation with the State Labour Inspectorate, organized a roundtable entitled *Man-*



Photo: The roundtable to mark World Day for Safety and Health at Work

*agement System for Safety and Health at Work: A tool for continued improvement.* The event was attended by the Inspector General of Labour, Vikrita Çuto, the UN Resident Coordinator in Albania and the UNDP Resident Representative, Zineb Benjelloun-Touimi, representatives of the Ministry of Labour and State Labour Inspectorate, as well as representatives of employers' and workers' organisations. Safety and health standards at work are an essential component of international labour standards and laws. This year, World Day for Safety and Health at Work focused on the implementation of a Management System for Safety and Health at Work, as a tool to mitigate safety and health related incidents and accidents at work. According to ILO statistics, each year worldwide approximately 337 million accidents occur in the workplace of which 2.3 million deaths, or in other words, about 6300 deaths per day. To ensure the effective functioning of the Management System for Safety and Health at Work effective dialogue with social partners through joint safety and health committees or collective bargaining arrangements is needed.

"The inclusion of a management system for safety and health at work during the implementation of preventive and protective measures in the workplace, is essential to improve work conditions and environment", said ILO representative in Albania, Alfred Topi. With the active participation of social partners, the man-

agement systems for safety and health at work will be able to find practical solutions for improving the safety and health at work. The General Labour Inspector, Vikrita Çuto, briefed the participants on progress made in the field of occupational safety and health. She said that in addition to the formulation and adoption of the basic legal framework in this area, raising awareness among the general population on safety and health through an information campaign has been undertaken. In addition, a quantitative and qualitative increase in the work of labour inspectors was recorded. The representatives of social partners, employers and employees, praised the steps taken and submitted their suggestions for further improvement of health and safety conditions at work.

In her remarks, the UN Resident Coordinator in Albania and the UNDP Resident Representative, Zineb Benjelloun-Touimi expressed the commitment of UN agencies in establishing a preventative culture of safety and health at work, which depends on the commitment, cooperation and joint action of government, employers, employees and all other relevant actors. Ms. Benjelloun-Touimi went on to highlight her intention to further the dialogue for partnership in the next Programme of Cooperation of UN and Government of Albania for the period 2012 to 2016, commenting: "We will certainly consult with you and expect your support and partnership in the formulation and implementation of so-

cial dialogue and employment.”

The ILO Office in Albania has marked World Day for Safety and Health at Work since 2003, stressing the importance of and promoting preventive policies of accidents and diseases at work through social dialogue and tripartite cooperation.

### **Kukes miners learn about their rights in safety and health at work**

Miners from Vlahna Village in Kukes are receiving training in occupational safety and health as part of the One UN Joint Programme Youth Employment and Migration. A total of forty miners are benefiting from the training, which is taking place as part of their recruitment to work in the nearby Vlahna Mine, following recent direct investment in the mining sector. The training aims to ensure improved working conditions and long-term job security for the local community. Course Trainer, Shpend Sokoli stressed: “In our village, everyone, especially young people that didn’t have previous experience in the mines expressed an interest in the course, to gain knowledge on the working procedures in the mines”. He went on to note that “the training course addresses the issue of occupational safety and health of persons working in the mines, the working process involved, so that that every trainee gains an in depth knowledge regarding the working environment and the working conditions as well as other relevant geological information”. Agron Kraja, one of 40 participants in the training course highlighted: “Due to its geographic position, our village is very poor. However, our village is rich in minerals especially in chrome. In this respect, the main source of employment and development in this region remains the chrome mine.” He concluded by commenting: “I really appreciate this training. I have been able to gain an understanding on how to work in the mines. Knowing the threats and costs associated with the extraction of minerals is very important, this training is very useful.”

The One UN Joint Programme Youth Employment and Migration: Reaping the benefits and mitigating the risks is jointly implemented by ILO, IOM,



Photo: Miners from Vlahna Village in Kukes receiving training in occupational safety and health

UNDP and UNICEF, and aims to enhance decent work opportunities for young people and migration management in Albania through better alignment of national strategies on youth, employment and migration. The programme is funded by the Government of Spain through the MDG Achievement Fund for Youth and Migration.

### **Water SWG discussed the draft Strategy on Water and Sewerage**

On 3 May, 2011, a SWG meeting on the Water and Sewerage Sector was held to present and discuss a draft strategy paper on water and sewage management. After, giving the opening remarks, MPWT Deputy Minister Ylli Manjani, stated that the strategy proposes and attempts to justify the commercialization of the sector. (Tirana, Durres and Elbasan are currently managed at the central government level). Regionalization is the second important tool of the strategy. After the strategy is approved, a master plan will be prepared by KfW. In addition, he noted that the regulatory entity is also a key player in that it will monitor the performance of the utilities. A structural reform will follow after the strategy is approved, covering areas such as: performance, standards and licensing, and the upgrading of water utilities according to the EU directive. A financing mechanism is under preparation through the General Directorate

of Water Supply and Waste Water. The meeting continued with a presentation made by Mr. Zeneli (MPPT), describing the process of drafting the strategy, in which he indicated that the process was inclusive. The draft strategy has also been sent to the parliamentary commission for suggestions. As a follow up, Mr. Hali, the Director of GDWS, gave a presentation on the current situation in sector. He discussed utility performance issues as well as technical and financial indicators.

Mr Zeneli, stated that priority issues relative to water resources to be addressed are the drafting and approval of the new water resources law. He also indicated that capacity building for the Technical Secretariat function of the River Basin Councils needed be undertaken and that river basin management plans need to be prepared for all six river basins consistent with the directives of the EU. In addition the directive of the Council of Ministers regarding sanitary protection zones around the well heads at groundwater well fields need to be enforced. He also addressed regulatory and financial issues such as expanding the implementation activities of the Water Regulator Authority in terms of its authority to issue licenses for the provision of water supply and sewerage services to the public and applying the concept of voluntary decision making at the local government level, but with incentives from Central Government to encourage aggregation, increasing private sector participation.

**World Bank**

Albania Natural Resources Development Project, Mission for Implementation Completion and Results Report, took place from 30 May to 3 June 2011. The overall mission objective was to evaluate the implementation progress of Albania Natural Resources Development Project which is closing in 30 June 2011. The specific objectives for this mission were to: (i) review of the status of implementation of the Project activities financed by Sida Trust Fund (closed on 1 May 2011) and IDA credit (closing on 30 June 2011); (ii) discuss the implementation of the new Sida Trust Fund; (iii) supervise the implementation of forest, pasture, and micro-catchment management plans; and (iv) follow-up of the preparation of the Project Completion Report.

Education Excellence and Equity Project, Joint European Investment Bank (EIB), Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) and World Bank Mission, took place from 16 to 23 May 2011. A joint development partners mission composed of representatives of the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the World Bank (WB) visited Albania during 16 – 23 May 2011 to supervise the Albania Education Excellence and Equity Project, including attending the Semi-annual Review of the project. During the visit to Albania, the team reviewed overall project implementation progress as well as implementation projections until the end of the calendar year. A focus of this review is to accurately determine

## In-country Missions

what activities can be completed by the current closing date of December 2011, as well as projections of what could be done under a six month extension. In that context, the team reviewed progress in all priority areas, as well as follow up on the Infrastructure Projects Facility technical assistance grant. The team also assessed the status with the implementation of the Infrastructure Project Facility (IPF) grant on “decision methodology for Investments in Education Infrastructure.”

**Business Environment and Reform**

and Institutional Strengthening Project (P096643), Supervision Mission, took place from 23 to 27 May 2011. The objectives of the mission were to: (i) meet with the staff of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy working on the BERIS project to discuss the progress so far, the procurement plan, disbursement, and the steps necessary to ensure a successful closure of the project in January 2012; (ii) meet with the staff of General Department of Metrology to discuss the progress of works for the construction of the new Metrology laboratory, purchase of equipment and know – how transfer.

## governmentdonor*dialogue*

As of 15 December 2010 the World Bank took over as the Chair of the Donor Technical Secretariat from the Swiss Cooperation Office.

All comments regarding Government-Donor Dialogue are warmly welcomed!

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If you would like to contribute, send your text to the Donor Technical Secretariat (DTS) Office ([nevila.como@aidharmonisation.org.al](mailto:nevila.como@aidharmonisation.org.al)) or the Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination (DSDC) ([koordinimi@km.gov.al](mailto:koordinimi@km.gov.al)) by the 5th of every month. An ideal word count for submissions is around 100 words.

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