



Advocacy Training & Resource Center

The ADVOCATE



USAID
NGA POPULLI AMERIKAN
OD AMERICKOG NARODA

Supporting the
NGO community



Volume IV • Issue 10 • December 2006

CONTENTS

Page 2

Youth Initiative for Human Rights Publishes Report on Print Media in Kosovo

New NGO Founded in Mitrovica Seeks to Return Displaced Citizens

Journalists of Kaçanik Form Club

Page 3

Civil Society Forms Anticorruption Coalition

The Council for Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms Organizes International Festival of Documentary Films on Human Rights

Students of Kosovo School for European Integration Learn from Regional Experiences of the EU Integration Process

Page 4

Balkan Human Rights Network Releases 2006 Annual Yearbook of Human Rights

Human Rights House Founded in Macedonia

Parliament Holds a Public Hearing for the Situation of Children's Rights in Albania

New funding opportunities, news, events, trainings, etc

can be found on
ATRC web site:
www.advocacy-center.org

NGO funding opportunities

ATRC Calls for NGO Proposals for Partnership and Networking Grants

ATRC announced on December 1 a Request for Applications (RFA) for the fourth round of the IREX/Kosovo Civil Society Program Partnership and Networking Grants for Kosovo NGOs.

Partnership and Networking Grants will be awarded to eligible NGOs whose proposals contain a strong partnership and networking component between NGOs and NGOs and other sectors (local or central government, private businesses). Projects should also address critical issues in any of three grant target areas: Transparency and Anti-Corruption, Community Development or Ethnic Reconciliation

and Conflict Mitigation. Duration of these grants is 6-9 months. NGOs are eligible to apply for grant funding up to \$25,000. *The deadline for submitting proposals is December 15, 2006.*

A comprehensive and detailed RFA Package (including program description, eligibility criteria, application timelines, selection criteria and review process, required application forms and proposal guidelines and format) may be obtained from ATRC at Agim Rramadani, Nr.15, Prishtina, or downloaded from ATRC's website: www.advocacy-center.org. The Kosovo Civil Society

Program (KCSP) is a three-year initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX). The goal of the program is the further development of Kosovo civil society and the NGO community in becoming a vibrant and viable sector that plays a significant role in representing Kosovo's diverse citizenry and shaping public policy.

For more information, call 038 244 810 or e-mail grants@advocacy-center.org.

Civil Society and Government Discuss Decentralization in Deçan

ATRC in cooperation with a local NGO from Deçan, "Epoka e Re," organized a public discussion entitled "Process of Decentralization in the Municipality of Deçan" on November 24. Participants included Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning Ardian Gjini, Mayor of the Municipality of Deçan Nazmi Selmanaj and civil society representatives from Deçan region.



Representatives of central and local government and civil society discuss process of decentralization in the Municipality of Deçan on Nov. 24

Continues on next page

This newsletter is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of ATRC and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

New NGOs

New NGO Founded in Mitrovica Seeks to Return Displaced Citizens

"Bregu i Veriut" was founded in November to return displaced persons to their homes in Northern part of Mitrovica. Musa Miftari, chairperson of the organization, said "Bregu i Veriut" will seek assistance from citizens, governing institutions, civil society and national and international institutions to enable a gradual return of all citizens to their property in Northern part of Mitrovica.

Journalists of Kaçanik Form Club

Journalists from Kaçanik Municipality established a club on November 19, which will protect the rights and dignity of local journalists, promote free media and foster public transparency. Journalists of Kaçanik discussed and approved the statute of their club and elected its chairperson, Kjani Sallahu.



Civil Society and Government Discuss Decentralization in Deçan

Continues from page 1



Villagers of Sllup, Voksh and Rastavice expressed their concerns about Pilot Municipality Unit of Junik, to Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning, Ardian Gjini, on Nov. 24

Villagers of Sllup, Voksh and Rastavice expressed their concerns about plans

to merge the se villages into the Pilot Municipality Unit of Junik. "The current pilot project does not serve the needs of the villagers of Sllup, Voksh and Rastavice. It does not bring public services closer to villagers," Nezir Panxhja, head

of Voksh village, said.

Minister Gjini, also a member of the negotiation team on the future political status of Kosovo, tried to assure Deçan citizens that their voice is being heard. He vowed that their concerns will be considered and discussed with Lutfi Haziri, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Local Governance Administration. The discussion was financially supported by the Balkan Trust for Democracy (BTD).

For more information contact info@advocacy-center.org.

Media monitoring

Youth Initiative for Human Rights Publishes Report on Print Media in Kosovo

Between August 1 and October 15 the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) monitored nine Kosovar daily newspapers to examine media coverage of key issues relevant to Kosovar society. The media monitoring also examined the influence editorials might have upon public views. The papers monitored included Koha Ditore, Express, Zëri, Kosova Sot, Bota Sot, Epoka e Re, Lajm, Iliria Post and Pavarësia News.

The monitoring focused on talks between Prishtina and Belgrade regarding the future political status of Kosovo, especially the issue of decentralization and community rights. "This focus reflects

the fundamental importance of these negotiations for citizens and the future of Kosovo," the YIHR report said.

The report also analyzed the quality of reporting in

Kosovo media, as well as the level of (un)professionalism. "There is much room for improvement in the methods used by journalists in producing newspaper articles. Basic errors are made such as the use of one source of information in creating a story, which contradicts fundamental principles of balanced reporting," the report stated.

"However, there is a positive tendency in the Kosovo media to give more space to minorities, where they can equally express their thoughts, feelings and attitudes," it continued.



For further information, phone 038 244 517 or e-mail ksoffice@yihhr.org.

Students of Kosovo School for European Integration Learn from Regional Experiences of the EU Integration Process



Representatives from Croatia, Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovenia shared lessons learned from the European Union (EU) integration process with students from the Kosovo School for European Integration at a regional seminar organized by the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation on November 24-25.

Students were introduced to specific topics on EU integration in South Eastern Europe, including Croatia's path towards the EU, Albania's perspective on European integration, Macedonia's experience as a candidate country, Montenegro in the process of integration and Slovenia and the EU.

Regional participants mentioned the mistakes their countries have made during the EU integration process. They advised Kosovars against repeating these same mistakes.

"Kosovars' duty is to be ready as soon as possible to knock on the EU's door, and Kosovo is heading in the right direction," Kosovo Prime Minister Agim Çeku said.

For further information, contact office@kcsfoundation.org.

Transparency and anticorruption

Civil Society Forms Anticorruption Coalition

Sixty representatives of civil society established the Kosovo Anticorruption Coalition during a workshop on transparency and anticorruption organized in Prizren by ATRC, the United Nations Development Program and the Kosovo Agency for Anticorruption on Dec. 1-2.

The workshop aimed to gather, strengthen and support civil society in Kosovo in fighting corruption, according to organizers.

Participants also discussed a number of topics related to transparency and anticorruption issues, such as the role of civil society in increasing institutional transparency, accountability and capacity to fight

corruption; the importance of building coalitions; advocacy as a tool in combating corruption; and the latest findings on people's perceptions regarding transparency in Kosovo.

"Kosovo needs a strong and effective coalition of different civil society organizations in its fight against corruption. NGOs, united in a coalition, would play a role in the community, pressuring and serving as a 'watchdog' over institutional reforms," Rreze Duli, Director of ATRC, said.

"Due to the lack of good cooperation between civil society organizations in the fight against this phenomenon that is affecting development in Kosovo, UNDP

and ATRC organized the workshop which resulted in a new civil society anticorruption coalition," Evliana Berani, the UNDP representative, said.

The new coalition elected a management council and approved the system of organizing normative acts of the Kosovo Anticorruption Coalition.

The seminar was part of UNDP's "Kosovo Transparency Initiative," which includes advocacy activities, research and training on anticorruption and transparency issues aiming to fight corruption in Kosovo.

For more information, contact info@advocacy-center.org.

Human Rights

The Council for Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms Organizes International Festival of Documentary Films on Human Rights

The Council for Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF) organized the seventh International Festival of Documentary Films on Human Rights in Prishtina on Dec. 5-10.

Divided into several categories, thirty films on human rights from different parts of the world were screened at cinema ABC 1 during the "One World" festival. Eleven films were from Kosovo.

The festival included public discussions among different groups on topics such as impartiality in journalism, women's rights, children's rights and problems between "Veteven-

dosja" activists and the Kosovo Police Service were part of the festival.

"The International Festival of Documentary Films on Human Rights 'One World' is gaining the status of a traditional festival," Pajazit Nushi, Chairman of CDHRF, said. According to Nushi, the Kosovar audience is becoming increasingly interested in human rights. "The audio and visual images on human rights accompanied by short comments and stories are having more impact than other forms of development of culture for the protection of human rights

and freedoms," he said.

For more information, visit www.cdhrf.org.



"The German Secret (see picture)" and "Children of Çabra" won the best documentary films prize of the festival on Dec.10

**Executive Director**RREZE DULI
rreze@advocacy-center.org**Financial & Administration
Manager**GANI ASLLANI
gani@advocacy-center.org**Grant Manager**TEUTA LUXHA
teuta@advocacy-center.org**Grant Officer**KUSHTRIM KALOSHI
kushtrimk@advocacy-center.org**Grant Officer**XHAFAER AHMETI
kushtrimk@advocacy-center.org**Training & Consultancy
Services Manager**DONIKA SALIHU
donika@advocacy-center.org**Trainer & Consultant**AFERDITA SURROI
aferdita@advocacy-center.org**Trainer & Consultant**KUSHTRIM ISLAMI
kushtrim@advocacy-center.org**Trainer & Consultant**NORA SUSURI
nora@advocacy-center.org**Communication & Outreach
Manager**ARJETA DOROCI
arjeta@advocacy-center.org**Program Officer**NATYRA ZHJEQI
natyra@advocacy-center.org**IT and Database Manager**ARSIM KOSUMI
arsim@advocacy-center.orgSt. Agim Ramadani Nr. 15
2nd Floor Prishtina, Kosovo
Phone/Fax: +381 (0) 38 244 810**Regional human rights developments****New Publication****Balkan Human Rights Network Releases 2006 Annual
Yearbook of Human Rights**

The Balkan Human Rights Network (BHRN) published in Dec. the sixth edition of its Yearbook of Human Rights. Every year BHRN chooses one topic in the public discourse in the Balkan region. This year's issue is "EU Accession and Human Rights - Consequences, Tendencies and the Role of Civil Society."

The BHRN Yearbook of Human Rights is a collection of essays written by renowned regional experts who contributed with their analyses and opinions on the given topic.

"EU Accession and Human Rights - Consequences, Tendencies and the Role of Civil Society' is becoming more and more important as the date for the accession of Romania and Bulgaria is approaching. All the countries of the Western Balkans aspire to become members of the EU but too often the human rights perspective of the process is overlooked," BHRN said.

The whole publication can be downloaded from <http://www.balkan-rights.net/bhrn/content/view/178/45/>. The BHRN website is www.balkan-rights.net.

Source: *Balkan Academic News*

Human Rights House Founded in Macedonia

Skopje, the capital town of Macedonia

Nov. 28. It aims to more rapidly develop civil society and to strengthen the capacities of civic organizations in Macedonia.

The Macedonian Human Rights House is part of the international Human Rights House Network based in Oslo, Norway. It represents several NGOs, whose joint mission is promoting human rights in home countries and abroad.

The Human Rights House was founded in Skopje on

"The House in Macedonia will serve as a national cen-

ter for human rights protection, contributing to the development of civil society," Dragi Zmijnac, President of the House, said. "The House also aims to step up cooperation between human rights protection activities for the benefit of citizens in exercising their rights and needs."

Macedonia is the 13th country in the world to open a branch of the Human Rights House Network.

Source: *Macedonian News*

**Parliament Holds a Public Hearing for the Situation
of Children's Rights in Albania**

The Parliamentary Sub-Commission for Juveniles and Equal Opportunities in cooperation with the Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania (CRCA), organized on Nov. 21 an open public hearing on the situation of children's rights in the country, attended by more than 30 representatives of NGOs, civil society and media.

Altin Hazizaj, Director of CRCA, commented that this is a new tradition for the Al-

banian Parliament, which through these open public hearings gets the possibility to know better the problems children face and to consult with NGOs and civil society.

It was agreed that the Sub-Commission for Juveniles and Equal Opportunities will hold a similar event once a year on the situation of children's rights. Government representatives guaranteed that the sub-commission will continue to support all NGO/civil society initiatives

for improving legislation that deals with children in Albania. To read more about CRCA visit <http://www.crca.org.al>. Source: *One World Southeast Europe*

