



International Union of Black Sea NGOs

(Black Sea NGO Network)

Newsletter

2nd edition, November 2008

In this edition:

- *2008 International Council on Social Welfare 33rd Global Conference on Social Welfare*
- *Union/Network News*
- *EC Renewed Social Agenda*
- *A Report on the First Year of Implementation of the Black Sea Synergy*
- *Black Sea NGO Forum 2008: It is Time to Meet!*
- *BSEC and PABSEC Events/The Thirty-First Meeting of the PABSEC Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee*
- *Working with National Governments and Parliaments. New initiative of Armenian NGOs.*

2008 International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) 33rd Global Conference on Social Welfare

On June 30-July 04, in Tours, France ICSW global conference was held. This meeting was significant in the sense that ICSW was also celebrating its 80th anniversary. The ICSW is a global non-governmental organization which represents a wide range of national and international member organizations that seek to advance social welfare, social justice and social development in more than 50 countries throughout the world.



ICSW and its members are active in a wide range of fields within the general areas of social development, social welfare and social justice. This includes issues such as food and nutrition, welfare and health services, social protection, education and housing, as well as many issues related to economic development, human rights and community participation.

For more information about ICSW Global Program and its activities please visit www.ICSW.org

Union/Network News

Black Sea NGOs Network was legally registered in Armenia by the name “International Union of Black Sea NGOs”.

With the aim of developing cooperation between IUBSNGO and ICSW European Region it was suggested to have an IUBSNGO representative in the ICSW Europe Board. IUBSNGO President Hripsime Kirakosyan got elected as ICSW Europe Board member. Hripsime Kirakosyan took part in the Board Meeting of ICSW European Region on October 17 and 18, 2008 in Stockholm, Sweden. During the meeting proposals of cooperation and future joint events were discussed.

The focal organization of Russian Federation Regional Public Foundation of Aged People Assistance "Dobroe Delo" (Good Deed) has become ICSW member. "Dobroe Delo" (president Eduard Karyukhin) was granted by ICSW as a National Member Organization (Category A) status for 2 years.

The representatives of IUBSNGO - Alexandra Simovic (Serbia) and Ketevan Dadunashvili (Georgia) – took part in the ICSW 33rd Global Conference in Tours and gave reports. A. Simovic gave a report on “Building a Relationship Between Civil Society and Regional Groupings of Governments”, where she presented the experience of IUBSNGO. The reports found great encouragement of the participants.



ICSW representatives Denys Correll and Solveig Askjem as well as IUBSNGO representatives Hripsime Kirakosyan, Valentin Vladu, Hrachya Amiryan, Karine Danielyan, Zhorzheta Mesropyan and Lilit Stepanyan) participated in Black Sea NGO Forum on October 31 – November 2, 2008 in Bucharest. Hrachya Amiryan, the Union General Secretary made a presentation and introduced the participants the Union/Network. The report on the Union and the Manual “Advocacy in International Institutions by Civil Society Organizations: A Practical Guide” created on the Union/Network order are posted in the forum website. The Forum was a significant event in the life of Civil Society in Black Sea region. One of the important results of the forum will be that there will be an electronic resource center for the NGOs in the region in the Forum website. For more details about the Forum, read the next article.



Black Sea NGO Forum 2008: It is Time to Meet!

At the beginning of November the Federation of Romanian Development NGOs (FOND) organized the Black Sea NGO Forum: “Time to Meet”.

The Forum was held in Bucharest, Romania, on October 31 – November 2, 2008. It was the start of an annual tradition bringing together over 100 NGOs from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, Russia, and other EU member states active in the wider Black Sea region.



The event was organized in partnership with the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation and UNDP Romania in the framework of the Black Sea Synergy.

The aim of this event was to increase the level of dialogue and coordination among NGOs in the wider Black Sea region as well as to strengthen the advocacy capacity of NGOs in the Black Sea region in order to influence development strategies in the region.

For more information visit www.blackseango.org

EC Renewed Social Agenda

European Commission launches Renewed Social Agenda.

An ambitious agenda designed to ensure that European Union policies respond effectively to today's economic and social challenges was adopted by the European Commission on 2 July 2008.

Technological change, globalisation and an ageing population are transforming Europe's societies. EU policies need to keep pace with these trends, and help people adapt to changing circumstances. The renewed social agenda aims to create more opportunities for EU citizens, improve access to quality services and demonstrate solidarity with those who are affected negatively by change.

The renewed social agenda brings together a range of EU policies in order to support action in seven priority areas:

- Children and youth – tomorrow's Europe
- Investing in people: more and better jobs, new skills
- Mobility
- Longer and healthier lives
- Combating poverty and social exclusion
- Fighting discrimination and promoting gender equality
- Opportunities, access and solidarity on the global scene

How will it work?

The Commission is proposing to use a mix of different policy tools to achieve the objectives set out in the renewed social agenda:

- **EU legislation** (e.g. proposals on tackling discrimination outside the labour market, patients' rights in cross-border health care, improving the functioning of European Works Councils)
- **Social dialogue** (encouraging representatives of workers and employers to make full use of the possibilities offered by the European Social Dialogue)
- **Cooperation between member States** (in particular, reinforced cooperation in the area of social protection and social inclusion)
- **EU funding** (mobilising the EU's Structural Funds, the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund and the PROGRESS Programme on employment and social solidarity)
- **Partnership, dialogue and communication** (involvement and consultation of non-governmental organisations, regional and local authorities and other stakeholders)
- **Ensuring that all EU policies promote opportunities, access and solidarity** (screening new initiatives for social and employment impacts)

For more information <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=547&langId=en>

Report on the First year of Implementation of the Black Sea Synergy

IP/08/977

Brussels, 20 June 2008

Way forward for the Black Sea Synergy

The Commission has today presented a Report on the progress achieved during the first year of the Black Sea Synergy initiative, which was launched in April 2007. The initial results show the practical benefits this new regional approach can bring, and its potential for the future.

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and Neighbourhood Policy, commented: "The Black Sea Synergy is bearing its first fruit in promoting stability, and prosperity in this area to the east of the EU. It does this through a wide range of projects aiming at: combating climate change, establishing regional fisheries management, focusing on protecting the Black Sea, stimulating cooperation in the fields of energy and transport, managing movement better by establishing a platform on migration. Furthermore the initiative also promotes democracy, respect for human rights and good governance in the Black Sea region. The initiative is now well established and the Report makes proposals as to how we can take our work on this evolving partnership to the next stage".

The Black Sea Synergy is complementary to the European Neighborhood Policy and other EU policies applied in the Black Sea region. A wide range of projects and activities have underlined the EU's commitment and have reinvigorated cooperation within the region. The initiative has deepened contacts with governments, local and civil society actors, as well as regional organizations, like the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

The Report sets out proposals for the next phase of the Black Sea Synergy:

- * Long-term measurable objectives could be set in areas such as environment, transport, energy or maritime safety to mobilize efforts by BSS partners.
- * Lead countries or organizations could be selected to coordinate actions to meet these objectives.
- * Sectoral partnerships could be established to provide a framework for co-financing of projects involving some or all of the Black Sea Synergy partners.
- * To increase the involvement of civil society and people to people contacts, a Black Sea Civil Society Forum and an Institute of European Studies in the Black Sea are proposed.
- * Belarus could be included in some BSS activities at technical level.

The first meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union and the countries of the Black Sea region took place in Kyiv in February 2008. This Meeting adopted a Joint Statement, welcoming the greater involvement of the European Union in Black Sea regional cooperation.

For more information on the Black Sea Synergy:

www.ec.europa.eu/external_relations/blacksea/index_en.htm

BSEC and PABSEC Events

The Nineteenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States, Tirana 23 October 2008

Welcoming the developments in the process of strengthening relations between BSEC and the European Union, Mr. Spaho, head of the Albanian PABSEC Delegation, stated that the ties between the PABSEC and the European Parliament have reached a significant stage and that the Assembly was dealing with the issue of establishing a permanent delegation on PABSEC – European Parliament Cooperation, with the task to examine issues pertaining to cooperation between the two institutions, within the general framework of BSEC-EU relationship.

PABSEC-BSEC interaction - The Council took note of the following PABSEC documents adopted by the 31st Plenary Session of the PABSEC General Assembly held in Athens, on June 10-11, 2008.

- Recommendation 101/2008 on “Foreign Investments and Economic Growth of the BSEC Member States”;
- Recommendation 102/2008 on “Role of Parliaments of the BSEC Member States in Fighting International Terrorism”;
- Recommendation 103/2008 on “Social Cohesion within the BSEC Member States: Contribution to Political Stability”.
- Declaration on the Occasion of the Fifteenth Anniversary of the Establishment of the PABSEC.

The Project Development Fund – The Council laid a particular emphasis on the sustainability and uninterrupted operations of the Project Development Fund and invited the Member States, which have not yet done so, to transfer their voluntary contributions to the Fund.

The BSEC-Hellenic Development Fund (BSEC-HDF) - The Council approved the Terms of Reference and the Guidelines of the BSEC-Hellenic Development Fund and expressed its appreciation to the Hellenic Republic for this initiative that is envisaged to strengthen regional cooperation among the BSEC Member States in key areas and further implement the project-oriented vision of the Organization. According to the Terms of Reference, the BSEC-HDF is set up as a voluntary contribution from the Hellenic Republic. The Fund will be endowed with an initial amount of 2 million Euros for a period of four years, as of 2008. Financing to be provided by the BSEC-HDF will be offered through grants, amounting to at least 50.000 Euros each.

Observer Status - the Council renewed the observer status of the Republic of Poland for another period of two years as of 1 November 2008.

Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Status – the Council granted the sectoral dialogue partnership status to the Republic of Montenegro for a renewable period of two years as of 1 November 2008.

BSEC-EU Interaction – The Council took note of the Report of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on BSEC - EU Interaction (Athens, 26 September 2008). The Council praised the initiatives of the PABSEC in enhancing its relations with the European Parliament and encouraged the Assembly to step up its efforts in this direction.

Working Group and other Meetings - The Council took note of the reports of workshops, conferences and Working Group meetings held during the Albanian Chairmanship-in-Office.

At the end of the Meeting, Mr. Lulzim Basha handed over the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office for the next six-month period to Mr. Edward Nalbandian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. It was decided that the next regular Meeting of the Council will be held in Yerevan on 29 April 2009.

For more information visit <http://www.pabsec.org/news.asp?islem=devam&ID=21>

PABSEC 31st General Assembly Athens, 9-11 June 2008

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) held the Thirty-First Plenary Session of its General Assembly on 9-11 June in Athens.

The Plenary Session had as the main topic of the General Debate “The EU and the Black Sea Synergy”.

The Assembly conducted debates on the Reports and Recommendations drafted by the PABSEC specialized Committees during their spring meetings. The Report on “Foreign Investment and Economic Growth in the BSEC Member States” was presented by Mr. Marcel Raducanu (Moldova), Member of the PABSEC Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee. Mr. Michael Yemelianov (Russia), Chairman of the PABSEC Legal and Political Affairs Committee, presented the Report on “The Role of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States in Fighting International Terrorism”. The Report of the PABSEC Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee on “Social Cohesion within the BSEC Member States: A Contribution to Political Stability” was presented by Mr. Styopa Safaryan (Armenia).

The Assembly adopted Recommendations on these subjects addressed to the Parliaments and Governments of the Member States and to the Organization of the BSEC.

The participants also reviewed the results of the various meetings of the BSEC Member States during the Ukrainian Chairmanship-in Office (November 2007 -April 2008), including the meetings of the ministers of energy and transport, the Special Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States and the Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the EU Member States and the States of the Black Sea Region (Kyiv, 14 February 2008), and the 18th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States in Kyiv on 17 April 2008. The members also considered the Progress Report of the Parliamentary Assembly and elected Mr. Alexey Kudriavtsev as PABSEC Secretary General.

The Thirty-First Meeting of the PABSEC Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee

The Thirty-First Meeting of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee was held in Alexandroupolis on 24-25 September 2008. The members of the Committee discussed the Draft Report and Draft Recommendation on “Impact of Globalization upon Social Policies in the BSEC Member States”.

The PABSEC recognizes that globalization, as a process of interconnecting people across the world through freer cross-border exchanges of ideas, knowledge, goods and services opens up the potential for higher growth, advanced human development and prosperity for the BSEC Member States. At the same time, the Assembly is fully aware of the challenges created by international competitiveness and its effects on people, families and communities. The Assembly welcomes the effort of the BSEC Members States to parallel the economic development with social sustainability, by increasingly giving priority to social policies, particularly with regard to improving social security and fighting poverty and unemployment. Furthermore, the Assembly stresses the fact that the recent economic growth of the BSEC region allows for and requires more than ever before the strengthening of the significant human capital of the region.

The Thirty-Second Meeting of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee will be held on 8-9 April 2009 in Tbilisi. The main subject on the Agenda will be “Migration in the BSEC Member States – social and cultural aspects”. The Rapporteur on the Recommendation will be Mr. Alexandros Dermentzopoulos, Chairman of the Committee, and on the Report – Mr. Nikolay Pozitkov, Member of the Committee (Russia). The additional subject to be discussed will be “Necessity for the protection of children from commercial exploitation in the BSEC Member States”. The Rapporteur on the Recommendation will be Mr. Namik Dokle, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Albania, and on the Report – Mr. Alexander Bednov, Member of the Committee, Russia.

The 33rd Meeting of the PABSEC Legal and Political Affairs Committee, Manisa, 29-30 April 2009

The Thirty-Third Meeting of the Committee will take place in Manisa on 29-30 April 2009. The main item on the Agenda will be “Migration in the BSEC Member States: Legal aspects” and the Rapporteur on the subject will be Mr. Paata Davitaia (Georgia).

***Working with National Governments and Parliaments
New Initiative of Armenian NGOs.***

The Armenian NGOs have come up with an initiative of developing cooperation with Armenian National Assembly and Government. In the result of that initiative in May 2008 “Public Network” of Civil Society Organizations was created in Armenia. The Network involves 80 NGOs, unions and foundations and aims at promoting the increase of public participation rate in legal activities by developing partnership with National Assembly and Government.

Within the Network there have been created 12 Expert Councils composed of the representatives from member NGOs. These Councils should work with the relevant permanent committees of the National Assembly. The managing body of the Network is the Coordinating Council composed of the Network 12 representatives from Expert Councils.

The Network operation main directions will be:

- Implementing examination of laws and legal initiatives, evaluating the impact of law application, analysis and their submission to authorities,
- Involving public experts in the permanent committees of National Assembly, groupings and ministries from “Public Network” relevant committees,
- Other various activities directed to enlarging and improving the legislative basis with the possible large participation of the voters in that process

The Network representatives already participate in the hearings and discussions of draft laws in the National Assembly.

Public Network is coordinated by “Araza” NGO

Address: 26 Aram Khachatryan, fl 50, Yerevan, Armenia

Tel: (+374 10) 227097 / 278906;

E-mail: araza@arminco.com

Thanks to P. Loukanova and T. Abrahamyan for providing materials for this edition.

Please feel free to distribute this newsletter as widely as possible.

The content of this Newsletter may be freely reproduced or cited provided the source is acknowledged. Views do not necessarily represent policies of IUBSNGO.

Newsletter Editor: Hrachya Amiryan – Secretary General.

Garegin Nzhdeh 42, Yerevan 0026, Republic of Armenia,

Fax: + 374 10 444-792;

Tel: + 374 10 444-792; + 374 10 444-793; +374 10 444-761

E-mail: csf@ngo.mission.am

URL: www.bsngon.com