

Report

On IUBSNGO Representatives' Participation in Black Sea NGO Forum, Bucharest, 31 October – 02 November

Black Sea NGO Forum 2008: It is Time to Meet! was organized by The Federation of Romanian Development NGOs (FOND) 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 Black Sea Synergy is complementary to the European Neighborhood Policy and other EU policies applied in the Black Sea region.

For more detailed information on Black Sea Synergy I am sending attached two documents:

- Way forward for the Black Sea Synergy
- Report on the First Year of Implementation of the Black Sea Synergy

For more information on the Black Sea Synergy, visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/blacksea/index_en.htm

“It is Time to Meet” was a large scale forum and had no precedent with the representation of its participants in Black Sea region. Everything is said by the fact that there were 194 people in the list of the participants.

Objective of the forum

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. The forum was focused on creating a **pool of concrete projects** and on proposing **concrete recommendations** for regional NGOs and donors to increase the number and quality of regional partnerships and projects.

For more information on the forum initiative, objectives and the process visit www.blackseango.org

This website will be updated soon.

Attached I am also sending you the agenda of the forum.

The forum did not aim at creating new regional structures and organizations. As the organizers and the donors mentioned the prevailing approach was not to create new structures but to assist the ones that already exist.

Dear colleagues,

Please take into account that the forum will be held each year. The new forums will take place every year in a new country. The country the forum will be held in next year is not decided yet. We think that it will be clear in the first quarter of 2009. The forum organizers told us that they intended to come to Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan in February-March, 2009. When I asked them what the aim of their visit was they told me they were coming to continue the discussions of Bucharest forum.

One of the important results of the forum will be creating an electronic resource center for assisting the NGOs in the region which will be posted at the forum website www.blackseango.org.

The results of our Network Representatives' Participation.

The following members from our Network participated in the forum:

Denys Correll – Executive Director, International Council on Social Welfare

Solveig Askjem – International Council on Social Welfare

Hripsime Kirakosyan – President, IUBSNGO

Hrachya Amiryan – Secretary General, IUBSNGO

Valentin Vladu – IUBSNGO Board Member, “Foundation for Community care Services” Romania

Karine Danielyan – “Association "For Sustainable Human Development", Armenia

Zhorzheta Mesropyan - “Foundation Against Violation of Law”, Armenia

Lilit Stepanyan – “Bridge of Hope”, Armenia

On the first day of the Forum H. Amiryan made a presentation and introduced our Network activities. The presentation was sent to all our Network members in advance (see attached). During the speech the participants were shown the printed version of our Black Sea Manual and were told the electronic version of the Manual would be sent to all the participants of the forum (about 200 people, representatives from NGOs, donors, and representatives from different agencies). This is a good opportunity for broadcasting our Manual which has already been sent to all the participants of the forum. We will also follow that the Manual, together with other materials on our Network also be posted in the electronic resource center of the forum website.

Our Network booklets and other printed materials have been delivered to the forum participants.

During the breaks we made different new contacts both with potential donors and participant NGOs from different countries. It was important for us to make contacts with the NGOs of those countries where our Network has few member organizations (for instance, Turkey, Greece, Azerbaijan, Ukraine).

We also had a conversation with Tedo Japaridze, Black Sea Economic Cooperation representative. Mr. Japaridze once was BSEC Secretary General, but now he works in International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) as Alternate Director General. ICBSS is a related body of BSEC. This is the same center where the author of the Manual Ioannis Stribis works. Mr. Japaridze evaluated the Manual as a solid work. He noted that he remembered our Network. We discussed the following preliminary idea with him: with our Network, BSEC and other interested organizations to organize a joint event devoted to Government-NGOs cooperation issues in BSEC member countries. Japaridze liked the idea very much.

Our participation in the forum was a good opportunity for us also in the sense that we discussed with our Network members, Denys Correll and Solveig Askjem the upcoming activities of the Union. We will write to you about those discussions in our further letters.

Dear colleagues,

If you would like to have more detailed information, write to us and we will reply to your feedback.

Hrachya Amiryan
Secretary General