



Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja

Information on the Coordination Body's Activities

(November 2009 – May 2010)

The Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja presents a report on its activities in the period from November 2009 to May 2010.

In accordance with its set priorities, the Coordination Body, in the previous period, achieved considerable success in the following fields:

a) In the field of politics – The Agreement on the Principles of Reconstruction of the Coordination Body envisaged the establishment of 6 (six) working groups (WG), which are as follows: WG for Economy and Infrastructure Development, WG for Political and Social Integrations, WG for Security and Judiciary, WG for Strengthening Local Self-Government Capacities and Sustainable Development, WG for Education, Culture, Sports and Information and WG for Healthcare and Social Welfare Policy. All the working groups were constituted and meetings were held at which the goals and priorities of each and every working group were set. Members of the working groups are representatives of the ministries, as well as representatives of the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. Representatives of the Coordination Body's Office take part in the working groups' operation.

b) In the field of economy – In 2009, the Coordination Body invested 228,576,607.18 RSD in the infrastructure projects for the purpose of strengthening the economy in the municipalities of Bujanovac, Presevo and Medvedja. The Ministry of National Investment Plan (NIP) contributed 57,757,340.73 RSD to the above-mentioned amount. In 2010, a total of 241,278,000.00 RSD shall be earmarked from the Coordination Body's budget and invested in the infrastructure projects. The Ministry of NIP shall contribute 2,996,728.24 RSD to the said amount. Apart from making direct investments in the infrastructure, the Coordination Body worked, both independently and in cooperation with the competent ministries, on the involvement of these municipalities in international and national projects dealing with development of the economy.

c) In the field of integrations – In the above-mentioned period, the Coordination Body announced three open competitions for giving the funds for civil society projects, as well as for assistance to vulnerable categories of the people. The project selection committee includes representatives of the municipalities, as well as representatives of the Coordination Body's Office. In 2009, the said commission approved 14,580,984.00 RSD, while it assigned another 16,831,996.00 RSD at the first open competition announced this year. The overall funds to be assigned in 2010 for implementing the projects of associations of citizens from the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja amount to **20 million RSD**, while the funds earmarked for the projects of the exercising and improvement of social and minority rights and special qualities amount to **25 million RSD**.

The Coordination Body, in cooperation with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, organized a series of activities, during which it was made possible for representatives of the Albanian community to get informed about the competencies of the National Minority Councils and about the ways of their operation.

d) In the field of international relations - For the purpose of improving all aspects of life in the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, the Coordination Body, in the aforementioned period, held a series of meetings with its international partners, which are as follows: the UNDP, the OSCE and the German CSSP Project for Integrative Mediation. Constant communication with the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, as well as support to their development, was agreed upon and achieved at the meetings held with representatives of the embassies of the USA, Great Britain, Greece, Austria and Norway.

e) In the field of public communication – The Coordination Body's Office continuously informs the public of its work by posting reports and texts on its website. It also provides information on the work of the President of the Republic of Serbia to the Government of the Republic of Serbia, the media and its international partners. Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, addressed all citizens of the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja by means of a letter, in which he informed them in their mother tongues of the Coordination Body's activities and the results it had achieved.

f) In the field of education – The Coordination Body supported and partially funded "The Reform of Education Policies in South Serbia" project, which resulted in the Feasibility Study on Development of Higher Learning in South Serbia. The project was implemented by the Center for Non-Violent Resistance and the Center for Education Policies NGOs from Belgrade. The Study was published in Serbian, Albanian and English and it is available at the Coordination Body's Office. The Study was funded by the Fund for an Open Society, the UK Department for International Development, the Balkan Trust for Democracy and the Coordination Body.

The Coordination Body's most important activities are as follows:

- **The opening of the "Lece" mine in Medvedja** – At the beginning of April, 2010, the "Lece" mine was opened in Medvedja, where 300 miners will be employed by 2011. The mine was opened by Boris Tadic, President of the Republic of Serbia. The operation of the mine was resumed by the "Farmakom MB" Company from Sabac. The mine reopening event was attended by Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. The Coordination Body, in cooperation with Slobodan Draskovic, the Medvedja municipal president, assisted with maintaining and resuming the operation of the mine.



In January 2010, during preparations for the opening of the mine, Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, along with a delegation of businessmen, which was led by Miroslav Bogicevic, the owner and Director of the "Farmakom MB" concern, paid a visit to Medvedja. Members of the said delegation included Radivoje Milanovic, State Secretary of the Ministry of Mining and Energy, representatives of the accumulator battery plant from Sombor, the dairy plant from Sabac, the industrial plant from Guca, the foundry from Pozega, the mining and smelting works from Zajecar, the agricultural and food-processing plant "7. juli", the agricultural plant from Belgrade, the RDS Group and RTV Bor. The purpose of the visit was to reach an agreement on resuming the operation of the "Lece" mine and on the possibilities for making new investments in the municipality of Medvedja.

- **Presentation of the Feasibility Study on Development of Higher Learning in South Serbia** – In



March 2010, the Coordination Body, the Center for Non-Violent Resistance and the Center for Education Policies presented the preliminary results of the Feasibility Study on Development of Higher Learning in the Municipalities of Presevo and Bujanovac. The meeting was opened by Nenad Djurdjevic, Director of the Coordination Body's Office, who pointed out that the conduct of the Study was one of the most important projects in 2010. The goal of the Study was to investigate the needs, the potentials and the resources for the opening of institutions of higher learning

in South Serbia, as well as to provide recommendations for planning the higher education policies in Presevo and Bujanovac. The presentation of the Study was preceded by two public discussions, which took place in Bujanovac and Belgrade, where representatives of all communities in Presevo and Bujanovac aired their opinions and proposals. Attending the Belgrade presentation were Knut Vollebaek, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Robert Schupp and Sebastian Dworack, representatives of the Hague-based Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, representatives of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, as well as representatives of the embassies and donors. At the end of April 2010, the Study was published in three languages, more specifically in Albanian, Serbian and English. The Coordination Body assisted with preparation of the Study by having provided the funds, the logistics and the experts, thereby affirming its dedication to solving educational problems in the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja.

- **The Coordination Body's scholarship holders visited Belgrade** – In August 2009, the Coordination



Body awarded scholarships to 148 secondary school students from Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. The secondary school students will be receiving the scholarship, the amount of which is 5,000.00 RSD per month, until the end of this school year. The secondary school students from Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, visited the most important governmental institutions in Belgrade. Boris Tadic, President of the Republic of Serbia, Slavica Djukic Dejanovic, the Serbian Parliament Spokesperson and Radmila Hrustanovic, Assistant Mayor of Belgrade, talked

with the scholarship holders. Towards the end of the visit, Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, and Zarko Obradovic, Minister of Education, distributed scholarship contracts to the secondary school students.

This was the first time ever that the Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja awarded scholarships to poverty-stricken secondary school students. The next open competition for awarding scholarships will be announced in mid – June 2010. The activity was supported by “Srpska banka”, which donated a savings-bank deposit of 5,000.00 RSD to each and every scholarship holder.

- **The funds assigned through the Coordination Body's Office open competition** – In November 2010, the Coordination Body Office's commission announced another open competition for implementing projects of the associations of citizens from the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. At this open competition, the Coordination Body's Office earmarked from its budget

a total of 3,525,992.00 RSD and assigned the amount to organizations for implementation of their projects. A total of 30 project proposals were received, whereas 9 project proposals were approved for implementation. Some of the projects, those for the implementation of which the Coordination Body had approved its funds, are aimed at improving the position of the Roma community and at launching radio information programs in Romany. As one of the Coordination Body's priorities is working with the young, a great many of the approved projects were aimed at improving the position of young people, at understanding their needs, at promoting cooperation of the young from all ethnic communities and at developing multi-cultural activities. Also approved at this open competition were the projects promoting multiethnic sports cooperation, such as the volley-ball school, as well as those dealing with promotion of gender equality.

In March 2010, the Coordination Body's Office announced its third open competition for funding the projects in the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. 85 project proposals were submitted, whereas the funds were approved to 24 organizations. The overall amount of the allocated funds is 16,832,362.00 RSD. In compliance with the Coordination Body's priorities, the funding of projects that in various manners deal with the young and with multiethnic cooperation, continued. The Coordination Body supported multiethnic sports projects, as well as the media that provide information in the languages of all ethnic communities. A multiethnic agricultural cooperative's project was submitted for the first time and the funds for spring planting were approved for it.

- **The premiere and tour of the “You and I are We” play** – A teenage pop- show „You and I are



We”, which is a play on growing up in South Serbia, was performed for the first time in Bujanovac last December. The play received ovations in Belgrade, too, when it was performed at “Dusko Radovic” Little Theatre. In February and March 2010, young actors and actresses were on a guest tour of Kikinda, Zrenjanin, Sremska Mitrovica, Sid and Sombor. Prior to the tour of Vojvodina, Minister Milan Markovic, the President of the Coordination Body, Bojan Pajtic, PhD, the President of the Executive Council, the mayors and presidents of the municipalities and

representatives of the “You and I are We” troupe held a press-conference. The project was financed by the Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. Also, the secondary school students from Presevo and Bujanovac performed a multiethnic play “You and I are We” at the 39th. Students’ “Vukov sabor” in Loznica.

- **The establishment of all working groups** – Over this period, the following four working groups (WG) held their constitutive meetings: WG for Political and Social Integrations, WG for Security and Judiciary, WG for Strengthening Local Self-Government Capacities and Sustainable Development and WG for Healthcare and Social Welfare Policy. The meetings were organized in Belgrade, Presevo and Bujanovac. The fourth meeting of the WG for Education, Culture, Sports and Information was also held. Further dialogue on resolving the problems that are within the competence of this WG was agreed upon.

- **The Coordination Body supported a blood donation activity** – In December 2009, the organization of voluntary blood donors from the Police Department in Vranje organized a blood donation activity at the police station in Presevo. 86 units of blood were collected. Representatives of the Coordination Body's Offices in Bujanovac and Presevo donated blood as well.

- **Visit of the Coordination Body's President to the faculties' departments in Medvedja**–

In January 2010, Minister Milan Markovic paid a visit to students of the departments of the Nis University's Faculties of Law and Economics in Medvedja, which were opened in October 2009. Minister Markovic talked with the deans of the two faculties, as well as with the students, about the course of their studies and about the problems with conducting the classes in Serbian and Albanian. During his visit, Minister Markovic delivered textbooks in Albanian to the two faculties.

- **A session of the Coordination Body's Presidency's was held in Bujanovac** – A session of the Presidency of the Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja was held in February 2010. This was the fifth session since the Coordination Body's reconstruction. The topics discussed at the session included a report on the Coordination Body's work in 2009 and distribution of the funds for the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. It was unanimously agreed that from 229,278,000.00 RSD transferred from the republican budget for the current year, 42 per cent (96,296,760.00 RSD) should go to the municipality of Bujanovac, 40.5 per cent (92,857,590.00 RSD) to the municipality of Presevo and 17.5 per cent (40,123,650.00 RSD) to the municipality of Medvedja. Unanimously adopted were also a report on the Coordination Body's work, the budget and the plan for spending the funds in 2010.

- **A multiethnic agreement on cooperation in sports was signed by and between basketball clubs "BSK Junior" and "Elita"** – The Agreement on Multiethnic Cooperation in Sports was signed at the "Mladost" sports center by and between basketball clubs "BSK Junior" and "Elita". The agreement was signed by Miroslav Ristic from basketball club "BSK Junior" and by Selami Selimi on behalf of basketball club "Elita".



Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, and Saip Kamberi, the Bujanovac municipal president, were guarantors of the signed agreement. The Agreement on Cooperation implicitly implies joint

appearances at basketball matches, as well as combination and exchange of basketball players of both clubs, who are young Albanians, Roma and Serbs. The agreement is aimed at establishing a long-term sports cooperation between these two clubs, so that the conditions for going in for basketball could be provided for the young in the municipality of Bujanovac

Members of the multiethnic basketball club are going to play their first matches together during the summer basketball league. Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, was a spectator at one of these matches. On that occasion, Minister Markovic was presented with the number 1 basketball club outfit, after which he threw the ball, thereby marking the beginning of the match.

- **Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, submitted a report to the residents of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja** – Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, sent a report on the Coordination Body's activities to all residents of these municipalities. The report, which was in Albanian, Romany and Serbian, was sent to the addresses of all those that live in the territory of these three municipalities. This was the second time that President of the Coordination Body directly addressed each and every resident of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja by means of a letter.

- **A meeting between Boris Tadic, President of the Republic of Serbia, and Minister Milan Markovic and MP Riza Halimi was held** – Boris Tadic, President of the Republic of Serbia, Milan Markovic, Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government and President of the Coordination Body and MP Riza Halimi talked about the Coordination Body's work, as well as about the improvement of living conditions for all residents of the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. A conclusion was reached that it would be extremely important for the Albanians to elect their National Council, so that problems of the Albanian ethnic minority with education, integration, use of the official language and script, culture and information could be resolved more efficiently.
- **A meeting at the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development was held** – At the initiative of Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, a meeting was organized at the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development in February 2010. Apart from Minister Markovic, the attendees of the meeting were Ragmi Mustafa, Saip Kamberi and Slobodan Draskovic, the Presidents of the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, Jonuz Musliju, the President of the Municipal Assembly of Bujanovac, Dejan Jovanovic, Vice President of the Coordination Body and State Secretary, Nebojsa Ciric, State Secretary and Vladislav Cvetkovic, Director of the Privatization Agency. The main topics discussed at the meeting included economic issues and the privatization process. The presidents of the three municipalities stated major problems with the economy and economic development. Given that one of the Coordination Body's priorities is a faster economic development of these municipalities, the agreement on more intensive cooperation in the fields of economy and regional development was made.
- **A meeting on the reform of judiciary in Presevo was held** – Vojkan Simic, Assistant Minister of Justice, met with President of the higher court in Vranje, MP Riza Halimi, as well as with Ragmi Mustafa and Saip Kamberi, Presidents of the Municipalities of Presevo and Bujanovac. The greatest progress was made in the sphere of judiciary. Problems with the reform of judiciary are specific for a multiethnic environment like Presevo and they are resolved by applying the principle of multi-ethnicity, which the Coordination Body aspires to. They are used when judges and the administrative staff are selected, without endangering the professionalism of courts.
- **Ilir Meta, the Albanian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, paid a visit to South Serbia** – Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, played a host to Iljir Meta, the Albanian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. They met in Presevo with Ragmi Mustafa, President of the Municipality of Presevo, and with Skender Destani, President of the Municipal Assembly of Presevo. During the visit, Minister Iljir Meta stated that there was no discrimination in South Serbia.
- **A power station of the "Sector 6" industrial zone opened in Bujanovac** – At the end of April, 2010, a power station, which is a part of the "Sector 6" industrial zone in Bujanovac, was opened. The power station was put into operation by Nenad Djurdjevic, Director of the Coordination Body's Office for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, Mary Warlick, the US Ambassador to Serbia and Saip Kamberi, President of the Municipality of Bujanovac.

By making this investment, the Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja and the USAID enabled the operation of the industrial zone. The Coordination Body invested 14,779,200.00 RSD in the electrification of "Sector 6".

- **The first meeting of the Managing Board for the joint UN program “Peace Building and Inclusive Local Development”(PBILD) was held** – The first meeting of the Managing Board for Peace Building and Inclusive Local Development Program was held in April 2010. This inter-sector program includes improvement of all segments of life in the Jablanica and Pcinj districts. Over the next two years, the Serbian government, the UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UN HABITAT and UNHCR), the International Labor Organization and donors from Sweden, Norway and Switzerland will be working on the improvement of multiethnic cooperation, gender equality, minority rights, the building of municipal and administrative capacities, prevention of conflicts and violence, as well as on developing the program for an active labor market.

The Managing Board consists of representatives of the Serbian government, municipalities of the Jablanica and Pcinj districts, the UN, international organizations and donors.

- **A meeting with the Coordination Body’s funds beneficiaries was held** – The Coordination Body’s Office organized a meeting with representatives of the associations of citizens and non-governmental organizations that had received the funds through the Coordination Body Office’s open competitions. The meeting was organized for the purpose of analyzing the activities of the approved projects and recognizing the issues with which these organizations and associations are faced during the implementation of their project activities.

- **President of the Coordination Body on a visit to Levosoje** – Minister Markovic talked with



members of the “Jug Levosoje” agricultural cooperative. This multiethnic cooperative had got the funds for repairing its machinery and purchasing the seeds for spring planting through the Coordination Body’s open competition. Minister Markovic suggested to the farmers that they should cooperate with the Sabac-based dairy plant. He also encouraged them to ask the Coordination Body for financial assistance, since the Coordination Body is always willing to support multiethnic cooperation. As a result of the visit, and at the Coordination Body’s

initiative, a meeting between Sasa Dragin, Minister of Agriculture, and representatives of the Levosoje cooperative and Sabac dairy plant was organized. It was agreed that representatives of the Sabac dairy plant should visit Levosoje and the nearby villages in June, so that they could obtain insight into the milk-production capacities. The Coordination Body and the Ministry of Agriculture are trying to determine the ways in which agricultural production and cattle-breeding in South Serbia could be improved.

President of the Coordination Body visited the “Vuk Karadzic” primary school. The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government funds the preparation of the project documentation for constructing the school gym. Minister Markovic stated that financial assistance with asphaltting the school playground and equipping the school kitchen would be provided.

Apart from the above-mentioned Coordination Body’s activities, the following is stated:

- **The Serbian government adopted the Coordination Body’s increased budget**– The Government of the Republic of Serbia provided for in its 2010 budget an increase in the funds for the operation of the Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. Pursuant to the

budget adopted on December 21, 2009, the Coordination Body has 421,550,000 RSD at its disposal. In comparison with the previous year, the Coordination Body's budget for 2010 was increased by 10 per cent.

- **Observance of the anniversary of the Faculty of Law in Nis** – Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, participated in celebration of the 50th. Anniversary of the Faculty of Law in Nis.
- **The Municipality of Medvedja Day** – On the occasion of the Municipality of Medvedja Day, Minister Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, was presented with a golden plaque for his contribution to development of the southern Serbian municipality.
- **International forum on “South Serbia: From Frozen Conflict to Sustainable Solutions and Opportunities for Long-Term Integration and Development of the Region”** – On the first anniversary of the reconstruction of the Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network ((BIRN) organized an international forum at which a debate on development of the region and further integration of Albanians into the governmental institutions was conducted. The Coordination Body's representatives at the forum were Milan Markovic, President of the Coordination Body, and Nenad Djurdjevic, Director of the Coordination Body's Office.

The goal of the Coordination Body is to contribute to a sustainable development of the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja in partnership with other Serbian government's ministries, international organizations and representatives of the international community. The Coordination Body strives to strengthen the capacities of local self-governments and civil society, so that they would be able to take care of their development themselves, without relying on lump sum financial assistance, which doesn't improve the situation over a longer period of time, which isn't sustainable and which doesn't contribute to reduction of poverty in these municipalities.

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