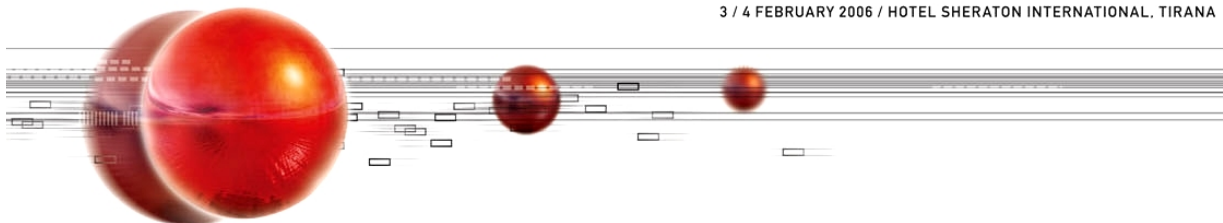


“Decentralization and Local Self-Government in Albania. Problems, Prospects and Strategies in the Light of Albania’s EU Integration”

3 / 4 FEBRUARY 2006 / HOTEL SHERATON INTERNATIONAL, TIRANA



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



SÜDOSTEUROPA- GESELLSCHAFT

in co-operation with



**Embassy of the
Federal Republic
of Germany**

Tirana

Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (gtz) GmbH, Tirana



Stabilitätspakt für Südosteuropa
Gefördert durch Deutschland
Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe
Sponsored by Germany

Programme

- Conference Venue:** Hotel Sheraton Tirana, Tirana
- Conference Languages:** English and Albanian (Simultaneous Translation)
- Organization / co-ordination:** **Uta Zapf**, Member of the German Bundestag, Vice President, Southeast Europe Association, Berlin
Dr. Hansjoerg Brey / Dr. Johanna Deimel, Southeast Europe Association, Munich
Thomas Wenk, Second Secretary; German Embassy Tirana; Political Affairs
Ismail Beka / Ilda Themeli, GTZ, Tirana

Decentralization and the establishment of functioning local self-government are among Albania's key steps towards a fully democratic system and full implementation of the rule of law. From a highly centralized government, Albania has already taken important steps in the right direction – for example – by anchoring the principles of local self-government into the new Constitution, by passing the corresponding legislation and by implementing specific policies towards decentralization.

A recent study of the World Bank defined the critical challenges Albania faces on its way to implementing a sustainable decentralization strategy, as follows:

- enhancing implementation capacity and weak institutions
- reducing the fragmentation of local government units and the re-defining the role of the regions
- designing a clear definition of specific responsibilities of levels of government
- improving the local revenue autonomy
- improving the efficiency of the transfer/grant system.

The International Conference of the German **Southeast Europe Association**, organised in co-operation with **the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany** in Tirana and the **Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit (GmbH)** in Tirana has the objective to evaluate the process of decentralization and the establishment of a functioning self-government so far – in the light of the country's efforts to integration into the European Union. Key elements of a functioning local self-government will be discussed and projects presented that enhance good governance and institutional development on the regional and local levels in Albania. Representatives of local and regional administrative units, policy makers, planners, and project coordinators, representatives of academia, the business community and the media have been invited to participate in an open discussion.

Programme

FRIDAY, 3 FEBRUARY, 2006

09:30 hrs	Opening and Welcome
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Uta Zapf, Member of the Deutsche Bundestag, Vice-President, Southeast Europe Association, Berlin

Hans-Peter Annen, Ambassador, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Tirana

Ismail Beka, Program Manager, Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, Tirana

10:00 hrs	Panel I: Decentralization and Local Self-Government in Albania - State of Play
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Chair: Uta Zapf, MP

Decentralization and Local Self-Government within the National Strategy for Socio-Economic Development

Sokol Oлдashi, Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Albania

Local Self-Government and Cooperation of Communities in Albania

Edi Rama, Mayor of Tirana, President, Association of Albanian Municipalities

Albania: Decentralization in Transition

Nadir Mohamed, Country Manager, World Bank Office, Tirana

Good Governance Aspects of Decentralization

Pavel Vacek, Ambassador, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania

11:30 hrs Coffee Break

12:00 hrs **Chair: Petra Bläss, Senior Consultant to the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe on Parliamentary Cooperation**

The European Union's Support to the Decentralization Process in Albania

Hubert Petit, Charge d'Affaires a.i. of the Delegation of European Commission in Albania, Tirana

Decentralization and the Need for a Territorial Reform in Albania: the role of Council of Europe

Delphine Freymann, Special Adviser of the Council of Europe to Albania

Local Democracy and Cross Border Cooperation in Albania: Enhancing the Regional Perspective

Srdjan Cvijic, Expert for Democratization and Human Rights; Working Table I, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

13:00 hrs Lunch

14:00 hrs	Panel II: Instruments and Strategies for an Effective Decentralization Policy in Albania
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Chair: Franz Kaps, Senior Advisor Aid Coordination and Partnerships, World Bank, Brussels

The Role of Education in Regional Development and Decentralization

Genc Pollo, Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania, Tirana

Financing, Transfers, Revenues and Accountability

- **Ardian Turku, Mayor of Elbasan**
- **Artan Hoxha, Director, Institute of Contemporary Studies, Tirana**

15:30 hrs Discussion

16:00 hrs Coffee Break

16:30 hrs **Chair: Heinz Schrumpf, gtz**

Implementation Capacity and Institutions

Fatlum Nurja, LGDA(co-lecturer)

Urbanisation and Legalisation of Immovable Property, Important Factor for Regional Planning and the Development of Communities/Municipalities

Besnik Alia, Adviser to Prime Minister Sali Berisha

17:30 hrs Discussion

18:30 hrs **Reception**

SATURDAY, 4 FEBRUARY, 2006

09:00 hrs	Panel III: Supporting Decentralization and Local Governance in Albania Project Reports
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Decentralization in Albania: Experiences and Challenges from the Perspective of Donor Co-ordination

Robert Hall, Counsellor (Donor Coordination) European Commission Delegation in Albania

Elviza Sagynbaeva, Deputy Resident Representative , UNDP (co-lecture)

09:30 hrs Short Presentations of Projects (max. 15 min.)

(Projects can be presented by one or several representatives of the respective organisations; parallel exhibition of project outlines in Hotel Sheraton International)

Chair: Robert Hall, Counsellor (Donor Coordination) European Commission Delegation in Albania

Water Supply and Sewage as Communal Obligation in Albania; Experiences and Best Practices

Petrit Tare, President, Albanian Association of Water Supply and Sewerage

Engjell Gjonndrekaj, Director, Water Supply and Sewerage Enterprise, Shkodra

Millenium Development Goals Strategy and Implementation in Kukes Region;
Kalyan Pandey, UNDP

Future EU Requirements in the Field of Regional Development in Albania: the Example of Northern Albania

Heinz Schrupf, Project Adviser, GTZ / Lorenc Luka, Chairman of Qarku Shkodra

(Note: donor representatives of relevant projects will be asked to participate in the discussion and to present project outlines in the exhibition)

Discussion

10:45 hrs Coffee Break and visiting the exhibition of relevant project outlines

11:30 hrs Closing Panel: Supporting Decentralization and Local Governance in Albania: The Road Ahead

Chair: Hansjörg Brey, Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

- Hysen Osmanaj, General Director, Ministry of the Interior, Tirana
- Fatos Hodaj, Executive Director, Association of Albanian Municipalities
- Artan Hoxha, Director, Institute of Contemporary Studies; Adviser to NCD
- Robert Hall, Delegation of the EU-Commission, Tirana

13:00 hrs End of the conference