



### Visitors Examine Kosovo Issues

**M**ay 2-6, USAID/Kosovo hosted visitors from the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia. Patricia Nelson-Douvelis, Director of the Office for Assistance to Eastern Europe, Sally Kux, Director of the Democracy Division and Courtenay Dunn, Program Officer for Macedonia and Kosovo, were introduced to USAID/Kosovo activities, partners and beneficiaries.

In addition to meetings with partners and other donors, the delegation visited some businesses, including ABI, one of Kosovo's largest dairy processors, based in Prizren, and Silcapor, a concrete block producer in Kacanik municipality which was recently privatized. These businesses have been assisted by USAID's Economic Development Initiative and Kosovo Cluster and Business Support, programs implemented by BearingPoint and Chemonics that address economic development. The team also visited local media and discussed issues affecting journalism and possible mechanisms for improvements.

### DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION

#### School Renovation Helps Students

**A** group of 1,626 Albanian and Turkish Kosovar students of Musa Zajmi primary school in Gjilan/Gnjilane hosted a cultural show on May 3 to celebrate the renovation of the oldest school building in town. Residents and municipal officials of Gjilan/Gnjilane municipality, teachers and parents were also present to celebrate the achievement in cooperation with USAID's Municipal Infrastructure and Support Initiative (MISI). This cooperative effort, across age and ethnic lines, between local community and municipality, helped preserve an educational and cultural center, improved conditions in the classrooms and linked students, parents and municipal officials.

Assisted by MISI, the Community Working Group advocated for the project which cost 98,802.94 euros, of which 70,002.94 euros from the municipal budget, 28,000 euros from USAID, and the remaining contribution from the community.



Turkish traditional dance -- performed by the students of Musa Zajmi school in Gjilan/Gnjilane

MISI is designed to assist communities and improve conditions for returns and reintegration of minorities through cooperative efforts of ethnic groups.

### CIVIL SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT

#### Kosovo NGOs Form Coalition To Reform Electoral Law

**I**n an effort to bring the government closer to the people, Kosovar NGOs have joined together to advocate for election reform. Three prominent non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Kosovo --the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF), the Kosovo Institute for Policy Research and Development (KIPRED) and the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN)--have joined forces in a coalition, "REFORMA." The group's mission is to "support democratic development by empowering civil society and enhancing the governing institutions' transparency, holding them accountable to citizens."

The coalition's first initiative will be mounting an electoral law reform campaign advocating for an open-list system for Kosovo's municipal elections in 2006. A previous incarnation of the coalition, "REFORMA 2004," had advocated for this reform in advance of the 2004 Central Assembly elections but was unsuccessful in gathering the support it needed in the limited time that was available.

Despite not achieving its stated objectives, REFORMA 2004 was the first major cooperative effort between NGOs in Kosovo and was instrumental in developing a

network of experienced civic activists. With support from the USAID's Political Process Strengthening project, implemented by National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the new REFORMA coalition builds on the lessons learned during REFORMA 2004's campaign and also broadens its mission by working to increase civil society's impact on Kosovo's governing institutions.

Reforma 2004 was supported by International Foundation for Election System (IFES) and Kosovo NGO Advocacy Project (KNAP). KNAP is a four-year cooperative agreement of USAID with East-West Management Institute (EWMI).

### Representative of Political Parties Discuss "Security in Kosovo"

**O**n May 3, a public debate on "Security in Kosovo" brought representatives of different political parties to discuss the issue, primarily to address recent events that affected the security and political arena in Kosovo. The debate was organized by the Advocacy Training and Resource Center (ATRC), Foundation for Democratic Initiatives (FDI), Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), the Republican Club and Kosovo Women's Network (KWN). Apart from introducing the standpoint of political parties on security, the debate brought together representatives from Kosovo's Government and opposition in a forum to inform and educate citizens on general security and measures to improve security.

The speakers included Gjylnaze Syla, Kosovo's Alliance for Future, Jakup Krasniqi, Democratic Party of Kosovo, Teuta Sahatciu, ORA, all members of Kosovo's Assembly and representatives of main political parties. Though the turnout of speakers wasn't as representative as expected, many civil society representatives, journalists and representatives of institutions attended the debate. The debate was televised across Kosovo. USAID supports ATRC and FDI through the Kosovo NGO Advocacy Project, a four-year cooperative agreement with East-West Management Institute (EWMI).

### A Decade of Work

**R**iinvest, one of Kosovo's premier research institutions celebrated its 10th anniversary on May 14. The birthday celebration was held at the Grand Hotel in Pristina and was attended by dignitaries including President Ibrahim Rugova and Prime Minister Bajram Kosumi.

As part of the celebration, USAID Deputy Mission Director David Leong participated in a panel including UNMIK, IMF, and EU representatives to discuss the obstacles to economic growth in Kosovo. In his presentation, Leong asked Kosovo leaders to envision a future Kosovo a generation from today, and appealed to them to make sure every decision henceforth is made with this future vision in mind. He also stressed the importance of Rule of Law as a necessary precondition to foreign direct investment, and the fact that Kosovo's competitors were not just neighboring countries, but countries as distant as China, Africa, and the United States

Riinvest implemented USAID's Promoting Economic Development through Civil Society, a three year project that carried out several researches and organized many roundtable discussions on economic issues.

## ECONOMY

### Livestock Trade Fair

**T**he annual Livestock Trade Fair held on May 14 brought together 110 dairy farmers from across Kosovo in Gjakovë/Djakovica. The fair was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD), Gjakova/Djakovica Municipality, and assisted by USAID's Kosovo Cluster and Business Support project, through the Kosovo Association of Milk Producers (KAMP). KAMP's goal is to enhance the competitiveness of the dairy industry by introducing different processes that improve management and production practices, improving marketing skills of milk producers, implementing standards for consumer protection and create regulatory and fiscal environment conducive to the competitive industry.

The fair was followed by a series of activities such as registration of new members, distribution of brochures, barn sheets and "Feed Recommendation Handbook" with 217 feed formulations for milking cows.

### Upcoming Events

- May 23**, USAID/Kosovo will announce the Civil Society Program
- May 30**, Memorial Day



U.S. Agency for International Development  
Arbëria (Dragodan), Ismail Qemali st., nr. 1  
Phone: ++ 381 38 243 673  
Fax: ++ 381 38 249 493

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