



NAAC Attends U.S. House of Representatives Hearing on Kosova-Serbia Relations

Five days after Kosova and Serbia signed a historic agreement about Kosova's northern territory, the U.S. House of Representative's Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats held a hearing on April 27th to discuss Kosova-Serbian relations. The Chairman of the Subcommittee, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, presided over the hearings.



Jonathan Moore, Deputy Assistant Secretary of South Central European Affairs, was the witness for the first panel. In his testimony, he reiterated the State Department's support of the April 19th agreement, and commended the EU: "The solution for northern Kosova Serbs, and the Kosova Serb community as a whole, lies on the path the U.S. and EU have supported throughout the region: the building of strong multiethnic, democratic institutions that are committed and able to uphold the civil, constitutional, and human rights of all citizens."

Legal and Policy Advisor to Effective Municipalities Initiative in Kosova, Robert Churcher, former Director of the International Crisis Group in Prishtina, Dr. Daniel Serwer, Professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies and Obrad Kesic, Senior Partner at TSM Global Consultants.

To watch the full hearing, please [click here](#).

The second panel featured testimony from Shirley Cloyes DioGuardi, Balkan Affairs Advisory for the Albanian American Civic League, Roland Gjoni, former Senior

Legal and Policy Advisor to Effective Municipalities Initiative in Kosova, Robert Churcher, former Director of the International Crisis Group in Prishtina, Dr. Daniel Serwer, Professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies and Obrad Kesic, Senior Partner at TSM Global Consultants. To watch NAAC board member Halil Mula's report in Albanian on the hearing, please [click here](#).

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Connect With Us



2013 Diplomacy and Democracy Hope Fellows

Eight women leaders from Kosova will arrive in Washington, D.C. on June 2 to participate in the Hope Fellowship's Washington Leadership Program (WLP).

posals while in Kosova, learn about project management and implementation while in D.C., and implement them in their respective institutions upon returning to Kosova. Additionally, each group will develop an initiative that is related to their professional expertise, community needs, and is sector-specific.

The program consists of research site visits, public events, one-on-one consultations, and networking opportunities. The participants will develop individual project pro-

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NED Presentation on Albania's Elections

NAAC attended a presentation focusing on "Albania's June Elections: A Key Test for Democracy" held at the National Endowment for Democracy on April 23, 2013. The event was also supported by the Open Society Foundations and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

The key presenters included Jonathan Moore from the U.S. Department of State, Robert Benjamin from NDI, Janusz Bugajski, independent analyst and host of "Gugajski Hour", and Dritan Taulla from

KRIIK Albania Association and Coalition of Domestic Observers.

The panelists analyzed the electoral processes in Albania, the role of political parties and civil society in contributing to a fair election, the possible outcomes of the election, and the role of the international community during the election process. They also focused the importance of Albania's progress toward EU.

To watch the full presentation, please [click here](#).

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Ardiana Maraj, *Program Assistant*

NAAC Executive Director Visits Balkans

In April, NAAC Executive Director Avni Mustafaj visited Kosova and Albania. During the visit, he met with officials and gave interviews about various issues in the region. Below is an itinerary of the trip:

Kosova:

President Atifete Jahjaga; Prime Minister Hashim Thaci; Chairman, LDK, Isa Mustafaj; Chairman, AAK, Ramush Haradinaj; Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Petrit Selimi; Vice Chairman, Vetvendosja, Shpend Ahmeti; US Ambassador Tracy Ann Jacobson; USAID Mission Director Maureen Shauket; Interviews on RTK and TV21

Albania:

President Bujar Nishani; Prime Minister Sali Berisha; Speaker of Parliament Joze-



Avni Mustafaj (right) meets with the President of the Republic of Albania, Bujar Nishani

fina Topalli; Minister of Foreign Affairs Aldo Bumci; US Deputy Chief of Mission Henry Jardine; Activist, Secretary for Youth and Migration, Socialist Party Erion Veliq; Interview on Ora News

To read about Avni's TV21 interviews, please [click here](#).

NAAC Meets with Prosecutor General of Albania

NAAC's Executive Director, Avni Mustafaj, met with Adriatik Llalla, Prosecutor General, and his cabinet members on April 25, 2013. Both parties emphasized the importance of strengthening the rule of law in Albania as a determining factor for moving Albania forward. Mr.

Llalla applauded NAAC for their work with the Albanian diaspora in the U.S. and for their ongoing support for the development of Albania and the Balkans. NAAC reiterated its strong commitment for Albania's EU integration and to working with the U.S. administration to support Albania.



NAAC Meets with Kosova Energy Delegation

By Silvana Tase, NAAC Program Intern

On April 18th, NAAC staff met with a delegation from Kosova about coal plant privatization and its effect on the NKPP (New Kosova Power Plant). The group included the Head of Kosovar Lung Association and Director of National Lung Clinic in Prishtina, Dr. Gazmend Zhuri, Head of Physicians for Social Responsibility in Kosova and WHO official, Dr. Ilirjana Bajraktari, Kosova's Parliament member, Mr. Visar Ymeri, Head of Energy Labor Union, Mr. Izet Mustafa, Researcher and journalist, Ms. Arbana Xharra, and participant from the Civil Society Consortium for Sustainable Development, Mr. Visar Azemi, Ms. Rirora Gojani.

rektor, provided an overview of the organizations initiatives and programs in Washington DC. The delegation discussed their efforts on developing a Kosova energy strategy, which should include alternative energy as well as coal; the development of democracy and the freedom of media, corruption, and other concerns that continue to affect Kosova's economic and health-related issues.

NAAC is dedicated to encourage the spirit of collaboration based on democratic principles, and to assist Kosova's citizens to build strong democratic institutions by promoting an exchange of dialogue and ideas with all interested parties.

Avni Mustafaj, NAAC Executive Di-

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About NAAC

NAAC is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advocating for Albanians and promoting peace and economic development in the Balkans by fostering democratic policy, promoting respect for human rights, and conducting educational and developmental programs.

Albanian Elections Update

By Nejvi Bejko, NAAC Program Intern

Albania's June 23rd elections are crucially important to the country's efforts to join the European Union. Albania, a member of NATO, has had ongoing difficulties meeting EU election standards. International standards for elections stem from political rights and fundamental freedoms established by universal and regional treaties and political commitments. While Albania has made progress economically and socially, political polarization has hampered its progress to joining the EU.

line with international and European standards." More than 400 observers will be in the country to monitor the upcoming vote. The Network of Europeans for Electoral and Democracy Support (NEEDS) has trained several hundred people to be EU Election Observation Missions.

High Representative Catherine Ashton, the EU's Foreign Policy Chief, told reporters, "The European Union considers it of crucial importance that the 2013 parliamentary elections are in line with international and European standards." More than 400 observers will be in the country to monitor the upcoming vote. The Network of Europeans for Electoral and Democracy Support (NEEDS) has trained several hundred people to be EU Election Observation Missions.

NAAC calls on all political parties and politicians in Albania to demonstrate to the international community, and especially its citizens, that they are committed to holding free and fair elections. Additionally, NAAC urges that the election results be accepted by all parties and that the elected government and the opposition participate in Parliament to govern the country.



Voice of America's 70th Anniversary of First Albanian Broadcasts



NAAC Board Member Harry Bajraktari and Congressman Eliot Engel



NAAC Executive Director Avni Mustafaj and DUI Chairman Ali Ahmeti



VOA Eurasia Director Elez Biberaj and Avni Mustafaj



From left: Avni Mustafaj, U.S. Helsinki Commission Policy Advisor Robert Hand, Harry Bajraktari and NAAC Senior Advisor David Scotton



From left: David Scotton, Ambassador Frank Wisner and Ambassador Gilbert Galanzhi



Honorary NAAC Board Member U.S. Ambassador William Ryerson



Summer 2013 WLP Hope Fellows

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About Hope Fellowships

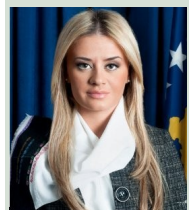
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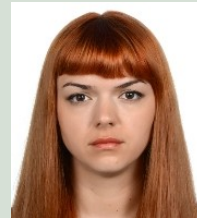
Blerta Miftari
Chief of Cabinet of Deputy
Prime Minister
Minister of Local Govern-
ment Administration



Dita Dobranja
Deputy Executive Director
Institute for Development
Policy



Meliza Haradinaj
Local Councilor
Municipal Assembly of
Prishtina



Doruntina Ukimeri
Task Manager
Ministry of Local Govern-
ment Administration



Venera Kabashi
Senior Legal Officer
Ministry of Justice



Shqipe Kurti
Officer in Charge of Census
Publications
Kosovo Agency of Statistics



Teuta Musa
Secretary General of WFLDK
Democratic League of Kos-
ovo



Linda Abazi-Morina
Project Coordinator
United Nations Population
Fund

To see a full list of the HF participants, including KLP, please [click here](#).

Connect With Us



Alumna in Action: Flutura Hoxha



Hope Fellow alumna Flutura Hoxha has continued working with high intensity and commitment in the field of primary and secondary legislation. Her work deals with the harmonization of primary legislation drafted by the line ministries, which should be harmonized with self-governance legislation. Part of the legislation development is the assessment of the legality of municipal acts, where the Ministry of Local Government is responsible for examining them, including regulations, decisions, statutes and other acts that municipalities draw. Flutura was also engaged in workshops related to legislation at the government level and with other international organizations operating in Kosovo.

“Now we, the people of Kosovo, are determining the nature of our state – not only its borders or its sovereignty, but its institutions, its economy and its values. Kosovo is slowly moving towards a country conjuring the rule of law, stability and democratic society. Its image is changing from a war-torn place to a country with potential! And, potential comes from people. It is the people that make the place! People that drive the change!

-Arjeta Emra
 Hope Fellow - 2011
 Diplomacy & Democracy

To read the full text of Arjeta’s speech, please [click here](#)



Shqipe Hajredini with her policy report

Alumna in Action: Arjeta Emra

On April 4th, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kosovo organized a conference titled ‘The role of the public diplomacy in the promotion of foreign policy agenda’ in Prishtina. The first panel was moderated by economist Tim Judah with the following guests: HE Vlora Çitaku, Minister of the European Integration, Ambassador Adam Ereli, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy, Ambassador Adam Bye, Head of Digital Diplomacy of Foreign Office and Diplomacy and Democracy Hope Fellow Arjeta Emra, who is the Director of the British Council in Kosovo.

Emra spoke about the importance of using public diplomacy tools to reach out to countries that still hesitate to recognize Kosovo’s independence but also to improve understanding of Kosovo in other countries that have limited or no interac-

tion with Kosovo. She shared with the participants’ successes and challenges of the projects that she is running on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK and the Norwegian Government.



The conference was attended by over 100 people, including Ambassadors and Heads of Missions accredited in Kosovo and key policy makers in civil society, academia and media.

Alumna in Action: Shqipe Hajredini

In April, Hope Fellow Shqipe Hajredini, from Diplomacy and Democracy group finalized and published her two year research and policy report on civil service reform in Kosovo titled “A Debate on Concepts, Strategies and Developments.”

The policy report is published through the Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS) where Shqipe is a Non-Resident Research Fellow. On April 10, 2013, GLPS held a Panel Discussion on “Professional and independent civil service in Kosovo: Challenges with the job classification in the civil service and the establishment of mechanisms for performance evaluation.” The panel discussion opened with the presentation of Shqipe’s report.

The report provides an overview of the legal and institutional transformation of the civil service in Kosovo from its estab-

lishment in 2000, examining the core principles and institutions under both the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and those that characterized the post-independence civil-service landscape. The report examines the development of the civil service system after the independence of Kosovo, focusing on the key reforms introduced. It highlights the “European agenda” as one of the incentives for restructuring the civil service system in Kosovo. It also draws attention to the current regulatory framework on civil service; identifies its strengths and weaknesses; and highlights the changes introduced in terms of the senior public appointments and oversight mechanisms, as well as career development and performance appraisal.

To read the Policy Report in full, please [click here](#).

Iliriana Kačaniku on Kohavision's RUBIKON

On April 24, 2013 Iliriana Kačaniku, Hope Fellow from Diplomacy and Democracy Group was interviewed on the political show RUBIKON on Kohavision with other political analysts to discuss the interpretation of the Kosovo-Serbia Agreement. Iliriana was invited as an expert in the EU integration process.

To watch the segment, please [click here](#).

To read Iliriana's blog, which focuses on statebuilding, please [click here](#).



“From the Hope Fellowship experience, I learned that no matter how hard something is, you should never give up. I do see myself as one of the woman leaders in Kosovo, and I will try to achieve my goals through my work and contribute towards further development of my country.”

-Merita Idrizi-Behluli Hope Fellow - 2010 Rule of Law

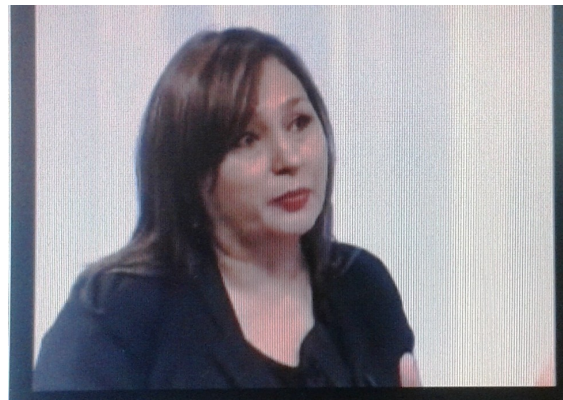
To read an article by Merdita about architecture, which was published in Conditions magazine, please [click here](#)

Merita Idrizi-Behluli Talks Architecture on TV KLAN



On April 1, 2013 Merita Idrizi-Behluli, Hope Fellow from the Spring 2010 Rule of Law group, was invited at TV KLAN show to talk about the architecture in Kosovo. The interview focused on the architecture of religious objects worldwide, regionally and emphasizing Kosovo religious objects.

To watch the full interview, please [click here](#).



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Photos from Kosovo Leadership Program

Photos by HF Staff



For more photos from the trainings,
please [click here](#)



Photos from Kosovo Leadership Program



For more photos from the trainings, please [click here](#)

Quotes from Kosovo Leadership Program, Spring 2013

“Hope Fellowships Program increases the capacity of women participating in governance, self-esteem, encourages a sense of leadership, accompanied the participants to exchange experiences and creates the possibility of action in networking.”



Zekije Zeqiraj-Sutaj

Head of the Legal Office, Istog Municipality
Hope Fellow, Good Governance, Group I, April-May 2013



“In the HF program I found dimensions that until now I have not noticed, and I am privileged to commend it. Topics discussed are current and elaborated with optimism. The team is very prepared for the elaboration of the themes in my area, and there is a proximity created between presenters and participants in leadership training. The level is very high and thus valuable knowledge is achieved about the issues addressed by providing modalities of space to find the answer required. Addressing the challenges of the professional fields, where the opportunity to deepen awareness in terms of future leadership it is created.”

Violeta Berisha

Head of the Office for Reintegration and Repatriation , Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kosovo
Hope Fellow, Good Governance, Group I, April-May 2013