



# *International Union of Black Sea NGOs*

*(Black Sea NGO Network)*

## *Newsletter*

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### *Welcoming Speech*

*Hripsime Kirakosyan*  
*Black Sea NGOs Network president*

Dear Readers,

I would like to welcome you to the first edition of Black Sea NGOs Network Newsletter. Black Sea NGOs Network was established as a result of Black Sea NGOs' two regional forums held in Yerevan in 2004 and 2005. The Network unites NGOs active in social and related fields from BSEC Member-states. The Network aims at assisting in the solution to social problems in the region, in the promotion of concrete balance between the processes of economic and social development. As the global development tendencies show together with the increase of incomes the rate of inequality between the rich and poor layers of the society also increases. To this very aim we intend to cooperate with regional structures, first of all with BSEC Organization and Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC trying to increase NGOs' input in the activities of these organizations. We will also cooperate with national governments and parliaments, all state and non-state institutions concerned with the solutions of the fundamental problems in the region. We are more than sure that through positive thinking, willingness to cooperate and coalescence of all the efforts it will be possible to find effective solutions to all those various fundamental problems that are specific for our region.

For more information on Black Sea NGOs Network and for suggestions to cooperate, please visit our web-site [www.bsngon.com](http://www.bsngon.com)

### *New Publication:*

#### **Advocacy in International Institutions by Civil Society Organizations: A Practical Guide**

Black Sea NGOs Network has published a new book entitled "Advocacy in International Institutions by Civil Society Organizations: A Practical Guide"

The author of this very interesting Manual is Dr. Ioannis Stribis, legal Advisor of International Centre of Black Sea Studies. The Manual was initiated on Black Sea NGOs Network order.

The Manual is devoted to an urgent issue that is advocacy in the following 5 international institutions: Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), European Union (EU), World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The structure, activities of these organizations, their experience of interaction with Civil Society Organizations, the possibilities and mechanisms for lobbying and advocacy among those organizations are thoroughly described in the Manual.

You can find the text of the Manual in Black Sea NGOs Network website by visiting: <http://www.bsngon.com/activities/public.php>

Please send this information to all those for whom this Manual can be useful and interesting. Thank you for your assistance in advance.

## *IUIBSNGO/Network News*

- The Network legal registration activities were followed-up. It will be registered under the name of “International Union of Black Sea NGOs”. The Union charter draft was elaborated and submitted to the Network members. At present the comments and suggestions from member organizations are being to be included in the charter draft for further discussion.
- Early in March Network Council session was convened during which the Network representatives’ participation issue in BSEC Working Group on Institutional Renewal and Good Governance recurrent meeting held in Istanbul, March 27-28, 2008 as well as other related issues were discussed. The Council concluded that it would be weightier to participate in BSEC and PABSEC meetings when the Network legal registration process will be over.
- The Network Secretariat has corresponded with “All-Ukrainian Association of palliative care,” which is interested in cooperating with ICSW. On the consent of Network Council the Secretariat suggested “All-Ukrainian Association of palliative care” become Network member.
- **Participation in International Conference**

On January 14-15, 2008 the international conference entitled “Wider Black Sea: Perspectives for International and Regional Security” was held in Yerevan. The event was sponsored by OSCE, NATO, YSU Alumni Association and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and was organized by Armenian International Policy Research Group (AIPRG). Many representatives of international and regional academic and political circles and international mass media from Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Turkey, Slovenia, Germany, the UK, Portugal, the US, etc. took part in this high-level and very representative conference.



The Network Secretary Hrachya Amiryan was given the opportunity to introduce BSNGO Network and its activities during the conference. Participants appreciated the initiative and welcomed the creation of BSNGO Network.

For more information and materials presented during the conference:

<http://www.aiprg.net/en/rcontent/7/1093/>

## *Forthcoming Conferences and Events*

### **ICBSS launches an International Symposium on Black Sea**

In line with its objectives to promote multilateral cooperation, to foster knowledge and dialogue in and around the wider Black Sea region, the ICBSS is launching an International Symposium as a forum for study and dialogue in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment.

The 2008 ICBSS International Symposium will focus on “The Wider Black Sea Area in Perspective” and is to be held in partnership with the EU-Russia Centre, the Harvard Black Sea Security Program, NATO Public Diplomacy Division, and the University of the Aegean. It will take place on 1-6 July 2008 on the island of Kalymnos, Dodecanese, Greece.

The event is to be held annually and targets young professionals (22-35 years old), such as policy-makers, academics, journalists, diplomats, Members of Parliament and researchers (post docs and PhD candidates) primarily from the countries of the wider Black Sea area, EU member states, the United States and Central Asia.

The participants will have the unique opportunity to gain insights into a wide range of issues related to Black Sea regional cooperation, such as security, energy, economic development and investment opportunities, presented by prominent scholars, experts and policymakers.

<http://www.icbss.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=207>

### **2008 International Council on Social Welfare 33rd Global Conference on Social Welfare – 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Not long to go now to the opening on the 30<sup>th</sup> June. At <http://www.icsw2008.org/> you will find the latest on speakers and the programme.

**Dates:** 30<sup>th</sup> June to 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008 **Venue:** Tours, France Contact Information:

globalconference@cnas-icsw.org

The theme of the conference is Social Work, Social Protection and Social Development: Where have we been? Where are we going?

## *Educational Opportunities*

### **Mutual Learning Program of European Union**

In the framework of MLP Peer Reviews, Thematic Review Seminars and Follow-UP Activities are carried out. MLP main objectives are to encourage mutual learning at all levels and to enhance the transferability of the most effective policies within key areas of the European Employment Strategy.

You can find interesting papers and materials by visiting [www.mutual-learning-employment.net](http://www.mutual-learning-employment.net)

## *Working with National Governments*

**Moscow:** Regional Public Foundation of Aged People Assistance "Dobroe Delo" (Good Deed), which is the Network focal organization in Russian Federation has addressed an official letter to Russian Federation Public Chamber Council president. It claimed that there were neither a department on elderly issues in RF Government and nor committees in Upper and Lower

Chambers in the parliament. In his letter E. Karyukhin, president of Regional Public Foundation of Aged People Assistance "Dobroe Delo" suggested RF Public Chamber Council President E. Velikhov convene Public Chamber plenary session on the social and medical problems of the elderly. Before this letter Mr. Karyukhin wrote official letters to Russian Federation Government and to the Upper Chamber in the parliament. The letters claimed to establish representative structures dealing with elderly issues in the Government and in the Upper Chamber in parliament. But the Government and the Upper chamber turned down the proposal reasoning that the establishment of such structures was not right.

## **NGO and Government Cooperation and Participation in Armenia**

Government and NGO partnership is an essential step forward for further development of a participatory, pluralistic and democratic system of governance. Armenian Parliament and Ministries do cooperate with Armenian NGOs. The cooperation is based on good will and there is no institutional mechanism that regulates NGOs participation in policy making processes. Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is considered to be the most transparent and open Governmental structure towards the NGOs in Armenia. To Professionals for Civil Society NGO's request regarding the institutionalization of the cooperation, the Ministry expressed willingness and commitment to cooperate with interested Armenian active NGOs and make changes in the Ministry's Charter by adding special provision on NGO and Government cooperation and develop Code of Cooperation and Participation.

There is a Working Group formed within the frameworks of "Strengthening the Legal Framework for Citizen Action through Freedom of Association," project to address this issue and work on Code of Cooperation and Participation. The Working Group consists of competent officials from Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and Armenian active NGOs. Both parties are very much interested in the development of Civil Society in Armenia and are willing to foster the process of institutionalization of NGO and Government cooperation and NGO participation in policy making processes in Armenia. The Working Group activities are coordinated by Ms. Hasmik Khachatryan, Head of PR Department of Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, and Ms. Nune Pepanyan, Project Director of Professionals for Civil Society NGO. Armenian well-known and active NGOs - Mission Armenia, Paros and Maternity Fund are involved in Working Group discussions and highly contribute to development of the Code.

The first draft of the Code is ready. The Working Group aims for 2008 to prepare final Code of Cooperation and Participation for Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Launch the Code. Lobby for other most active Ministries to make changes in their Charters and adopt the Code of Cooperation and Participation thus promote consistent dialogue and cooperation and ensure NGO participation in policy making processes.

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**Please feel free to distribute this newsletter as widely as possible.**

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