



PRESS RELEASE

The fourth meeting of the SEE Heritage network & Workshop “Devastation of Cultural Heritage”, held in Kotor, Montenegro, on 8-10 February 2008

The fourth meeting of the SEE Heritage network & Workshop “Devastation of Cultural Heritage” were held in Kotor, Montenegro, on 8-10 February 2008. The organizers of the event, on behalf of the SEE (South East European) Heritage network, were NGOs EXPEDITIO, Center for Sustainable Spatial Development and NOTAR, Center for Preservation and Promotion of Kotor Documentary Heritage from Kotor. The project was supported by FOSI (Foundation Open Society Institute) – Representative Office Montenegro, within the *East East Program: Partnership Beyond Borders*.

The SEE Heritage is a network of cultural heritage NGOs working in the South-East European region. The SEE Heritage network aims to raise awareness about different issues and problems concerning the cultural heritage in the region. The **network members are 12 partner NGOs from: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia**. The extension of the network has been planned in order to include other South-East European countries (Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria).

The initiative to establish the network was started by the **Swedish organization CHwB (Cultural Heritage without Borders), Regional office in Sarajevo** in spring 2006. Three other meetings of the network were held in Sarajevo (BiH), Gjirokastra (Albania) and Ohrid (Macedonia).

The meeting in Kotor was attended by the following organizations: Albanian National Trust, Butrint Foundation and MJAFT! Movement, from **Albania**; Foundation Cultural Heritage without Borders, Regional office in Sarajevo and Mozaik – Community Development Foundation, from **Bosnia and Herzegovina**; EC MA NDRYSHE, from **Kosovo**; FOSIM (Foundation Open Society Institute Macedonia), from **Macedonia**; Association for Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage ARCH - LUK, Civic Association SUBURBIUM and Europa Nostra Serbia, from **Serbia**; Expeditio, Notar and Center for Cultural Heritage Projektor, from **Montenegro**. For the first time the network meeting has been attended by two new organizations from **Croatia**: Pro Torpedo, from Rijeka and Association of Friends of Cultural Heritage of Split, from Split.

At the **SEE Heritage meeting**, the network members discussed some important issues regarding the network's development, such as the accession process for new members, the network's website, which is to be launched soon, and the network's Strategic plan 2008-2012.

In addition to the network meeting, the **workshop** on "**Devastation of Cultural Heritage**" was held, focusing on one of the crucial problems when the heritage of Montenegro, as well as of other countries is concerned. The first part of the workshop consisted of the tour around Boka Kotorska Bay aimed at mapping the zones of heritage devastation. It was followed by presentations on heritage devastation in the participants' countries.

As the workshop conclusion, the participants adopted a joint **APPEAL to stop the indifference towards the devastation of SEE heritage**, which will be sent to the authorities and responsible institutions of the countries where the participating NGOs come from.

On the last day, a **press conference** was held in Kotor Municipal Hall (Bizanti Palace) at which the results of the workshop were presented and the public appeal read out. The press conference was followed by the **public presentation of cultural heritage of two participating countries**: Azerbaijan (represented by two NGOs that participated in the workshop as guests) and Albania (represented by three NGOs, the network's members).

Enclosed you will find the **Appeal** that the network is going to send to the authorities of the countries from the South-East European region in order to preserve the cultural and natural heritage of the region which, according to the conclusions of this meeting, is in a great danger.



Organized by:

EXPEDITIO Centre for Sustainable Spatial Development and
NOTAR Center for Preservation and Promotion of Kotor Documentary Heritage,
on behalf of the **SEE Heritage network**



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