



**SEE HERITAGE NETWORK PRIZREN MEETING AND WORKSHOP  
“CULTURAL TOURISM AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT”  
23 – 26 January 2009 – Prizren, Kosova**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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South East European Heritage is a network of non-governmental organizations that believe in cultural, ethnic and religious diversity as a valuable resource. The Network's work is aimed at protecting and promoting our common heritage which is leading to sustainable and responsible development. SEE Heritage Network has managed up to now to bring together organizations of cultural heritage field from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia, Albania and Kosova.

From 23 to 26 January, in Prizren, NGO EC Ma Ndryshe hosted the sixth meeting of SEE Heritage Network. The first part of this meeting was dedicated to the internal organizational matters of the Network, during which the member organizations discussed the legal, functionality and sustainability aspects of the Network. The member organizations have stressed the importance of strengthening the cross-border cooperation through joint activities that would be implemented under Network's umbrella, while creating strong basis for upcoming projects in cultural heritage field.

During the second part, a thematic workshop revealed and discussed the potential of cultural tourism and local development, as a common opportunity and need of many South East European cities and rural areas. The discussion was mainly focused on the city of Prizren and its potential to attract tourist through its rich cultural heritage, thus contributing to the local economic development of the city. In the workshop, participants had the opportunity to discuss cultural tourism and other related issues with the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Kosova, Mr. Valton Beqiri and the Mayor of Prizren, Mr. Ramadan Muja. The last part of the workshop brought two positive examples of civil society engagement in utilizing the cultural and heritage potential of Prizren and Kosova (restoration works of Cultural Heritage without Borders, office in Prishtina and DokuFest film festival).

SEE Heritage Network uses this opportunity to appeal to local and central government institutions, civil society organizations, private sector and other relevant stakeholders of South East Europe, as well as to the international donors working in the region, to firmly support cities and sites with peculiar cultural and heritage values towards the development of cultural tourism based on these values as a mean of economic development. This we believe is a double-beneficial approach, bringing wealth and development in parallel to better protection and promotion of the region's cultural heritage and other cultural values. All member organizations of SEE Heritage Network are committed to advocate and promote this approach that combines economic and sustainable development with the care for cultural values.

The SEE Heritage Network meeting and workshop in Prizren was financially supported by the Swedish foundation "Cultural Heritage without Borders – CHwB" regional office in Sarajevo.

Respectfully,  
SEE Heritage Network