



**B | S | T** The Black Sea Trust  
for Regional Cooperation  
A PROJECT OF THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND



## The Black Sea NGO Forum 2011

4<sup>th</sup> edition

*“Building a common vision”*

6-8 October 2011, Bucharest, Romania

Caro Hotel  
164A Barbu Vacarescu Blvd.

### Day 1, Thursday 6 October

#### 9.30 – 10.30 **Opening session**

*Moderator:* Olivia Baciu, Federation of Romanian Development NGOs (FOND) (Romania)

Teodor Baconschi, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs (tbc)

Staffan Nilsson, President of the European Economic and Social Committee

H.E. Ömür Şölendil, Ambassador of the Turkish Republic to Romania (tbc)

#### 10.30 – 11.00 **Press Conference / Coffee Break**

#### 11.00 – 12.30 **The Black Sea Region in 2011. The State of Affairs**

*Moderator:* Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, Center for International and European Studies at Kadir Has University (Istanbul)

*Discussants:* Suat Kiniklioglu, AK Party Deputy Chairman of External Affairs (Turkey); Sergiu Celac, Center for Sustainable Development (Romania); Alina Inayah, Black Sea Trust (Romania); Traian



Chebeleu, Deputy Secretary General, Black Sea Economic Cooperation (Turkey); Boris Kuznetsov, Center of International and Regional Policy (Russian Federation)

The Black Sea region continues to remain a region with strong differences and various levels of political, economic and social development. While globalization influence a region situated at the crossroads of the Europe and Asia, geopolitics continues to have a decisive weight in the degree of cooperation and regional integration. The session aims to review the main political, economic and social developments in the region over the past year, from the civil society perspective.

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch

### 14.00 – 15.30 **The European Neighborhood Policy, its Eastern dimension and regional cooperation at the Black Sea. What impact does civil society have in the programming process?**

*Moderator:* Simon Stoker, Eurostep (Brussels)

*Discussants:* Antonella Valmorbidia, Association of the Local Democracy Agencies (Strasbourg); Dirk Lorenz, Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova (EU); Tamar Khidasheli, Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (Georgia); Erik Gyulazyan, Enterprise and Parliamentary Dialogue International (Armenia)

*How effective has been the consultation with CSOs on the ENP mid-term review and the ENPI programming? What impact have CSOs' recommendations had on the final documents of the EC/EEAS? What have been the challenges of the consultation process? Is there any coordination among various national processes?*

15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break

### 16.00 – 17.30 **The Black Sea Region's place in the European Union's regional cooperation**

*Moderator:* Philipp Fluri, DCAF Geneva (Switzerland)

*Discussants:* Traian Ungureanu, Member of the European Parliament (Romania); H.E. Serge Smessow, Ambassador for the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (France); David Bartels, Head of section for EU External Relations with Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Germany); Thierry Bechet, Representative of the European External Action Service (EU); Iulian Fota, Romanian Presidency (tbc); Representative of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Romania)

The session will debate the current evolution of regional cooperation initiatives in the Black Sea region with a focus on European policies. EU has been regarded as a model of successful regional integration which can provide solutions for the various security, political and economic problems of

the region. Several European initiatives have been launched to provide adequate responses to the various interests and goals of the countries in the region: the Black Sea Synergy, the EU Strategic Partnership with Russia, the Accession Partnership for Turkey, the Eastern Partnership. Interconnecting all these initiatives remains essential for the future of effective regional cooperation in the region. In January 2011, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea which has created a new momentum.

*Which are those existing common interests and successful instruments with the highest potential to become a foundation for increased regional cooperation? Which are the challenges and how can they be overcome? Based on other EU regional policies and the experience of the initiatives in the Black Sea region, what are the lessons learnt and alternative approaches with a potential to make an EU integrative approach for the region work?*

19.00 – 21.00 Welcome Dinner

## Day 2, Friday 7 October

9.30 – 12.00 **Parallel thematic panels (A):**

### A.1 Where are the leaders? Civil Society Leadership for the Black Sea region

*Moderator:* Ioana Avadani, CJI (Romania)

*Discussants:* Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, Yalta European Strategy (Ukraine); Ghia Nodia, Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (Georgia); Ciprian Stanescu, Aspen Institute (Romania); Vahan Asatryan, ICHD (Armenia); Kalin Marinov, Economic Policy Institute (Bulgaria)

As civil society represents the most forward and key bond for the region, civil society leadership has the potential to transform the region. Over the past few years, a series of initiatives to create and support civil society leadership at national and regional level were carried out by NGOs in several Black Sea countries.

*Does civil society in the region grow and support leaders? What are the objectives of the existing initiatives? What is their impact? What else is needed? How can civil society leadership be developed in the region?*

### A.2 East meets South: Transitions to democracy

*Moderator:* Alina Inayah, Black Sea Trust (Bucharest)

*Discussants:* Magdy Abd El Hamid, Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement (Egypt); Ahmed Galai, League for the defence of Human Rights (Tunisia); Cristian Pirvulescu, Pro

Democracy Association (Romania); Anar Mammadli, Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Center (Azerbaijan); Arda Batu, ARI Movement (Turkey)

2011 has seen a wave of “jasmine” revolutions across Northern Africa and the Middle East. Civil society has been at the forefront of the movements throughout the region. A difficult transition period to democracy is expected to follow, as it happened in the post-communist countries from Central and Eastern Europe.

*What has been the role of civil society in the democratic movements across Northern Africa and the Middle East? How can the experience of transition to democracy in post-communist countries serve to newly emerged democracies in Northern Africa and the Middle East? What prospects for East-South civil society cooperation does the new context offer? What are the priorities of civil society in Northern Africa and the Middle East and how do they connect to the ENP and other regional strategies?*

### A.3 Does social matter? Monitoring and advocacy in the social field



*Moderator:* Ancuta Vamesu, Civil Society Development Foundation (Romania)

*Discussants:* Victoria Stoiciu, Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Romania); Doina Crangasu, Caritas Confederation (Romania); Rada Ivanova Elenkova, BGRF (Bulgaria); Kenan Aslanli, Public Finance Monitoring Center (Azerbaijan); Petru Dandea, Cartel Alfa/EESC (Romania)

While for most of the Central and Eastern European countries the economic crisis hit at a moment of growth and successful political and social transformations, for many of the countries in the Black Sea region the crisis overlapped with the never ending transition process and incipient reforms. As the international community attention is generally set on macroeconomic and political changes, monitoring and advocacy in the field of social policies lies often at the bottom of agendas throughout the region.

*What are the existing initiatives and instruments to support monitoring and advocacy in the field of social policies in the region? How can they be strengthened? How can the coordination at regional level be increased?*

### A.4 Child protection policies and cooperation in focus



*Moderator:* Mirela Oprea, World Vision International (Romania)

*Discussants:* Nabil Seidov, NGO Alliance for Children's Rights (Azerbaijan); Bogdan Simion / Daniela Gheorghie, The Romanian Federation of NGOs for Children (FONPC); Zino Kore, Albanian BKTF Coalition; Mariana Ianachevici, NGO Alliance in the Field of Child and Family Social Protection

(Republic of Moldova); Mira Antonyan, Child Protection Network (Armenia); Sasa Stefanovic, Network of Child Focused CSOs (Serbia); George Bogdanov, National Network for Children (Bulgaria).

Too many children in the Black Sea region are trafficked, exploited or abandoned in crumbling institutions. Caring for children is not only a human concern: gaps in child protection systems cause profound challenges for long-term prosperity and inclusive growth. Civil society organizations and coalitions can have a fundamental role in calling governments and other national and international stakeholders to develop, fund and implement appropriate national laws, policies, regulations and services for the vulnerable children living in our region.

*What are the existing NGO coalitions for children's rights and protection? Do they need to be reinforced? Should we think about regional level coordination at a time when the European Union, one of the biggest influencers in the region, intends to reinforce its partnership with the region's 'societies'?*

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break

12.00 – 13.00 **Open space sessions (I-IV)**

13.00 – 14.30 Lunch

14.30 – 17.00 **Parallel thematic panels (B):**

### **B.1 Democratization in the Black Sea region: the renewed great expectations**

*Moderator:* Ilona Mihaies, Euroregional Center for Democracy (Romania)

*Discussants:* Hans-Peter Niedermeier, Hanns Seidel Foundation (Germany) (tbc); Vira Nanivska, International Centre for Policy Studies (Ukraine); Tamar Arveladze, International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (Georgia); Ulvi Ismayil, USAID Azerbaijan

A vibrant civil society is essential for democracy and civil society organizations are natural allies in supporting and triggering reform. Both the ENP review and recent political developments demonstrate a need to move beyond partnerships with governments towards partnerships between societies. These are, however, issues that require more agile support mechanisms and higher levels of human resources than the usual co-operation programs. The need for stronger values-based activities to support and sustain democratic transformation and a broader outreach to civil society and population is visible in the Black Sea region.

*What changes are to be expected? What are the challenges for civil society? What are NGOs priorities and needs? What are the most recent lessons learnt? How can NGOs prepare, cooperate and strengthen their work throughout the region?*



## B.2 Policy thinking for policy shaping in the Black Sea region

*Moderator:* Igor Rekunov, Expert European projects (Russian Federation)

*Discussants:* Jeff Lovitt, PASOS; Hrant Kostanyan, Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS); Cristian Ghinea, Romanian Center for European Policy (Romania); Vasile Puscas, Babes-Bolyai University (Romania); Jana Kobzova, ECFR (UK); Niyaz Yagubov, Economic Research Center (Azerbaijan)

*Is there a community of policy thinking in the Black Sea region? How effective are think tanks or higher education organizations, experts, other forms of advocacy NGOs in the region in influencing and shaping national or regional policies? What is the impact of ideas generated by experts and organizations from the Black Sea region and to what extent and how do they reach the agenda of the major capitals of the world [Bruxelles, Washington, Moscow, Berlin, Paris, London]?*

## B.3 Education is the key?



*Moderator:* Gabriela Alexandrescu, Save the Children (Romania)

*Discussants:* Nurdan Şahin, Education Volunteers Foundation (Turkey); Leslie Hawke, Ovidiu Rom Foundation (Romania/USA), Sargis Grigoryan, Centre for Leadership Development (Armenia); Oksana Shved, Partnership 4 Every Child (Ukraine)

Alternative education initiatives to complement and support the formal education systems in the Black Sea countries are extremely important to overcome marginalization of vulnerable categories of children and youth who, because of poverty, conflicts and discrimination are excluded from the benefits of an effective and empowering education. NGOs have been at the forefront of providing alternative education services for these categories (particularly for children and youth in rural areas, for those belonging to minority groups, refugees and IDPs).

*What is the level of priority that Governments and international actors/donors give to youth and education in the region? Do existing cooperation programs have a positive compact? What else is needed? What good practices should be promoted at regional level?*

## B.4 Towards a Green Black Sea region

*Moderator:* Csibi Magor, WWF (Romania)

*Discussants:* Emma Gileva, Black Sea NGO Network (Bulgaria); Kakha Bakhtadze, CENN (Georgia); Sergey Simak, International Socio-Ecological Union (Russian Federation); Karine Danielyan, Association for Sustainable Human Development (Armenia) (tbc); Raluca Fisher, Green Report (Romania)

The panel aims to explore the current situation of environmental NGOs and NGO networks in the Black Sea region, the main challenges faced by environmental movements and to identify commonalities for further regional coordination and cooperation.

15.30 - 16.00 Coffee break

17.00 – 18.00 **Open space sessions (V-VIII)**

19.00 – 21.00 Dinner

## Day 3, Saturday 8 October

9.30 – 11.00 **Donors and institutional actors' perspectives on the region**

Moderator: Holger Dix, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Bucharest)

Discussants: Iulia Hertzog, Black Sea Joint Operational Programme (Romania); Bobbie Traut, National Endowment for Democracy (USA); Klaus Sollfrank, Hanns Siedel Foundation (Romania) (tbc); G. Bacopoulou, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Business Council (Greece).

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break

11.30 – 13.00 Conclusions and reports from the panels. Closing remarks

13.00 – 14.30 Lunch

14.30 Departure of the participants