

BALKAN NEWS

NO.1/May 2013

TOP NEWS

- **Serbia and Kosovo, the agreement on normalization of relationship**

On April 19, 2013, Serbian and Kosovo PM's, Ivica Dacic and Hashim Thaci, has reached agreement on normalization of relationship. After the 2 years and 10 rounds of high level negotiation, with mediation of EU, agreement was reached in Brussels on conditions that Serbia will not interrupt the EU integration of Kosovo, and that the Government of Kosovo will guarantee certain level of autonomy in judiciary and police, in predominately Serbian northern part of Kosovo. The European Commission has proposed the negotiation on EU accession. If the date for the accession talks would be approved by the end of the June 2013, on EU high-level conference, Serbia will start EU integration process from January 2014.



PM Dacic, EU High Representative Ashton, PM Thaci (Photo Tanjug)

- **Kosovo, 5 years of Independence**

On February 17, 2013, Kosovo celebrated 5 years of independence. On Mother Teresa Street in center of the capital city, Pristina, huge celebration event was organized and people from all parts of country gathered. On celebration, PM of Kosovo, Thaci addressed the crowd, expressing the will tackle the issue of corruption and establishment of rule of law, in order to realize Kosovo's EU accession reality. Currently 98 states acknowledged the independence of Kosovo.



Celebration in Pristina (Photo Trojka.rs)

- **Montenegro, Presidential Elections**

On April 7, 2013, the presidential election was held in Montenegro. Incumbent President Filip Vujanović of the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) was challenged by former diplomat Miodrag Lekić. Vujanovic reached 51.21% and Lekic 48.79%. Vujanovic won by narrow margin. Representatives for Lekić's campaign have stated that they will not recognize the results. On April 22, Electoral Commission announced that Vujanović has won the election.



New president of Montenegro Filip Vujanovic (Middle)
(Photo kurir-info.rs)

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SERBIA

• Project for Science and Technology Research Partnership for Biomass Energy Utilizing Livestock Waste

In March 2013, Institute for Animal Husbandry and Obihro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine has concluded the joint research with the support of JICA, which has been implemented since April 2011. Through this Technical cooperation project, as one of many results, the biomass research came to the conclusion that the straw mixture is producing larger quantity of methane gas. It is expected that both institutions will continue the collaboration.

• Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA)

In order to tackle the problem of global warming, Serbia, which has ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Changes (UNFCCC), has affirmed Kyoto Protocol in October 2007, and became a member state of Cool Earth Partnership in September 2009. However, not much has been done to cope with issue of greenhouse gas emission, and lots of problems have been left to be solved.

Since November 2011, JICA has implemented the “Capacity Development Project on Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs)”, and supported the effort to develop the policy which will help to adverse the effect of the climate changes.



Serbian researcher instructed by JICA expert in Animal Husbandry

• Kendo Instructed by JICA’s Senior Volunteer

Senior Volunteer, Mr. Matsumura Mitsunori (7.dan), who has trained 3 clubs in Belgrade and National team of Serbia, finished his assignment in March 2013. He spent 2 years teaching Kendo to Serbian students.

On March 18, 2013 in Center for Sports and Culture “Sumice”, the presentation ceremony of kendo equipment from All Japan Kendo Federation to Kendo Federation of Serbia was held. On presentation ceremony students, who were instructed by Matsumura demonstrated their skills.



Demonstration of Kendo on presentation ceremony by members of Kendo Federation of Serbia



BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA

• Herzegovina International Tourism Corridor Development and Environmental Conservation



Increasing tourists in Mostar

The Technical Cooperation project for “Herzegovina International Tourism Corridor Development and Environmental Conservation” started in August 2012, with goal to develop the tourism corridor which connects neighboring touristic destination of Adriatic Coast to inland area of Herzegovina.

From January 2013, JICA has dispatched long-term expert, Kunihiko Shiraiishi, who will be in charge of operational coordination and planning for training courses. He monitors the progress of the project through the daily communication with related local institutions.



ALBANIA

• The Final Report of “The Project for Tirana Thematic Urban Planning”

In Capital of Albania, Tirana, with its rapid urbanization and the growth of population, development of infrastructure has left behind.

In order to improve such condition, JICA has supported the short and mid-term planning (5 to 10 years) of urban infrastructure since July 2011. The final report of this two-year study focuses on four thematic infrastructure sectors, namely Roads and Urban Transportation; Solid Waste Management; Water Supply; and Sewage and Drainage Systems. The study completed in March, and the handover ceremony was held on May 13, 2013.



Future road network of Tirana



MACEDONIA

• Zletovica Basin Water Utilization Improvement Project, First Japanese ODA Loan to Macedonia



Completion ceremony

On January 26, 2013, a completion ceremony was held near a multipurpose dam constructed by the Zletovica Basin Water Utilization Improvement Project. In addition to the dam, the project constructed water intake and conveyance facilities to supply drinking, agricultural and industrial water to the eastern part of Macedonia, which suffers from chronic water shortages.

As the first Japanese ODA loan project for Macedonia, this project performed construction work over a period of nearly 10 years, after the ODA loan agreement for up to 9.689 billion yen was signed in November 2003.

• Follow up Program on Food Security

Ex-participants of “Securing the Food Security” training program in Japan (2011) from Food and Veterinary Agency of Macedonia, organized educational activities in food security in February 2013, as a JICA’s Follow-up Assistance. The seminars were held in educational institutions and welfare facilities, and it was widely promoted by media. This campaign came out to be realized in perfect timing, just as the food contamination became an issue in Balkans.



Educational brochure for children



KOSOVO

• Aid Coordination Advisor dispatched to Kosovo

With objective of building capacity of aid coordination of the Government of Kosovo, JICA has dispatched the Aid Coordination Advisor to the Ministry of European Integration. This Ministry is responsible for aid coordination from international organizations including with EU and others, and is actively coordinating development assistance programs for the country.



OTHER TOPICS

• Bosnia and Herzegovina ODA Seminar

On February 8, 2013, in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan to Bosnia and Herzegovina, JICA Balkan Office held a "Bosnia and Herzegovina ODA Seminar". This seminar was organized with aim to introduce aid policy, basic principles and characteristics of Japanese aid for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to gain better understanding of Japanese ODA from counterparts. Around 100 people attended the seminar.



BIH ODA Seminar

• Possibility to expand ODA by Private and Public Sector Coordination

On March 27, 2013, in Vienna, the Embassy of Japan to Austria and JICA Balkan Office organized the meeting with Japanese companies. Around 30 attendees from Japanese companies based in Eastern Europe and Balkan region, the Embassy of Japan and JETRO, exchanged ideas on private and public sector coordination for strategic realization of ODA programs in this region. JICA Balkan Office has presented the information on JICA's activities coordinated with private sector and priority areas in countries of Balkan region. Balkan Office will actively pursue the policy of private and public coordination from the phase of project formation until realization.

Message from the Resident Representative

I have arrived to post in January 2013.

The JICA Balkan Office is in charge of JICA's development assistance for six countries in the Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Cooperation for this region began as aid for Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union at the beginning of 1990s. At the time, the focus of cooperation was primarily support for transitioning to market-oriented economies and environmental conservation. JICA also began assistance for peace-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Macedonia in the 1990s when the Balkan region was unstable. The assistance JICA provided had the objectives of reconciliation and confidence building between the parties in conflicts, and community development in areas affected by the conflicts in accordance with the concept of human security, efforts that continue to earn high praise to this day.

Since then, the countries in this region have achieved steady economic growth, entering the ranks of semi-development countries, and JICA has adapted its cooperation to these changing circumstances. Continuing to work on the important issue of environmental conservation, JICA has also worked on economic stability and other development issues that face semi-developed countries.

People may wonder why Japan provides development assistance to the Balkan region in Europe.

Due to historical circumstances, this region has always had a range of ethnic and other issues that spark conflict, and the stability here is linked to the political and economic stability not only of Europe but of the entire world. Development assistance is therefore needed to prevent conflict and consolidate peace. Expectations for the advanced Japanese technology and investment by Japanese companies are high in this region, which has its eye set on EU membership in the future along with even further economic growth, and a role is needed for development assistance to enhance the potential of economic exchange. Another feature of this region is that the people are very fond of Japan. After the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, there was an outpouring of offers of aid from this region, something we cannot forget.

The Balkan countries are attractive, given their great diversity, potential for high growth and rich human and natural resources. JICA aims to provide assistance for growth and stability in countries of this region, working in the areas of environmental conservation, private sector development and the consolidation of peace.

JICA Balkan Office
Toshiya Abe

TRAINING NEWS



Feb 22 - Mar 15
Trade Promotion,
4 person



Feb 18 - Mar 16
Development and Promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises B, 1 person



Mar 20 - May 18
Zero Emission-type Agriculture and Rural Development, 1 person



Apr 15 - Apr 26
GIS/Open Source Software Operation Training,
4 person



Jan 16 - Feb 2
Development of Employment Policy for Sustainable Economic Development and Improvement in Worker's Welfare,
1 person

Announcement

May (Mid) Start of the Project on Establishment and Promotion of Mentoring Service for SME in Western Balkans

May 16~26 Training programme on the Project for Enhancement of the Capacity for Waste Management toward Sound Material-cycle Society. 10 participants from Kosovo are planned to visit Japan.

May 28 Handover ceremony of instruments to Sarajevo

June 2 Japanese Martial Arts Fair (Center for Sport and Culture "Sumice", Belgrade)

After the cold and dark winter, spring has come. Just that I thought so, the temperature has risen and Belgrade showed its summer wear. It is hard to believe that the streets are full of people in light clothes. It seems that we wore coats just yesterday.

We are starting the Newsletter. We will continue to inform you about our activities on regular basis.

Message from the Editor

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