

**THE UNION OF ASSOCIATIONS FOR REFUGEES, DISPLACED PERSONS AND
RETURNEES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (UARDP)**

(Special Consultative Status granted in 1997)

**Quadrennial Report 2001 – 2004 to the Committee
on Non-Governmental Organizations
United Nations Economic and Social Council**

PART I – INTRODUCTION

i. The Union of Associations for refugees, displaced persons and returnees in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter The Union) is a multi-ethnic and non-governmental organization comprised of 93 local grassroots return-related NGOs, which are organized through five regional centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main office is located in Sarajevo, and it is responsible for an overall coordination, regular reporting and coordination with the key governmental institutions in state and entity level, international and local non-governmental organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Union works for the protection of refugees, displaced persons and returnees in their basic human right - return to their pre-war homes, right to their property, right for education and insurance; fights against ethnic discrimination in areas where refugees return and other crimes against humanity. The Union also promotes civil society initiatives and strengthens civil society status in the areas where refugees return, through cooperation with local authorities and government institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

ii. During the reporting period 2001 - 2004 one significant change has happened related with the name of organization. Previous name of organization “Association for refugees and displaced persons of Bosnia and Herzegovina” has been changed into “**The Union of Associations for refugees, displaced persons and returnees in Bosnia and Herzegovina**”.

Explanation: During the return process of refugees in their pre-war houses, local return-related NGOs have been formed, and not any more un-formal group of refugees, that used to comprised the Union.

PART II – CONTRIBUTION OF THE ORGANISATION TO THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS

i. Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, major conferences and other United Nations meetings

The Union of Associations for refugees, displaced persons and returnees in Bosnia and Herzegovina was able to facilitate the participation of its representative during the reporting period within the following United Nations meetings:

- **Bucharest, Romania, 29 May – 1 June 2003**, Capacity Building Workshop United Nations Informal NGO Regional Network (UN-NGO-IRENE) in Eastern Europe;
- **Geneva, Switzerland, 27 June 2003**, High Commissioners Forum Convention Plus;
- **Geneva, Switzerland, 24-26 September 2003**, 54th Session of the Executive Committee - Pre-ExCom Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations, Palais des Nations, Geneva ,

2001: In late 2001, representatives of the Union attended at the special meeting in **Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, where the cooperation among NGO's from Croatia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina was agreed upon. The aim was to discuss about repatriation of all three countries and to support the voluntary return process between Croatia, Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

2003: The representatives of Union attended at the 4th Forum of Cities and Regions of South-East Europe (10th Economic Forum), in **Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 22- 23 September 2003**. The aim was to bring the interests of local and regional authorities in South-East Europe to the attention of those in charge of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, and asking donor countries and organizations to provide funding for priority projects in the field of local and regional democracy;

In late 2003, the Union prepared the regional meeting related to the 8th anniversary of the Dayton agreement and realization of its Annex VII – Agreement on refugees and displaced persons, which was held in **Doboj, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 15. December 2003**.

2004: The president of the Union had a speech at the three day Conference “Through practice to rights in the local community – best practice of sustainable solutions for displacement in the former Yugoslavia in the context of local community development – non discriminatory access to rights”, that was held in **Fojnica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, June 2004**.

ii. Cooperation with the United Nations bodies and/or specialized agencies in the field and/or at Headquarters.

During the reporting period, the Union has been an implementing partner for various agencies implementing integrated returns projects in action program of European Union for Western Balkan countries - CARDS (Community assistance for reconstruction, development and stabilization), including house and basic infrastructure reconstruction, employment and local capacity building, where has been established tight cooperation with UNHCR in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

iii. Initiatives undertaken by the organization in support of internationally agreed development goals, in particular, the Millennium Development Goals, which now form the basis of the global agenda for the 21st century.

Activities in line with the Millennium Development Goals

The Union contributed to the Millennium Development Goals in Bosnia and Herzegovina by advocating for, or otherwise contributing to the following:

▪ Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Through projects and advocating, the Union protected interests of most jeopardized category of population – homeless, unemployed, with no adequate education and insurance. In reporting period (2001-2004), the lobby of the Union and special prepared campaigns addressed to relevant return-related international organizations and governmental institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, resulted the following ACTIONS:

- return of refugees in their pre-war homes: **209.198**
- reconstruction of completely devastated houses: **51%**

• Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability:

Environmental awareness and reforestation programs in Bosnia through the Union's assistance in projects financed by European Union called CARDS (2000-2003)

Target 10: Halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation. ACTIONS:

- reconnection of houses to water, sewage and electricity networks: **508**

Activities in Support of Global Principles

The United Nations General Assembly designated 20 June 2000 as World Refugee Day to recognize and celebrate the contribution of refugees throughout the world. Since then, on this day the Union organizes variety events:

- With the slogan “Come and see”, the Union organizes visits in 93 places where extremely jeopardized live, in order to draw the public’s attention to the refugees who are living in very difficult conditions;
- Commemorate World Refugee Day though different podium-discussions that inform the public in Bosnia and Herzegovina about the aims of world poverty reduction and Millennium Development Goals.

To mark the International Human Rights Day on 10 December every year, the Union organizes roundtable Bosnia and Herzegovina, where local associations - members of Union- give a report about current situation from the field and human rights violations. Conclusions and official statement are sent to all public media in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

UPDATED CONTACT INFORMATION

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