

Newsletter – No. 13 April 2003

First Children's Embassy in the World – Megjashi – 1992-2003

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1. 11th anniversary of First Children's Embassy in the World – Megjashi

The First Children's Embassy in the World "Megjashi"-the Republic of Macedonia is founded on 29th April 1992 on the initiative of *Mrs. Gordana Pirkovska Zmijanac*, its founder.

Children's Embassy, apart from the First Children's Country in the World- Megjashi, establishes, represents and protects other children's territories in the world.

The Children's Country, Megjashi, as the smallest and youngest Country of the children in the world, is proclaimed free and open territory for the whole world. The children's Country does not have borders because "where a world begins with borders, there stops the childhood". Free children's territory does not recognise any secrets except the secrets of nature and the secrets that are discovered by the science. Therefore, the biggest alliances are the humanists, scientists, cultural envoys, medical workers, sports activists and all that love children. People in the Children's Embassy treasure only love and knowledge because its biggest opponents are hate and ignorance.

Over 8000 children in the world represent the Children's Embassy. It has its own Child-Ambassador. The Embassy is advocated and represented by the Diplomatic Corps of more than 50 honorary ambassadors and consul's users of our diplomatic passport all over the world. It has a Diplomatic Corps of children-ambassadors too.

The Embassy, as an international association for care and protection of children in the

world, advocates and represents all the children in the world no matter what race, religion, nation, sex, social status or state they belong to. It strives to contribute in making the communication with adults more easily and struggles for putting into effect the children's rights in the whole world.

Part of the statement of our Ambassador:

"We joined ourselves on 29th April 1992 in order to help the refugee children from Bosnia and Herzegovina. While we were helping them, we noticed that that the children in Macedonia needed our help too. They were asking for our help, we needed them. When they need someone to help them, and there is no one, when they are lonely and there is no one to talk about their problem. That was the reason we continued our work and we have not stopped until now, we have continued in order to grow up as they grow up. We cannot help everybody, but those, who we have helped, give us strength and power never to stop. Until it is so, the Embassy will be the light signpost on this planet and to its most numbered nation, **the children nation**, because no ideal is as worthy as one child's tear." - *Kole Angelovski, Ambassador*

Part of the statement of our Executive Director&Co-founder:

"At the end, we recommend all the well intentioned that there is still time to include them in this big project of this century. The mosaic of stones, called the First Children's Embassy in the World, was put together by a lot of people. There is always a place and room for new citizen's initiatives and incorporations". - *Dragi Zmijanac, & Co-Founder & Executive Director*

2. Global March Campaign for Education

Our Embassy - Megjashi, as national coordinator of Global March against Child Labour, in the framework of the Global Campaign for Education from 6th to 13th April 2003, carried out the action "Education for All"

The main initiator of this campaign was the international non-government organization Global March, which is financing this project. We were involved actively in the campaign for implementation of the children's right for qualitative and free education.

On 9th April, we took a participation in breaking the record in giving "The Biggest Lesson in the World". It was a presentation and discussion of the meaning of the education with a special accent on the education of girls and women. The greatest interest for the lesson showed: from the primary schools - "Ljuben Lape", "Kliment Ohridski", "Vera Jovic" and "Zivko Brajkovski", and from the secondary schools in Skopje - the art school "Lazar Licenoski" and the high school "Josip Broz Tito". This was a first participation of Macedonia in this action. We also organized debates on topics: "Should women commit themselves to their families or the career?"; "If I give some money to a child-beggar, will I solve its problem or will I deepen its problem?";

"Is it an advantage or disadvantage to be a woman in the education?" etc. 12 volunteers of the Children's Embassy-Megjashi (sociologists, psychologists, social workers and workers who participated in similar projects) carried out the debates. In order to inform better the citizens, civil associations, youths and children with the global topic of this action, we printed 2000 brochures, so that the campaign could reach all the ordinary people and those who can make the changes.

On Sunday, 13th April as a final part of the campaign, we organized a march in which children, youths and all concerned, expressed peacefully their protest against exploitation of child's labour.

One of the activities of the campaign was broadcasting of the video "Zvinoshamisa" The whole campaign was covered by the daily press and media.

The coordinators of the project were our volunteers Marija Gjukik and Ljupka Naumovska.



3. Children's workshops

The Children's Workshops, as a part of the other activities in the Children's Embassy, started with preparations for their new cycle at the beginning of April. As we mentioned in the last Newsletter the project is financed by the World Bank. Because it is a new cycle first of all, we made contacts with the volunteers, who will be responsible for the workshops, and we agreed about the timetable and the activities that are necessary for fulfilment of the workshops and its tasks. We also had a meeting with a representative of the Centre for Social Welfare in purpose to involve the marginalized children, who are covered by the Centre. We provide all educational materials needed and we are ready to start working from May.

4. Mutual project with CRIC

As a part of the EAR - European Agency for Reconstruction program for promotion of multi-ethnic reconciliation through peaceful cooperation is the project Action for Citizenship through Theatre. For eight months CRIC - Centro Regionale di Intervento per la Cooperazione and First Children's Embassy - Megjashi, as a partner

organization will do the implementation. It will be in cooperation with two primary schools and one school for children with disabilities, one group of street children and it will include 60 children and their families.

Project Description

To strengthen the capacity of a sound multiethnic society through a series of creative workshops with the active involvement of four ethnically mixed groups of children and their parents. The project is inviting interested stakeholders to take part in at every stage of the project. The workshops will be centred on staging theatre performances all over the country in order to raise the issue of the need of a cross-ethnic cooperation and dialogue at national level. Parallel there will be a countrywide contest in order to raise nationwide interest for the overall problem of an ethnically mixed society.

Project General Objectives

To strengthen the fundamentals of a sound Macedonian multiethnic society starting from and through the active involvement of children and youth from different ethnic backgrounds and the support and involvement of their families.

Project Specific Objectives

- 1) To organise through a highly participatory approach and involving all relevant stakeholders four ethnically mixed groups each of fifteen children and fifteen from their parents or older brothers/sisters from the Skopje area knowledgeable of the purpose and conditions for participation in project creative workshops.
- 2) To organize four creative workshops with the active involvement of the four children and parents, and engage participants in rethinking the standards roles attributed to members from the various ethnicities.
- 3) To raise awareness on the issue of cross ethnic cooperation and dialogue at national level through no less than sixteen theatre performances countrywide, and a multiethnic-based contest.

According to *Daniel Juliyars* words, Chief of EAR in Skopje, this program is a part of the efforts for connecting with EU and promotion of long-term development and stabilization of the Republic of Macedonia.

Action for Citizenship through Theatre

An EU-funded project managed by the European Agency for Reconstruction,

<http://www.ear.eu.int/>

5. Training for Non-Violent Action

In order to develop a multiethnic dialogue and mutual confidence and communication, there was training for non-violent action from 4th to 12th April in Ohrid. 19 NGO representatives from Macedonia, who are included in activities for building of peace, protection of human rights, minority rights, gender issues, children and youths, took part on the training. It was about the concept of violence and non-violence, understanding of the conflicts, non-violent communication, identities/national identities and team work.

The organizers of the training were the First Children's Embassy in the World - Megjashi and the Centre for Balkans cooperation - LjOJA from Tetovo, and in cooperation with the Centre for Non-violent Action (CNA) - Sarajevo and Belgrade.

6. Families at our Shelter

On 10th of April, we celebrated the third Birthday of little Jovana. She was the youngest when they came here two years ago. At the time, Megjashi family grow and now we have tree more members-babies, Aleksandar, Marija and Nikola. Also for the second time here, they celebrated the great orthodox holiday, Easter.

Constantly we make great efforts to help them and we hope that everyone who is generous and is doing the same could be proud of his humanity and virtue as we are.

We are using this occasion to thank our donors: Rotar AK, Eterna, the personal contribution of Filip Vidovic and Gica Dooel for their donation of eggs for Easter.

On 29th of April, Ivana, the eleven years old girl from Aracinovo, had an exhibition of her fashion designs as an occasion for Megjashi Birthday. It was nice to see her happy face because her friends, relatives and members of the Children's Embassy visited it. We were all surprised by her talent and imagination.

Jovana's third birthday



7. Advocacy actions

* In the last newsletter, we inform you about the two year old girl from Stip who died in the Children's hospital because she was deadly beaten by her mother. Believing that this life was lost because the neglect of the parents and the state agencies, we

reacted and made several public appeals. Presently we got the respond from the Court in Stip that the mother and stepfather of the little girl are accused for murder.

* This month our social service was occupied trying to help two poor families from Veles. One family has a five month old baby and no place to live, because the floods ruined their house. We manage to provide supplies for the baby. The other action is about the gifted boy who speaks more than three languages and it is our volunteer. We supported him with language materials and foreign literature.

8. Participation on international conferences/trainings

From 5th to 9th April, our Technical secretary Slavica Taseva participated on Growing Your Organization-sustainability seminar in Borovetc, Bulgaria organized by BCYF - Balkan Children and Youth Foundation.

Our Executive Director and co-founder Dragi Zmijanac and our volunteer Magdalena Rizova on 7th April, took part on tribune for Actualization of the priorities of the children with special needs organized by German Association for Technical Cooperation. The same day the Executive Director was also on conference about Improvement of cooperation between the NGOs and the Assembly, organized by Citizen Association - MOST.

On 17th April, Citizen Association - MOST organized one more event, a meeting with the members of the Assembly, called Mobile Parliament, about the Law for minors, on which together with our Executive Director Dragi Zmijanac, were our Technical secretary Slavica Taseva and our SOS volunteer Ljupka Naumovska.

Our Executive Director Dragi Zmijanac on 23rd April, participated on the round table for STOP to Child abuse in the election campaign, organized by the Defence for Children Rights. He also took part on seminar for Development of a computer society on 24th April organized by the Centre for Advanced Communications.

9. New member of Diplomatic Core

In the last newsletter we informed you about the new members of our Diplomatic Core who are beneficiaries of the diplomatic passport of the Embassy of the Children and moreover we feel very honoured and happy that the membership is increasing, which shows us that our ideas, vision and mission are spreading all over the world. The new member is:

H.E. Pastor Raphael Kalala Lusengu, Honorary Ambassador in South Africa & D.R. Congo -
Number of the passport 295

Statement of our new Honorary Ambassador:

"Smiling to the BaoBab while stepping on breeding ground is the human madness suppose to be consumed by Megjashi burning love torch for ever".

Until the next time warm regards from Embassy of the Children team.