



THE MERİÇ BRIDGE SPEAKS

***FIRST SUB-REGIONAL “BALKAN BRIDGES SPEAK” EVENT
ORGANIZED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF
UNESCO’S INITIATIVE
“CULTURE: A BRIDGE TO DEVELOPMENT”***

Edirne, Turkey, 24- 25 November 2012



Turkish National Commission for UNESCO



FRIDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2012:

Arrival of participants
DINNER OFFERED BY THE GOVERNORATE OF EDİRNE

SATURDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2012

9:00– 09:30: OPENING SPEECHES

TRAKYA UNIVERSITY HALL B

- **Prof. Dr. Yener Yörük**, Rector of the University of Trakya
- **Mrs Yolanda Valle-Neff**, Director, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, Venice (Italy)
- **Dr. Abdurrahman Çelik**, Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Director General of Copyrights
- **Mr. Hasan Duruer**, Governor of Edirne

09.45 – 12.30: CULTURE AS A MOTOR FOR SOCIAL COHESION AND PEACE:

“Imagining cultural policies: placing diversity, creativity and innovation at the heart of development”
TRAKYA UNIVERSITY HALL B

Rationale: Imagine cultural policies that can address the major challenges to development: economic inequalities, social exclusion, unsustainable use of assets and resources. Policies that place priority on investing in creativity and creative processes to expand the abilities and develop the potential of individuals, to act as a catalyst for the release of diverse sources of inspiration and innovation that is required for building open, inclusive and pluralistic societies. Policies that are the result of a dialogue between public authorities and institutions, artists, cultural professionals and entrepreneurs, academics and citizens.

The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005) reaffirms the right and obligation of countries to adopt cultural policies and measures that are based on principles of equality, openness, balance and sustainable development and that ensure the active participation of a diversity of voices in policy-making processes as well as shared responsibility in policy implementation. The Convention promotes the introduction of policies that promote diversity at different stages of the cultural value chain of creation/production/distribution/dissemination/ access–enjoyment. This implies policies and measures that nurture creativity, provide access for creators to participate in domestic and international marketplaces where their works can be recognized and compensated and ensure that they are accessible to the public at large.

The session will be inspired by cultural policy decision makers, researchers and civil society stakeholders. They will discuss the roles and responsibilities of governments, civil society and the private sector to work together to formulate policies that promote diversity, creativity and innovation. They will identify and address the challenges in developing such new processes and frameworks for culture and the benefits of engaging in regional cooperation.

Participants:

1. **Nedim Gursel**, Turkish writer (moderator).
2. **Nina Obuljen**, Researcher, research fellow at the Institute for International Relations in Zagreb. Former State Secretary (2007-2011) and former Assistant Minister (2006-2007) at the Croatian Ministry of Culture.
3. **Luan Starova**, Professor, writer, poet, former first ambassador of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in Paris.
4. **Diana Culi**, Albanian writer, President of Albanian Cultural Observatory Mare Nostrum.
5. **Dr. Ş. Abdurrahman Çelik**, Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Director General of Copyrights.
6. **Anthony Krause**, Head of Culture Unit, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe.

12.30 – 14.00 : PHOTO EXHIBITION: WHAT THE WATER WHISPERS

Presentation by Mr Nikolay Stoyanov, President, Balkanika Foundation
TRAKYA UNIVERSITY HALL B LOBBY

Followed by Lunch offered by the Governorate of Edirne

14.00 - 17.00: RIVERS, CITIES, HISTORY – A DISCUSSION BETWEEN MAYORS

“Coping effectively with the challenges faced by cities in the region today”

TRAKYA UNIVERSITY HALL B

Rationale: is conceived with a view to discussing the first steps to creating a cooperative network between the cities with historical bridges, included in the project. Similarly to theme (A), it is placed within the framework of the implementation of the 1972, 2003 and 2005 UNESCO Conventions. In addition, the discussion in theme (B) on development, tourism and other cultural industries of the private sector bears relevance to the UNESCO *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, adopted by the General Conference in October 2011. The Recommendation, applicable to all historic cities, recommends that development projects take into account the importance and uncompromised nature of cultural heritage, both physical and immaterial.

Participants:

1. **Dr. Ertuğrul Tanrikulu**, Deputy Mayor of Edirne (moderator)
2. **Mr Minco Kazandjiev**, Mayor of Lovech
3. **Ms Etleva Dhima**, Specialist of Foreign Affairs and Tourism, Municipality of Berat
4. **Mr. Vladimir Çela**, Consellor, Municipality of Berat
5. **Ms Diana Culi**, Albanian writer, President of Albanian Cultural Observatory Mare Nostrum
6. **Ms Yolanda Valle-Neff**, Director, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe
7. **Ms Maria Gropa**, Executive Office, Culture Sector, UNESCO
8. **Mr. Ali Korur**, Member of Culture Tourism Committee, Turkish Travel Agencies Association (TURSAB)
9. **Mr. Nejat Karagöz**, Head of Boğaziçi Regional Executive Board of TURSAB
10. Representative from the Municipality of Novi Sad (tbc)



19.00: OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE EVENT

MERIC SQUARE, OPEN AIR EVENT

Opening speeches:

- Welcome by **Mr Hamdi Sedefçi**, Mayor of Edirne
- Address by **Dr. Abdurrahman Çelik**, Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Director General of Copyrights.
- Video Address by **Mrs Irina Bokova**, UNESCO Director-General
- Welcome by **Mr Hasan Duruer**, Governor of Edirne

CHUDESYA dance group

BAGPEPPER music group, Venelin Piperov, Javor Gajdov

3D Show

20.00: DINNER AND CONCERT (VOICE OF CIVILISATIONS) OFFERED BY BAHCESHIR UNIVERSITY

LALEZAR RESTAURANT

In January 2012, for the first time in Turkey, Bahçeşehir University started a Project and established the 'Civilizations Choir' with the conviction that universities have a great influence and power on social progress and in overcoming cultural and ethnic biases. "The Choir of Civilizations" is performing a wide range of folk songs as we are aware of the fact that the first loop of the world music chain is folk music. An orchestra of professional musicians is accompanying the Choir comprised only of students.

Through music's direct ways of expression, the Choir, which has had a great impact in establishing the love of humanity upon audiences and upon the students, hopes to stand up against antagonism and 'othering' and is determined to carry all over the world the message of peace and brotherhood by means of these beautiful melodies.

Text by Bahçeşehir University



Turkish National Commission for UNESCO



SUNDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2012

09:30 – 12.00: BRINGING HISTORY BACK HOME: RECONCILIATION THROUGH THE RETURN OF CULTURAL OBJECTS

“Testimony on the return of cultural objects in the region followed by a discussion”

TRAKYA UNIVERSITY HALL B

Rationale: this round table is conceived as a testimony of a real case study, touching upon issues of reconciliation, restitution, return and recovery, the provisions of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and of the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects will most certainly come into focus. In addition, theme (C) references the work of the 1978 Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation and the extrajudicial platform it provides for the return of misappropriated cultural property.

As such, Theme (C) is not conceived as a technical session on the issue (a technical capacity building regional workshop for SEE on the fight against illicit trafficking is held separately in Gaziantep in November 2012), but rather as a testimony on a return of an object and on the importance that this carries.

CASE STUDIES:

Case Study 1 (Italy and Bulgaria): In 2009 and 2010, Italian authorities returned to Bulgaria some 3,000 archaeological objects from the Roman and Byzantine eras which had been illegally excavated and exported to Italy. Various statuettes included among these objects are now on display at the National Museum of History in Sofia

Case Study 2 (Germany and Turkey): through a bilateral agreement as a case sui generis between the two countries concerned. The sphinx arrived in Turkey in November 2011 and is now on display at the Boğazköy Museum in Turkey, where it was excavated. The site of the former capital of the Hittite Empire is inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Participants:

1. **Mr Todor Chobanov**, Deputy Mayor, Municipality of Sofia (Moderator and Case study 1)
2. **Professor Dr. Mustafa Özer**, Department of Architecture, Bahçeşehir University : presentation on the excavations of Edirne Imperial Palace
3. **Ms Maria Miñana**, Assistant Programme Specialist, 1970 Convention Secretariat, Culture Sector, UNESCO
4. **Ms Sabrina Urbinati**, Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca (Case Study 1)
5. **Mr. Özgür Mehmet İRKİN**, Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museum. (Case study 2)
6. **Mrs. Katharina Cramer-Hadjidimos**, Department for Culture and Cooperation, Federal Foreign Office Germany (Case study 2)

12.30 – 14.00 LUNCH OFFERED BY THE GOVERNORATE OF EDİRNE



14:00 – 16:30: TOUR OF CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF EDİRNE

18:00 – 20.00 : CLOSING CONCERT ORGANIZED BY THE TURKISH MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM.

TRAKYA UNIVERSITY STATE CONSERVATORY

ANKARA POLIPHONIC CHORUS STATE ARTIST YILDIZ İBRAHİMOVA AND
EDİRNE STATE TURKISH MUSIC GROUP

20.30: DINNER OFFERED BY THE GOVERNORATE OF EDİRNE
LALEZAR RESTAURANT

MONDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2012: Departure of participants



Turkish National Commission for UNESCO

