



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO ALBANIA
DELEGACIONI I KOMISIONIT EVROPIAN NE SHQIPERI

Tirana, 18 June 2009

PRESS RELEASE

EU-funded project of €1.1 million facilitates the movement of goods and persons between Albania and Montenegro

The Joint Border Crossing Point in Muriqan/Sukobin, constructed through a fund of €1.1 million of the European Commission, was inaugurated today. This is the first border crossing point in the Western Balkans. It will encourage trade and integration between Albania and Montenegro, and assist the countries in their fight against organised crime, corruption and illegal migration.

Strengthening border controls and travel document security are principal tools in the fight against organised crime, corruption and illegal migration. Joint efforts by neighbouring countries, especially with regards to border management, will lead to better results.

Albania and Montenegro signed today a protocol to enable and simplify the operation of this joint border crossing point as regards police and customs control, and phytosanitary and veterinary inspections. As border activity between the two countries is jointly regulated, tangible results will also come in the form of trade and economic development, especially for the poor border regions. The facilitation of the movement of goods, services and persons enabled by harmonised and faster procedures at the border will foster economic and social exchange between the two countries.

During the inauguration ceremony of the Muriqan/Sukobin joint border crossing point, the Head of the EC Delegation to Tirana, Ambassador Helmuth Lohan emphasised the political significance of this initiative, observing that “this joint border crossing point between Albania and Montenegro is an initial step to replicate between two potential candidate countries the vote of confidence that EU Member States have given each other by eventually abolishing their borders altogether to allow the free movement of goods and services, persons and capital. As Albania and Montenegro run this border crossing point harmoniously, as they jointly enforce the same standards of border control and management, they build confidence in each other opening the way to further cooperation.” Ambassador Lohan recalled that the common EU perspective of the region, a perspective of peace and stability, greatly depends on regional cooperation too, as exemplified by this joint border crossing point.

The Joint Border Crossing Point between Albania and Montenegro forms part of a network of 12 border crossings between Albania and its neighbours that are being constructed with EC financial support totalling €5.4 million.

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