



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union

Lipkovo, 20th of September 2012

**Official inauguration of the newly constructed part of the school
'Ismet Jashari'
Part of the IPA CBC Project MK - BG
'Education, Environment, Europe ... United Europe'**

Speech by
Ms. Ingrid Sager
Head of Section
Delegation of the European Union

Dear Mayor,

Dear guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

- It is my honour and pleasure to be here today with you on the occasion of the inauguration of the newly constructed part of the school implemented with EU funds under the Cross-border Cooperation project between Bulgaria and Macedonia titled 'Education, Environment, Europe ... United Europe'.
- The experience of the European Union proves that the development of border regions is a key factor of European integration and economic and social cohesion. However, cooperation across frontiers is a difficult and rarely spontaneous process. The authorities and structures concerned, at different levels of government and power, must get used to working together.

Obstacles need to be overcome. These have to do with differences in political institutions, administrative systems and procedures, legal structures and technical and environmental standards.

- One of the most important aspects of cooperation across frontiers is the 'multiplier effect' that it produces; the energies that it mobilises and the experience gained from it. To improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the people living in the region. Cross Borders Programmes help to improve the living conditions of the population through building economic and personal bonds.

- The Cross Border Cooperation financial instruments developed by the European Union do contribute to overcoming the barriers to economic and social development of border regions. They do so by putting the people at the heart of the cooperation process.
- The newly constructed part of the school 'Ismet Jashari' which we are inaugurating today is part of a bigger project which was funded by the European Union with EUR 255.000; total project costs amounted to EUR 300.000 and I am proud that we can all see the results of this project today.
- I would like to congratulate the Municipality of Lipkovo as the lead partner of the project, the Association Environmental Forum from Kjustendil in the Republic of Bulgaria as well as the Municipal secondary school Goce Delchev - Kumanovo as project partners to the successful implementation of the project!
- I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage the national authorities to continue their cross-border cooperation efforts. The spirit of cooperation and friendship created through such programmes is contributing to a more prosperous future of all of us in a united Europe!

Thank you very much for your attention!