



March 31, 2004

## PRESS RELEASE

### Disclosing Hidden History: Lustration\* in the Western Balkans

[www.lustration.net](http://www.lustration.net)

The Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) has launched a new website and invites citizens, legislators, legal experts, officials of public administrations, civil and human rights activists and groups of the Western Balkans to visit our website [www.lustration.net](http://www.lustration.net).

The “Disclosing hidden history: Lustration in the Western Balkans” project intends to strengthen good governance, the rule of law, and the participation of civil society in the democratic process, via regional and local activities. This project aims to enhance lustration legislation and practices and to extend citizen participation in the public debate on the past in the Western Balkans. Since the fall of Communism, Lustration has become the accepted term for dealing with the remnants of an authoritarian past primarily within state bureaucracy.

The CDRSEE will cooperate with 5 partners (the Albanian Human Rights Group in Tirana, the Center for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies of the University of Sarajevo, the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Zagreb, the Foundation Open Society Institute Macedonia in Skopje and the Center for Antiwar Action in Belgrade). A broad network of NGOs will be created to strengthen the role of civil and human right groups in the lustration process.

All activities of the project will be documented on [www.lustration.net](http://www.lustration.net). Publications worked out by expert working groups and based on empirical research will be available free of charge to all interested parties in electronic formats. Especially important publications: a manual on “Lustration Legislation and Procedures in the Western Balkans”, an electronic book “Past and Present: Consequences for Democratisation,” and a dossier with a set of recommendations on “Best Practices in Lustration”.

The Disclosing Hidden History: Lustration in the Western Balkan Project had its first meeting the Planning Workshop in Thessaloniki on the 26-28 of March, which will be followed by a series of Seminars in Belgrade, Tirana and Zagreb. All events will be attended by well known legal experts, human right activists and journalists from all over the Balkans.

The Western Balkans (Albania, FY Republic of Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia-Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina) is a region that still faces important challenges such as the lack of genuine peace, lack of trust by its citizens in the proper rule of law and the ongoing violation of human rights. CDRSEE aims to raise awareness of the problems, and to use this awareness as a tool with the goal of changing attitudes, mindsets and patterns of hostility and encouraging citizens and officials to build a better future for themselves and for their children.

This project is funded with 250.000 €by the European Commission and with 71.176 €by USAID.

\* Lustration – to purge, to cleanse

For more information on this project or on the other programmes and activities of CDRSEE, please contact us at +30-2310-960820 or email: [corinna@cdsee.org](mailto:corinna@cdsee.org)

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