

**OESC/NGO Section: Launch of the UN-NGO-informal Regional network (UN-NGO-IRENE) at regional level in the Caribbean Region and at national level in Haiti**

In the framework of the worldwide development of the UN-NGO-IRENE and of its implementation in the remaining regions and countries, Ms Najet Karaborni, Senior Adviser/UNDESA and Project Coordinator of the UN-NGO-IRENE/ NGO Section/ECOSOC undertook an advisory mission in Haiti from 1 to 6 September 2005 to conduct a High Level Consultation and Capacity Building Meeting to Launch the UN-NGO-IRENE in the Caribbean and in Haiti. 77 participants (NGOs, Government representatives, civil society, media, students, UNDP and UNDESA) attended the Meeting that was hosted by the Foundation for Habitat and Homeless “FONDHABISA”, a leading NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC. The Minister of Finance opened the Meeting which was closed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to express the full support of the Government of Haiti to a strengthened civil society and NGO sector contribution to poverty alleviation and sustainable development. FONDHABISA was elected to serve as Regional Coordinator of the UN-NGO-IRENE/Caribbean in close cooperation with seven thematic focal points covering all the MDGs and the crucial issues of the Caribbean (Disability, Peace, Security, Conflict Prevention, Human Rights and Governance). This NGO was also elected to act as National Coordinator for Haiti. Several highly committed international NGOs from the North participated in the meeting and joined the Network. They also contributed to the Network strategic action plan.

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**OESC/NGO Section: Launch of the UN-NGO-IRENE at national level in Turkey**

A High Level Consultation and Capacity Building Meeting to launch the UN-NGO-IRENE in Turkey took place from 28 to 30 September 2005 in Bursa, Istanbul, Turkey. It was jointly organized by the UN-NGO-IRENE / NGO Section/ECOSOC of UNDESA and the “Federation of Balkan Turks & Associations for Emigrees (BGF)” in cooperation with the Istanbul International Brotherhood and Solidarity Association (IBS), two leading NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC. Sponsored by the Local Authorities and the Chamber of Commerce of Bursa, and the Government of Turkey, the meeting was attended by 211 participants (NGOs from Turkey, the Caspian/Central Asia and the Balkan regions, Turkey Government High Officials, the Parliament, Local Authorities, Trade-Unions, Chamber of Commerce, media, civil society, Private sector, UNDP and UNDESA). On behalf of UNDESA, Ms Karaborni made an opening and closing statements underlining the United Nations evolving relationship with NGOs from consultation to partnership especially with the ongoing UN Reform and focusing on the priority given to NGO capacity building programmes and partnership initiatives to strengthen NGO contribution to the UN and ECOSOC work in implementing the MDGs and achieving the Millennium Declaration at all levels. Based on the main issues of Turkey, the Meeting agreed on seven thematic focal points covering the relevant MDGs for Turkey and other crucial issues (Governance and Peace; Disaster and Risks Management; Human Rights and Immigrants’ Social Rights) in order to work closely with the UN-NGO-IRENE/Turkey National Coordinator: BGF in cooperation with IBS. Consideration was given to the need for a database of Turkish NGOs, a website and e-

newsletter for the newly established Network to strengthen networking and exchange of information, innovative experiences and best practices among the NGO community. As National Coordinator of the UN-NGO-IRENE/Turkey, BGF in cooperation with IBS were asked to take responsibility for this with the support of the UN-NGO-IRENE Project Coordinator.

In bringing together the Turkish, Balkan and Caspian civil society and NGOs, the Meeting purposes were also to follow-up to the November 2004 Azerbaijan Meeting that established the UN-NGO-IRENE/Caspian (Caucasian/Central Asia) and to promote partnerships with the Balkan NGOs. This will enhance the exchange of experiences among NGOs, promote partnership initiatives and projects, and strengthen the NGO role at all levels (local, national, subregional, regional and global) in a more and more globalized world.

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**Haiti First Habitat Forum** From 1 to 4 September 2005, Port-au-Prince, FONDHABISA organized the First Habitat Forum in Haiti with the support of the UN-NGO-IRENE/NGO Section Project Coordinator. The Forum was opened by the Minister of Public Works and Communications and closed by the Minister of Environment taking into account the importance of this crucial issue in Haiti for all the population and especially the poor and homeless. Ms Karaborni made an opening and closing statements on behalf of UNDESA and contributed with two PPT presentations on the implementation of the MDGs in Haiti and in the Caribbean highlighting (i) the necessity of holistic and integrated strategy for poverty alleviation and sustainable development and (ii) the role of multistakeholders (public, private, civil society and the United Nations) and result-oriented partnerships in achieving the MDGs and the Millennium Declaration at all levels. A Declaration on Habitat in Haiti was adopted by the participants.

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