



Promoting and Facilitating Dialogue in Support
of Peace Building Processes since 1995

PRESS INFORMATION NOTE (5-10-2011)

Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje awarded by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, OSCE (Max van der Stoel Award 2011)

We are honored and pleased to announce that the High Commissioner on National Minorities of OSCE has officially communicated NDC Skopje and the Nansen Dialogue Network that the winner of this year's Max van der Stoel Award is the Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje (NDC Skopje).

The Award will be presented to NDC Skopje at a ceremony to be held on 24 October 2011 in The Hague, Netherlands.

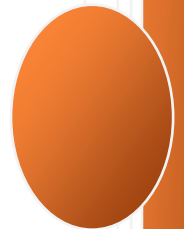
The Award is presented every two years to a person, group or institution for extraordinary and outstanding achievements in improving the position of national minorities in the OSCE participating States.

The official justification for bestowing this prestigious Award to NDC Skopje states the following:

"The International Jury of the Max van der Stoel Award has decided to give its 2011 Award to the Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje (NDC Skopje) for its outstanding work to promote integrated education and improve co-operation between different ethnic communities.

"The NDC Skopje, established in 2000, is part of the Nansen Dialogue Network, which supports intercultural and interethnic dialogue with the aim of preventing conflict, fostering reconciliation and building peace. In particular, it has taken up the challenging task of bringing together students, parents and teachers in an area that has been affected by the 2001 conflict and is characterized by great ethnic divisions.

"Through its relentless efforts and innovative projects, NDC Skopje has provided further evidence of the positive role that education can play in



defusing interethnic tensions and integrating society. Its integrated bilingual schools are models for promoting respect for diversity, bilingualism and harmonious relations between teachers, pupils and their parents from different ethnic backgrounds.

“In many regards, NDC Skopje has continued the important legacy left by the late Max van der Stoep in the country. The work it has accomplished is a great source of inspiration for all those committed to bridging the ethnic divide in post-conflict environments.”

Integration through education: the Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje

The NDC Skopje is a local non-governmental and non-profit organization established in 2000. It is part of the Nansen Dialogue Network (NDN), an international NGO with a special focus on the Balkans, which promotes dialogue and reconciliation for conflict prevention and sustainable peace building. NDN is inspired by the work of Fridtjof Nansen, a Norwegian diplomat appointed the first League of Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, also obtaining the Nobel Prize in 1922 for his work on behalf of displaced victims of the First World War and related conflicts. This year, which is the 150th anniversary of his birth, reminds us of his important legacy, including in addressing statelessness.

NDC Skopje's vision is of a democratic society in which dialogue is the everyday tool for problem resolution between individuals, groups or communities; a society in which peace, multiethnic cohesion, integration, equality and tolerance are the main values.

Since the end of the conflict in former Yugoslavia and the signing of the Ohrid Framework Peace Agreement in 2001, NDC Skopje has focused on strengthening peace through dialogue, reconciliation and integration, before widening its activities to include a focus on integrated education.

In 2005, NDC Skopje initiated a programme on “Dialogue and reconciliation” in Jegunovce Municipality. This led to opening of the first Integrated Bilingual Primary School in that municipality in 2008. Since then, its integrated education model (the so-called “Nansen Model”) has been extended to primary and secondary schools in other municipalities across the country. It is also the model that NDN promotes and supports internationally

For more information, please see:

- www.nansen-dialogue.net
- www.nansen-dialogue.net/ndcskopje
- www.facebook.com/nansendialoguenetwork
- <https://www.facebook.com/ndcskopje>

For **additional information on NDC Skopje or the Nansen Dialogue Network**, please contact:

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Further information on the 24th October 2011 Award Ceremony in the Hague

For more information and a press pass for the Award Ceremony, please contact:

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ON THE MAX VAN DER STOEL AWARD

The OSCE Max van der Stoel Award was established in 2001 honouring the late Max van der Stoel, a Dutch statesman and former Minister of Foreign Affairs. Throughout his distinguished career, Max van der Stoel was concerned with the protection of human rights, including minority rights. He was appointed as the first OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in 1993 and served until 2001, a period during which he made an invaluable contribution to preventing or resolving interethnic tensions throughout the OSCE area. This year's ceremony will include a special tribute to Mr. van der Stoel, as he passed away earlier this year.