

## URBANISM WATCH

Urbanism of Prizren under  
Constant Watch

4 February 2014, Prizren

Communiqué #10

### PRESS RELEASE

## URA E GURIT (STONE BRIDGE) AND ARASTA BRIDGE – PROOF OF THE ABSENCE OF RULE OF LAW

'EC Ma Ndryshe', within the "Urbanism of Prizren under Constant Watch" project has again looked at the issue of decorative lightings at both Ura e Gurit (*Stone Bridge*) and Arasta Bridge situated within the Historic Centre of Prizren.

In January, the organization's monitoring staff have sought clarification from the Directorate of Public Services in relation to the timeframe for the removal of lightings from these bridges that were placed during the gone year without a permit of the Directorate of Urban and Spatial Planning and without consents issued from the Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments and from the Council for Cultural Heritage of the Historic Centre of Prizren. DPS failed to show complaisance in providing a response thus violating basic transparency principles and also the provisions of the Law on Access to Public Documents.

In November of last year the DPS had clarified that on 11 September 2013 it had issued the consent for NSH "Hisar Kosova" for cleaning-up the bed of Lumëbardhi River, regulation of the safety walls (railings) on the damaged places and for placing of decorative lighting at the mentioned bridges in the city. "Decorative lighting of bridges was done for a short-term period which will remain until the upcoming end-of-year holidays with some minor repairs that were undertaken such as the colouring of the guardrail, regulation of bridge pavement, which were very damaged and that can stand until the construction of a new bridge", it stated in the DPS's reply.

Although more than a month have passed since the closing of the end-of-year holidays, illegal lighting on the aforesaid bridges continues to operate. 3 months ago EC Ma Ndryshe had documented the interventions made without permits and consents in these bridges, an act that constitutes a direct violation of the provisions of the Law on the Historic Centre of Prizren (link where you can find an earlier press release: [http://www.online-transparency.org/repository/docs/UW\\_Komunikate\\_6.pdf](http://www.online-transparency.org/repository/docs/UW_Komunikate_6.pdf)).

Ec Ma Ndryshe recalls once again that this law provides that for each activity in the Historic Centre, the Institute for Protection of Monuments of Prizren and the Council for Cultural Heritage of the Historic Centre must be consulted beforehand and after their consent the Directorate of Urbanism issues a relevant permit or rejects the request according to the Conservation Plan and applicable Laws.

The case of these two bridges reveals the unwillingness of municipal institutions to follow the laws in the Historic Centre of Prizren.

Considering the inattention of Prizren Municipality, EC Ma Ndryshe calls upon MESP and MCYS in getting involved for enactment of lawfulness in the Historic Centre of Prizren, starting from Ura e Gurit (*Stone Bridge*) and Arasta Bridge.

EC Ma Ndryshe also encourages oversight institutions, such as the IPCM and particularly the CCH for public condemnation of these cases.

'EC Ma Ndryshe', in July, began with the implementation of the project "Urbanism of Prizren under Constant Watch", financially supported by the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS). The need for overseeing developments in the sector of urbanism has naturally emerged as a result of a numerous adverse developments during the post-war and transition period that were manifested in urban degradation and lopsided spatial planning. The project will continue to monitor and publish findings from the field of urbanism and spatial planning, as well as in addressing institutional responsibility.

With regards,  
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is financially supported by the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society



Fondacioni i Kosovës për Shoqëri të Hapur  
Kosovo Foundation for Open Society  
Kosovska Fondacija za Otvoreno Društvo