



## **Partnership Memorandum of Understanding**

***“Strengthening/Consolidation Local Associations Structures”***

*Development of the initiative for a consolidation support*

**ALAA-AAM-NALAS**

## **1. Rationale/Scope**

The purpose of this MoU is to bear witness of the initiative undertaken by both the Albanian Association of Municipalities (AAM) and the Association for Local Autonomy of Albania (ALAA) to consolidate both associations.

Upcoming decentralization reforms in Albania require that the interests and needs of Albanian municipalities are effectively represented within the intergovernmental dialogue.

In this context, the potential of awareness raising through lobbying and advocacy, communication and negotiation that lies within both associations needs to be strengthened in view of attaining a unified voice of and for Albanian municipalities.

This MoU is the result of a shared conviction among both associations that only common concerted action will result into a better consideration of municipalities' roles and functions in the Albanian decentralization reform. Under these circumstances, AAM and ALAA expressed their disposition to explore common grounds for future cooperation and their determination for joint collaboration and concentration regarding the challenges that lie ahead.

## **2. Goals and objectives**

The goal lies within the scope of attaining ever closer institutional ties. This goal comprises the concrete intention to reach in a first step a Technical Merger to be complemented in due time by a complete genuine merger of both associations into a common institutional framework.

The objectives are:

- i) To contribute within the decentralization reform in Albania as authentic and legitimate representatives of local governments and its population to a constructive dialogue that focuses on the wellbeing of its citizen, the promotion of economically and environmentally sustainable and inclusive development at local level. This contribution is realized within the framework of the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2014-2020 for social and economic development towards European Integration and is in line with the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government

- ii) To foster the democratization process and citizen participation via a bottom-up approach from the local level with the aim of ensuring administrative and political decentralization
- iii) To enhance and strengthen the Local Governance reforms by investing in and providing for professional public services of quality guided by international standards in transparency and accountability

### **3. Partner Organizations**

The present Memorandum of Understanding is between:

- The Albanian Association of Municipalities (AAM), represented by its Executive Director Mr. Agron HAXHIMALI, and
- The Association for Local Autonomy of Albania (ALAA), represented by its Executive Director Mrs. Adelina FARRICI

### **4. Governance Structure and Reporting**

The main governance structure is the Joint Standing/Policy Committee led by both Executive Directors of AAM and ALAA. The Joint Standing/Policy Committee is integrated by a group of experts of both associations to be nominated.

The Joint Standing/Policy Committee works on a consensus basis.

Both AMA and ALAA will potentially be located in a Joint Office, where the Joint Standing/Policy Committee is seated.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Joint Standing/Policy Committee, which is to be established as the main platform to coordinate common activities between AAM and ALAA, is responsible for:

- working towards the goal and promoting the objectives mentioned under point 2. “Goals and objectives” of this MoU
- coordinating the elaboration of joint policy statement and advocating common positions
- consolidating a joint lobbying/liaison effort between both associations
- promoting the institutional strengthening of Local Government via demand driven capacity development
- fostering collaboration between both associations for the mutual benefit of its members
- removing obstacles to the partnership’s successful delivery of services for its members
- maintaining at all times the focus of the partnership on the agreed scope, outcomes and benefits
- monitoring and managing the factors outside the partnership’s control that are critical to its success

The members of the Joint Standing/Policy Committee will commit to:

- organizing roundtables and joint meetings with mayors
- setting up demand driven professional Forums for capacity development
- fundraising for common projects and liaise with the donor community
- attending and facilitating all scheduled Joint Standing/Policy Committee meetings
- champion the partnership within and outside of work areas and vis-à-vis third parties and here especially vis-à-vis the central government and the donor community
- share all communications and information across all Joint Standing/Policy Committee members and members of the associations
- make timely decisions and take action so as to not compromise the MoU
- notifying members of the Joint Standing/Policy Committee, as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed to affect the development of the partnership

## **Final disposition**

Both parties of this Memorandum of Understanding, in their function as NALAS members, (AAM is a founding member and ALAA has filed for membership), will request support for its genuine implementation from the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South East Europe (NALAS). The objective consists in facilitating the consolidation of both LG Associations (AAM and ALAA) in order to become a strong and unified voice for local government units, ensuring optimal services for its members and representing their needs and interests beyond party affiliations.

The Memorandum of Understanding is signed on the.....day of the month of.....  
of 2016 in Tirana, Albania.

- *For the Albanian Association of Municipalities (AAM):*

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**Mr. Agron HAXHIMALI - Executive Director**

- *For the Association for Local Autonomy of Albania (ALAA):*

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**Ms. Adelina FARRICI - Executive Director**