

PRESS RELEASE

SOUTH EAST EUROPE GOVERNMENTS CALLING FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC RECOVERY BASED ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Chisinau, 9 April 2021 - The 16th NALAS General Assembly will be organised from 12 to 14 April 2021, in partnership with the Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM) and a number of international partners. The event will be held online, bringing together over 300 Mayors, local government staff and practitioners to exchange on issues related to local democracy, European integration of South-East Europe and sustainable local economic development as a cornerstone of the post COVID-19 recovery.

“One year ago, we found ourselves in an unprecedented situation, that is not over yet. None of us had the experience or the ready to use solutions to deal with the challenges, we learned from our mistakes and we keep doing so. But this should not discourage us, quite the contrary it should give us impetus to new ideas and opportunities. Indeed, we need to rethink the way we achieve our goals, but not give them up”, says Mr. Emanuil Manolov, NALAS President.

During the 16th General Assembly, based on the rotation system, Ms. Tatiana Badan, Mayor of Selemet, Moldova, will assume the role of new NALAS President. *“These difficult times more than ever emphasise the role of local governments and the importance of our Network. Local governments are on the forefront in responding to this crisis, but they are also the first ones that respond to citizens’ everyday needs, be it social, economic or environmental. The challenges of local governments need to be listened to and understood, and they must be supported to address these challenges in the most effective and efficient manner”,* says Ms. Badan.

High officials from Moldova and the Region, as well as from the European institutions will address at the 16th NALAS General Assembly.

Welcome addresses

- HE **Maia Sandu**, President of Moldova
- Ms **Tatiana Badan**, CALM President, Mayor of Selemet, Moldova
- Mr **Ion Ceban**, Mayor of Chisinau, CALM Vice-President, Head of the Moldovan Delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- Mr **Emanuil Manolov**, NALAS President, Mayor of Pavlikeni, Bulgaria

Keynote addresses: Local Democracy and European Integration in South and Eastern Europe

- Mr **Leendert Verbeek**, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- Ms **Majlinda Bregu**, Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council
- HE **Sybille Suter Tejada**, Ambassador of Switzerland in North Macedonia

- Mr **Maciej Popowski**, Director General, Directorate General Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
- Mr **Nikola Dobroslavić**, Prefect of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County, rapporteur for the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) opinion on 2020 Enlargement Package

The rich program of the 16th NALAS General Assembly will include the following events:

12 April 2021	13 April 2021	14 April 2021
<p>City to City Dialogue: Sharing experiences from the Urban Partnership Program</p> <p>PLATFORMA Peer Exchange: CALM and Local Government Associations from South and Eastern Europe</p>	<p>NALAS General Assembly Statutory Meeting</p> <p>PLATFORMA Eastern Partnership Coordination Seminar: Reinforcing Dialogue on Local Government Reform in Moldova and South-East Europe</p>	<p>Sustainable Local Economic Development in South-East Europe</p> <p>Second Forum of Women Mayors in SEE: Inclusive Local Economic Development</p>

The General Assembly will be held in English language. Most of the sessions will be translated simultaneously in the regional languages. All the details of the General Assembly agenda are available on the following link: <http://www.nalas.eu/News/21GA>.

For more information, please contact NALAS Knowledge and Communications Manager Jelena Janevska, at janevska@nalas.eu, ++389 70 280 582.

About NALAS: NALAS is the unique local government network of South-East Europe (SEE). It is made up of 14 national or regional local government associations from 12 SEE economies, representing more than 5,000 local governments directly elected by around 80 million people. NALAS actively supports the development of strong local self-government in South East Europe, creation of smart, sustainable, inclusive and resilient communities, based on innovative solutions, through a unique regional partnership, wide knowledge base and strong policy-making influence, thereby contributing to democracy, stability and prosperity in the region. The NALAS Knowledge Centre is the main knowledge platform of local government affairs in SEE.

For more information about NALAS: www.nalas.eu