

## MEDIA RELEASE

### The Student Councils' Convention held for the second time

**Friday, 19 December 2008, Prishtine/Pristina** – Secondary school students from all Kosovo municipalities met Friday and elected the new membership of the Steering Committee of the Kosovo Student Council. Student Councils were established with the support of UNICEF in 2007, and it gathers representatives of 64 secondary schools all over Kosovo. The newly elected Steering Committee comprises of 32 members. Present at the general Convention were around 70 students. The deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) Mr. Agim Hyseni, the head of Student Councils Mr. Valon Kurhasani, UNICEF's Project Officer Mr. Dren Rexha and the Organising Bureau of European School Students' Unions (OBESSU) coordinator for south-east Europe Ms. Deniza Bundalevska, addressed the students.

Mr. Hyseni said, *Democracy develops when people are free, when they can think and express their opinions freely and when they respect each other's opinions. The MEST is always at your disposal so that we can together address all the immediate social and economic challenges of youth. I wish you successful accomplishment of your mission in brining closer students with the education authorities, the initiation of social dialogue and your efforts to promote your rights.'*

Ms Bundalevska said that OBESSU will support the Kosovo Student Council to develop good relationships with other 25 associations of European OBESSU members.

The aim of the overall project supported by UNICEF is to empower and strengthen the Student Councils through active participation of students not only by representing student voices in front of the education and other authorities but also in designing and implementing meaningful youth activities and influence policies at the municipal and Kosovo wide level. Other aspects of the project include training of student members of the Kosovo Student Council on human rights, management, leadership and fundraising in order to ensure better functionality and representation.

Student Councils are also active through UNICEF's support in activities aiming to decrease the potential for violence in secondary schools and communities by promoting meaningful student involvement, education and service opportunities in efforts to provide safer environments for learning.

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