

Tuesday, 02 March, 2010

CEE Bankwatch Network  
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Dear Member of the EIB Board of Directors,

### Disbursement for the Gazela bridge reconstruction project

We understand that the EIB Board of Directors is about to make a decision on the disbursement of the loan for the rehabilitation of the Gazela Bridge in Belgrade, initially approved in 2007.

During these three years the city of Belgrade has not managed to develop the promised showcase resettlement that was to serve as a model for rehousing people in the approximately 130 informal Roma settlements in Belgrade. It has squandered the opportunity to design and implement a successful solution with the help of IFI technical assistance and the deployment of specialist consultants. In spite of some progress with improving the conditions in the five temporary container settlements that have been set up, much remains to be done to bring the resettlement in line with IFC OD 4.30, a satisfactory plan for which should have been developed before the EIB approved the project.

In view of the fact that the disbursement of this loan is nevertheless planned for approval, we demand that the EIB imposes several conditions as a minimum for the disbursement of the financing.

Firstly, that a satisfactory Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), both for Belgrade residents and non-Belgrade residents, and likely to result in sustainable livelihoods for the resettled people, is produced within a defined timeframe. As the city of Belgrade and the Ministry of Social Affairs have already had three years for this we see no reason why this should take longer than the end of April. This RAP – unlike the existing one approved by the city council – needs to be consulted with the affected people. We would like to emphasise here the necessity of consultation, rather than merely informing people about what will happen.

Secondly, that the issue of long-term housing for Belgrade residents is resolved satisfactorily. The current plan for Gazela inhabitants to compete for a highly insufficient number of social flats is absolutely not acceptable as a solution. While the Resettlement Action Plan must lay out improved plans in this direction, by the end of August – one year after the resettlement – more detailed plans need to have been made for the long-term accommodation of all the Belgrade-based former Gazela residents.

**Bulgaria:**

Centre for Environmental  
Information and Education  
(CEIE)  
For the Earth!

**Czech Republic:**

Centrum pro dopravu a  
energetiku  
Hnutí Duha

**Estonia:**

Estonian Green Movement–FoE

**Georgia:**

Green Alternative

**Hungary:**

Nature Protection Club of  
Eotvos Lorand University (ETK)  
National Society of  
Conservationists–FoE (NSC)

**Lithuania:**

Atgaja

**Macednia:**

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**Poland:**

Polish Green Network (PGN)  
Institute of Environmental  
Economics (IEE)

**Russia:**

Sakhalin Environment Watch

**Slovakia:**

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**Ukraine:**

National Ecological Centre of  
Ukraine (NECU)

CEE Bankwatch Network's  
mission is to prevent  
environmentally and socially  
harmful impacts of  
international development  
finance, and to promote  
alternative solutions and public  
participation.

Thirdly, that the promise of employing one person per household of the Belgrade residents is realised by the end of August. This is also bound up with the need to resolve the long-term housing problem, as those applying for the highly competitive social flats allocation are often unwilling to accept work knowing that they will lose assessment points in the process. Time-bound plans for additional training and employment creation are also needed as part of the Resettlement Action Plan. Particular attention should be given to those Gazela settlers from southern Serbia, where employment opportunities are scarce and anecdotal evidence suggests that social assistance has not been forthcoming to any meaningful extent.

Besides the overall recommendations above, several outstanding concrete problems remain that we have noted during our last visits to the new settlements conducted on 03.02.2010 and 11.02.2010 in three locations in Belgrade: Cukarica, Rakovica and Mladenovac, and a visit to Makis on 02 March 2010. Recommendations on these can be found in the attached document.

We look forward to seeing how the EIB now takes our concerns into account,

Yours sincerely,  
Zvezdan Kalmar  
Center for Ecology and Sustainable Development  
Serbia