



Cultural route
of the Council of Europe
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PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 24 January 2020

Meeting of Ms. Athina Korovesi, Head of the Focal Point for Southern & Western Greece of the Anna Lindh Foundation Greek Network with Mr. Georgios Karabatos, Executive Director of the Cultural Organization “Routes of the Olive Tree”



On Thursday 16 January 2020, **Ms. Athina Korovesi**, member of the ICBSS Team and **Head of the Focal Point for Southern & Western Greece of the Anna Lindh Foundation Greek Network**, had a meeting with **Mr. Georgios Karabatos**, Executive Director of the Cultural Organization “**Routes of the Olive Tree**”, at the ICBSS Hq, in Athens, in the framework of the collaboration of both member organizations within the Anna-Lindh Foundation.

Representing the **International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)** as the elected “Focal Point for Southern & Western Greece of the Anna Lindh Foundation Greek Network”, **Ms. Korovesi** informed **Mr. Karabatos** about the actions taken by the Head, Coordinator and Co-Head of the Greek National Network of Euro-Mediterranean Anna Lindh Foundation during the period after the recent elections for the three Focal Points and Heads accordingly, held on September 2019.

At this point it is worth to mention the **1st National Meeting of the Members of the ALF Greek Network**, that took place on 9-10 November 2019, in Thessaloniki-Greece, which was the first gathering of the member of organizations following the said elections.

During the meeting with the Executive Director of the “Routes of the Olive Tree”, **Ms. Korovesi** highlighted the importance of **the active participation of all members at the events and actions of the ALF Greek Network**, starting her mentions by the abovementioned 1st National Meeting. In addition, she stressed the **significance of the dissemination of the news and activities** among all members of the Network and especially among the members based in Southern and Western Greece, via the official Newsletter of the Network.

From his side, **Mr. Karabatos** expressed his strong desire for the **development of a meaningful interaction between the Network heads and members**, focusing on its educational dimensions. More specifically, he referred to the **supply of tools and “good practices” by the Network** in an effort to the exchange of knowledge and know-how. As examples, the Executive Director mentioned the e-learning programs, seminars and the creation of an on-line library that can be used by the member organizations.

Furthermore, **Mr. Karabatos** informed **Ms. Korovesi** for the extension of the “Routes of the Olive Tree” network into the Balkan and the Black Sea countries, through the initiative **“The Routes of the Olive Tree AGORA”**.

Both parties exchanged views for **developing collaboration in fields of common interest between the ICBSS and the “Routes of the Olive Tree”**, such as by organizing joint actions aiming to the enhancement of the **intercultural dialogue among the countries of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean**.

Given the **international recognition of the “Routes of the Olive Tree”**, as they were officially recognized by the UNESCO as “International Cultural Route of Intercultural Dialogue & Sustainable Development” in 2003 and as “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” by the Council of Europe in 2005, both **Ms. Korovesi** and **Mr. Karabatos** proposed ways of cooperation between the two organizations, especially in the field of culture, with a focus in **the BSEC countries**

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About the ICBSS:

The [International Centre for Black Sea Studies \(ICBSS\)](#) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It is a supervised organisation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic. Since its establishment it has fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and serves as its acknowledged think-tank. In the context of the above dual function, it undertakes a number of activities, such as events, publications, participation in research programs. The ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim to foster multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners. Mr. Georgios Mitrakos is the Director General of the ICBSS since July 2016.

About the Routes of the Olive Tree:

The «[Routes of the Olive Tree](#)» are itineraries of intercultural dialogue framed with cultural events and other activities around the themes of the Olive Tree and the Mediterranean. Acting as a bridge between Greece and the world, they convey the messages of the Olive Tree and pave new ways of communication and cooperation. These activities are implemented by the Network and the Cultural Foundation “Routes of the Olive Tree”, a non-profit NGO which, since 1998, had been putting forward innovative concepts of civilisation and alternative proposals of sustainable development across the olive growing regions. The participants in the “Routes of the Olive Tree” had travelled so far 160.000 km of intercultural dialogue across more than 25 countries, registering, discovering and valorising the Olive Tree civilisation, a time-old cultural asset and an integral part of the Mediterranean civilisation. The annual Olive Route program come true by a multi-scientific team in collaboration with network members and collaborators in all Mediterranean countries.

Few words about the Anna Lindh Foundation:

The [Anna Lindh Foundation](#) is an international organization working from the Mediterranean to promote intercultural and civil society dialogue in the face of growing mistrust and polarisation. Founded in 2004, its Headquarters inaugurated in 2005 in Alexandria, Egypt. The Foundation has coordinators and management staff based across more than 40 countries. The Foundation is the first common institution for dialogue co-created by the European Union and its Mediterranean Partner countries and constitutes the largest network of civil society actors involved in Intercultural Dialogue in the wider Euro-Mediterranean region, with more than 4.500 member organizations across its National Networks in 42 countries. Read more about the Anna Lindh Foundation – Greek Network on <https://www.alfhellas.gr/en>.

For further information regarding the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) visit the website www.icbss.org and contact us at email icbss@icbss.org or tel.: 210 3242321-2.

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