

## Beautification and Improvement of Environmental Conditions in Roma Mahalla in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica



*IOM Project Manager Panagiota Voidonikola presenting the Roma Mahalla beautification project to the Deputy Prime minister Mr. Hajredin Kuçi, and the Head of the EU Mr. Renzo Davidi*

On 9th of May 2008, IOM Support for Stabilization of Communities (SSC), a programme funded by European Union (EU) through the European Commission Liaison Office (ECLO), facilitated the inauguration ceremony for “Improvement of environmental conditions in Roma Mahalla” project implemented in the returnee neighborhood of South Mitrovica--Roma Mahalla. On this occasion the Deputy Prime minister Mr. Hajredin Kuci, the Head of the European Union Mr. Renzo Davidi, EAR Task Manager for SSC Mr. Samir Selimi, the community and other relevant stakeholders were present.

The Roma Mahalla is located in southern part of Mitrovica, but was destroyed during the conflict in 1999. Some of the families were displaced to camps in Northern Kosovo, while others were displaced to Serbia, Montenegro and Western Europe. In March 2007 RAE population began the return to Roma Mahalla. Despite the reconstruction of houses, buildings, a cultural centre, a health centre, a playground and other premises, the Roma Mahalla residential area was a “dead” zone with no green areas trees or grass, no demarked paths or benches and trash is spread in the streets. There was a playground for kids to play and youngsters to play sports, but no space for people to sit down and communicate.

Under SSC programme for supporting larger community initiatives the EU approved the project implemented by IOM to improve the environmental conditions in the Roma Mahalla residential area. Construction works were completed for pathways between the buildings, garbage bins and benches were placed and trees and flowers were planted. For this initiative, EAR provided over 13 000 € through the IOM programme Support to Stabilisation of Communities.