

No. 11, July-October 2011

**We offer our deepest condolences to the relatives of those who lost their lives during the tragic Van earthquake in October 23, 2011, and would like to thank all civil society organizations that took part in aid and rescue activities.**

## Civil Society Law Reform

### Amendment on Law on Foundations regarding Minority Foundations

According to the decree, published in the Official Gazette on August 27th, minority foundations can reclaim property -- including cemeteries, fountains, schools, hospitals and orphanages -- that they have declared since 1936. Real estate that has been re-sold to third parties will also be paid for after the current value is determined by the Ministry of Finance. To reclaim their property, minority foundations must apply to Turkish authorities within a year. Each application must be approved by parliament, after which the property will be registered in the name of the foundation by the registration office. In 2008, parliament amended the Foundations Law, expanding the rights of minority religious groups to acquire new property and recover their confiscated property.

(Source:<http://southerndailynews.com>)

### New TUSEV Publication: TUSEV Civil Society Monitoring Report 2011

Starting from 2011, TUSEV will publish a yearly civil society monitoring report which provides an in-depth analysis and recommendations under four main dimensions that are in line with TUSEV's programme areas (civil society law reform, international relations, institutional capacity and research). With this report, TUSEV aims to specify the problems and needs of civil society and raise awareness about these issues among key stakeholders and carry out advocacy efforts to create a more enabling environment for civil society organizations. Focusing on government-civil society relations as the main theme, the Executive Summary of the Findings and Recommendations of Civil Society Monitoring Report 2011 is available at [www.tusev.org.tr](http://www.tusev.org.tr)

## News from the Sector

### 10th CIVICUS World Assembly

10-12 Eylül 2011, Montreal

Representatives from civil society, donor organizations, governments and business gathered at the

10th CIVICUS World Assembly in Montreal on Sept. 10-12, 2011 to discuss the theme “Civil Society and Global Decision Making: Doing It Better”. On the way to the Rio +20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and in light of the developments following the Arab Spring; CIVICUS offered its participants various workshops on Development Effectiveness, Climate Justice, Connecting People through Technology and, Civil Society and Democratic Space. The Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA), which is the group of national organization networks represented at CIVICUS, also held its Annual General Meeting in Montreal on September 9, 2011. TUSEV presented initial findings from the “Membership Toolkit for National Associations” developed with the support of the AGNA membership working group. Notes from the plenary meetings and workshops are now available at [www.civicusworldassembly.org](http://www.civicusworldassembly.org) in English, French and Spanish.

### **Round Table Meeting: Young People in CSOs and Possible Collaborations Between CSOs in the US and Turkey**

**16 September 2011, Istanbul**

TUSEV and Foreign Policy Platform co-organized the “Young People in CSOs and Possible Collaborations Between CSOs in the US and Turkey” meeting in Istanbul on September 16, 2011. Young American leaders working in civil society, think tanks and with government visited Turkey as part of the “Young Turkey -Young America A New Relationship for a New Age” program sponsored by the US Department of State and co-organized by World Learning and Foreign Policy Platform. American participants were joined by the young professionals from Turkish CSOs to discuss the position and role of civil society in foreign policy in Turkey and United States with the moderation of Rana Birden Çorbacıoğlu. The group jointly developed frameworks for creating and strengthening civil society collaboration between both countries. Notes from the meeting are available to download from [here](#).

### **CIVICUS Civil Society Index: Key findings from 2008-2011**

The key findings of CIVICUS’ Civil Society Index (CSI) Project, a three year civil society self-assessment and research project conducted in 35 countries between 2008 and 2011, has been released in the report Bridging the Gaps: Citizens, organisations and dissociation. The report paints a picture of multiple disconnects for civil society: disconnects between CSOs and governments and the private sector, with relationships tending to be piecemeal, volatile and characterised by limitations on what can be raised; disconnects between CSOs and other organisations within civil society, such as trade unions and faith groups, and between advocacy-oriented CSOs and service delivery-oriented CSOs; and disconnects between CSOs and the citizens they are assumed to

represent and serve. It concludes that the rise of informal activity, such as the people's movements of the Arab Spring, offers a new challenge and opportunity to CSOs: they must embrace such movements to connect better with the public and renew themselves in order to survive. Please visit here to view the report. (Source: [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org))

### **Regional TACSO CSO Database Launched**

The Regional TACSO CSO Database provides information about the CSOs from 8 different IPA countries which are Turkey, Albania, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. For each registered CSO, information can be found about the organisation's mission statement, area of interest, and contact details. Apart from the data provision, the database enables organizations to make partnerships and to strengthen the exchange of information. It is also possible to find data about the public institutions of the selected countries which CSOs are collaborating with. Interested CSOs can register and create a profile of their organizations at <http://www.tacso.org/cso-db-res/reg/>

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## **News from Our Members**

### **Scholarships Programs Launched by Almost 30 TUSEV Members**

Almost 30 foundations and associations among TUSEV's membership have launched scholarship programs for high school and university students. The scholarships are awarded based on the financial need and academic merit while the application processes varies among organizations. Online database of TUSEV members, [www.tusev.org.tr/member](http://www.tusev.org.tr/member), provides a list of organizations giving scholarships and their contact information.

### **Ministry of National Education and TEMA Launched Ecology Training Program for Teachers**

Ministry of National Education and TEMA Launched Ecology Training Program for Teachers  
TEMA in cooperation with Turkey's Ministry of National Education launched a two-week training program for school teachers on ecological awareness. Through this training program, teachers will be given both theoretical and practical training on ecology and how to use ecological awareness in class syllabuses. The project aims to train four hundred teachers from Turkey's eighty-one provinces in the next four years. Eighty-five teachers from different provinces of Turkey attended the initial training of the program which was held in the province of Yalova between September 19 and

30. Please visit [www.tema.org.tr](http://www.tema.org.tr) for further information.

### **Untitled: 12th Istanbul Biennial**

**September 17- November 13, Istanbul**

The Untitled 12th Istanbul Biennial organized by IKSv is open to visitors between September 17 and November 13 at Antrepo 3 and 5 warehouses. The Biennial curated under the artistic eyes of Adriano Pedrosa and Jens Hoffman is composed of five group exhibitions and more than five hundred solo presentations and it explores the rich relationship between art and politics, focusing on artworks that are both formally innovative and politically outspoken. Please visit [12b.iksv.org](http://12b.iksv.org) for more information on the Biennial.

