



Policy Association for an Open Society

PRESS RELEASE

A network of policy centres in
Central and Eastern Europe and
Central Asia

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Soros, Bakala and Khodorkovsky's lawyer meet in Prague for debate on strengthening philanthropy in Central Europe

Think-tank experts from Latvia, Poland, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Bulgaria and Czech Republic meet for PASOS Board meeting and PASOS conference with Soros and Bakala on Fostering Philanthropy in Europe's New Democracies

Prague, 25 April 2007 – Global financier and philanthropist George Soros will address the need for policy-oriented philanthropy in Central Europe, and spell out his own vision of an open society, when at the invitation of PASOS (Policy Association for an Open Society) he speaks at a conference in Prague on 26 April 2007. A new initiative will be launched by PASOS to engage with business leaders and new EU-member governments in strengthening business and government dialogue in good governance, open society and the rule of law, both at home and in neighbouring countries. PASOS is a network of 32 independent think-tanks spanning 20 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The proposal to raise greater interest in public policy questions among the business community in Central and Eastern Europe will be launched in Prague on 26 April 2007 by PASOS at a conference, *Fostering Philanthropy in Europe's New Democracies*. The PASOS international secretariat is located in Prague, Czech Republic, headed by Executive Director Jeff Lovitt, former Communications Director at the Berlin-based international secretariat of Transparency International, the anti-corruption watchdog.

Soros will be joined at the conference, hosted by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, by leading representatives of business and civil society in Central Europe, including Zdeněk Bakala, Chairman of RPG Industries, Robert R. Amsterdam, the defence counsel of jailed Russian businessman Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Vazil Hudák, Vice-President, Central/Eastern Europe and the CIS, of Citigroup, and Vita Terauda, PASOS Chair and Director of Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS in Latvia. The panel also includes Lenka Surotchak, Director of the Pontis Foundation in Slovakia, and Martin M. Šimečka, editor of *Respekt* weekly newspaper. Alexandr Vondra, Czech Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs, will present the Czech government's perspective, and the conference will be opened by Dr Jeffrey Gedmin, the new President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

The conference, held in Prague, coincides with the meeting on 25-27 April of the international Board of Directors of PASOS, leading think-tank experts from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. PASOS Chair Vita Terauda is Director of Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS in Riga, Latvia, and former Minister of State Reform with responsibility for launching the reform of Latvia's public administration and local government affairs. PASOS Deputy Chair Dr Jacek Kucharczyk, one of Poland's best-known political commentators, is Director for Programming at the Institute of Public Affairs, a leading think-tank in Warsaw.

PASOS promotes and protects open society values, including democracy, rule of law, good governance, respect for and protection of human rights, economic and social development by supporting policy centres.

PASOS is a not-for-profit association registered in the Czech Republic.



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Another PASOS Board member, Cholpon Nogoibaeva, is Programme Director of the Soros Foundation Kyrgyzstan in Bishkek, where she leads the Public Administration, Economic Reform, Information and Education programmes of the Foundation. George Tarkhan-Mouravi, co-director of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) in Tbilisi, Georgia, specialises in social and political analysis, Caucasian politics, democratic transition, development and poverty studies.

Their Board colleagues include Adrian Ionescu, Programme Director of the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative of the Open Society Institute in Budapest, Darina Kadunkova, Deputy Development Director at the European Institute, Sofia, and David Král, President of EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy in Prague.

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*The PASOS conference, **Fostering Philanthropy in Europe's New Democracies**, takes place at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Vinohradská 1, Prague, Czech Republic, from 09.00-12.30 on Thursday 26 April 2007. Media with cameras should arrive at 08.00. Registration is required by at the latest 18.00 on Wednesday 25 April 2007 by calling +420 2223 14833 or sending an email to philanthropy@pasos.org*

For requests for interviews with PASOS Board members, please contact PASOS Executive Director Jeff Lovitt at jefflovitt@pasos.org or on +420 2223 13644 or PASOS Events Manager Eva Rybková at eva.rybkova@pasos.org or on +420 2223 14833.

PASOS comprises the following policy centres:

(* Associate members)

Albania

Institute for Contemporary Studies (ISB), Tirana

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Center for Economic and Social Development (CESD), Baku

Economic Research Center (ERC), Baku

Bulgaria

Center for Economic Development (CED), Sofia

European Institute (EI), Sofia

International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations (IMIR), Sofia*

Croatia

iDEMO Institute for Democracy, Zagreb*

Czech Republic

Association for International Affairs (AMO), Prague*

EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, Prague

Estonia

PRAXIS Center for Policy Studies (PRAXIS), Tallinn

Georgia

Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD), Tbilisi

Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), Tbilisi

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Policy Association for an Open Society

Hungary

Center for Educational Policy Analysis (CEPA), Budapest

Center for Policy Studies at the Central European University (CPS - CEU), Budapest

Local Government Initiative Development Limited (LGID), Budapest

Kazakhstan

Public Policy Research Center (PPRC), Almaty

Kyrgyzstan

Center for Public Policy, Bishkek

Latvia

Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS, Riga

Macedonia

Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), Skopje

International Centre for European Culture Euro Balkan Institute (Euro-Balkan), Skopje

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Institute for Public Policy (IPP), Chisinau

Poland

Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw

Romania

Center for Rural Assistance (CRA), Timisoara

Institute for Public Policy (IPP), Bucharest

Romanian Center for Economic Policies (CEROPE), Bucharest

Russia

Center for Legal Support to Local Government (LSLG), Moscow

Strategia - St. Petersburg Center for Humanities and Political Studies, St Petersburg

Serbia

Jefferson Institute, Belgrade

Slovakia

Institute for Public Affairs (IVO), Bratislava

Slovenia

Peace Institute - Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies, Ljubljana

Ukraine

International Centre for Policy Studies (ICPS), Kiev

For contact details, see www.pasos.org

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