



**CULTURAL CORRIDORS OF SOUTH EAST EUROPE  
COMMON PAST AND SHARED HERITAGE -  
A KEY TO FUTURE PARTNERSHIP  
A REGIONAL FORUM**

Varna, May 20-21 2005

**ADDRESS BY MR. MICHEL THOMAS-PENETTE,  
DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL  
ROUTES, LUXEMBOURG**

*(Summarized, the original text is not available)*

- The Director said he was honoured to sit at the same table with the participants in this extremely important meeting, which he described as a milestone in the development of cultural corridors in Southeastern Europe.
- The Director said he was proud to convey a message from Jean-Claude Juncker, Prime Minister of Luxembourg and President of the European Union, whose busy schedule prevented him from attending this event, although he found its agenda very intriguing. The Director said that Mr. Juncker extended his moral and political support for the meeting and for the activity carried out in Southeastern Europe.
- The Director said Mr. Juncker was very impressed that the current meeting placed culture, cultural heritage and cultural corridors in the centre of attention through a political document, which was remarkable because the true meaning of such matters is often underestimated.
- Recalled that, eight years earlier, Luxembourg had decided to host a meeting at which the Grand Duchy and the Council of Europe reached political agreement to set up a European Institute of Cultural Routes, which would be based in Luxembourg, and since then, the main concern has been about methodology, about information, about assisting those who were working on projects related to the cultural routes across Europe.
- Also recalled that, five years earlier, Prof. Kretev had set the beginning of this initiative at a Sofia meeting of all ICOMOS representatives in Southeastern Europe, and back then, the European Institute of Cultural Routes had promised to follow the activity and provide assistance.
- Said the question was about methodology, and it would be relevant to develop an Internet-based virtual forum on culture and cultural corridors and to build a network, so the idea of a triangle between Luxembourg, Sofia and Sibiu was now being discussed.
- The Director said Mr. Juncker had asked him to state that it is extremely important for international institutions to engage in assistance and cooperation, so that they complement each other rather than follow identical or overlapping programmes.
- The Director said Mr. Juncker was in charge of compiling a report on architecture in the EU and the capacity of various initiatives to complement each other, and, therefore, his moral support would also have tangible dimensions.