



United but autonomous

PODGORICA (ME) — The first **United Nations premises** incorporating ecological principles will be built in Montenegro's capital to a design by Daniel Fügenschuh. The City of Podgorica has donated a very attractive site on the banks of the River Morača for this energetically autonomous building. The special equipment for the ecological technology and building services will be financed by the Austrian Development Agency and implemented by the World University Service Austria. The building itself is being financed by the Montenegrin government and will have a usable surface area of approximately 1400 m². Completion is scheduled for 2008.

The project is the result of an invited architecture competition held in 2005. The

building, which opens up to the riverbank, is embedded in the landscape and presents itself as the horizontal counterpart to the adjoining Millennium Bridge, Podgorica's newest landmark. The various UN agencies operating in Montenegro (UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM and UN consultants) will be brought together under a single roof slab that is perforated with large openings for natural ventilation and lighting purposes. Photovoltaic cells floating above the roof slab act as a shading device while also providing enough energy to meet the building's estimated annual energy demands. The ventilation system works on the displacement principal, using the heat generated in the interior to drive the movement of air.

Although Montenegro defines itself as an ecologically benign state, owing to its untouched natural beauty, there is a need for action in the area of environmental protection. This project has been seen as a welcome opportunity for the country to 'put its money where its mouth is': the building should serve as a prime example of ecological construction in Montenegro.

Other noteworthy and positive impulses emanating from this project are the promotion of sustainable building principles by the NGO Expeditio (see A10 #11) and the Austrian Development Agency's financial and academic support to the Faculty of Architecture in Podgorica for the establishment of a course on ecological construction. (VESNA VUČINIĆ)

UN PREMISES, 2005–2008

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The water from the river will be used to cool the building in summer and to heat it in the winter with the aid of a heat pump powered by solar electricity.

