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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Building a green future, one school at a time**

**Skopje, 31 October 2012:** The kindergarten Orce Nikolov in the muncipality of Karpos in Skopje has officially been launched as an energy efficient kindergarten, in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the National Energy Agency, municipality officials and UNDP.

The Municipality of Karpos and UNDP have joined forces and invested 70,000 USD to refurbish this 46-year-old building. It took less than five months to change the windows, the façades, the roof and install a hot water solar system – following EU standards and best practices.

The kindergarten is now fully energy efficient. According to UNDP estimates, the energy savings of the kindergarten will amount to 60%. A recent study by UNDP showed that just by introducing simple efficiency measures, the energy costs of any building could be reduced by 20% to 30%. This could help municipalities make great budget savings.

“Thanks to the complete refurbishment of the kindergarten with energy efficiency measures, fully in compliance with European Union standards, we can expect a total return on the investment of 70,000 USD in two to three years from now”, the Mayor of the Karpos Municipality says.

“With projects like this, we are sending a clear message: Investing in energy efficiency in buildings is the cheapest, easiest and simplest way to save money, reduce our energy bills, and cut down on harmful pollution”, says Alessandro Fracassetti, UNDP Resident Representative a.i., adding that “UNDP stands ready to continue helping central and local governments throughout the country to introduce energy efficiency measures and ensure a greener future for all.

The kindergarten was refurbished in the frames of the Energy Efficiency in the Building Sector project, implemented since 2009 by UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the Ministry of Economy, the Association of Local Self Government Units (ZELS) and the financial support of the Austrian Development Cooperation.

This is the country’s second fully energy-efficient school, compeletely refurbished this year with the support of UNDP.

The key aim of UNDP’s two kindergarten projects has been to demonstrate and raise awareness of the financial and environmental benefits of greater energy efficiency in the building sector.

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