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Republic of Macedonia on the way to the EU

Joint Parliamentary Committee EU-RM

The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and the EU

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Culture

Macedonian legislation harmonized with EU acquis in January & February 2010:

- Amendments to the Law on Broadcasting Activity – **adopted**
- Amendments to the Law on Administrative Fees – **adopted**
- Law on Examination and Engraving or Marking of the Fire Weapons and Ammunitions – **adopted**
- Law Amending the Law on Inland Waterways Navigation – **adopted**
- Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long - Range Transboundary Air Pollution on Long-Term Financing of Co-Operative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-Term Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP)- **ratified**
- Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution Concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or Their Transboundary Fluxes – **ratified**
- Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions – **ratified**

Meeting of the President Trajko Veljanoski with the JPC Co-Chair, Mr. Yorgo Chatzimarkakis and Head of the AFET Delegation, Mr. Alojz Petrlje



Reminding of the EC Progress Report and the recommendation for a date for opening accession negotiations, as well as on the EP Report for the

Republic of Macedonia, the President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Trajko Veljanoski underlined that the NPAA is a priority of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, but also the institutional and administrative adaptation for EU Membership are also high on the agenda. This Assembly constantly works on strengthening the parliamentary principles, and in this framework, the political dialogue. The Republic of Macedonia did not receive a date for opening negotiations with EU due to well known reasons, although our European friends constantly state that the name issue is a bilateral issue and that it should not affect the EU Integration. Nevertheless, the Republic of Macedonia will continue to implement the needed reforms and will continue the negotiations under the auspices of UN, for finding mutually acceptable solution on the name issue. Greece is our neighbour and we want to have highly developed friendly relations based on mutual respect and trust. This is in the interest of both

sides, but also in the interest of the stabilization, development and integration of the region in EU, underlined Mr. Veljanoski.

The MEP Alojz Petrlje stated that the Republic of Macedonia has achieved many significant results. "The work is not finished yet and the reforms must continue. The fact that you continue working is an encouragement for us and we as MEPs continue working for full EU integration of the countries from the region. Regarding the name issue, I would like to underline that you must seize the moment, since the two sides show preparedness to find a solution", stated Mr. Petrlje. Mr. Yorgo Chatzimarkakis, Co-Chairmen of the JPC, underlined that he shares the opinion with his colleague and that now is a good moment to find a solution. "That is why, figuratively speaking, we are pressuring your country and Greece to find a solution for the name issue, which is in the interest for the two countries but also for the region in general" underlined Yorgo Chatzimarkakis.

The EU Commissioner Mr. Štefan Füle, Addressed at the 7th JPC Meeting



Mr. Štefan Füle, the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy, addressed at the 7th JPC Meeting on 19 of February 2010, in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. Mr. Füle expressed his pleasure that the Republic of Macedonia is among the first countries he has visited since his appointment as EU Commissioner. He said that his visit comes at a very important moment - after the new European Parliament and European Commission have been constituted, and the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Mr. Füle emphasized that the enlargement remains one of the priorities of the EU, especially with regard to the Western Balkans countries, and stated that in his opinion EU membership is the key for their fu-

ture. Concerning the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Füle pointed out that the country has "substantially addressed the key priorities and has sufficiently fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria".

Commissioner Füle, congratulate the Republic of Macedonia on being granted visa liberalization that has been a result of hard work and of political consensus. Regarding the dispute over the name issue, he said that the maintaining of good-neighbourly relations and finding mutually acceptable solution for both sides within the frames of the UN, remains crucial and emphasized that there is a "window of opportunity" that should be taken as advantage, and that his visit to Skopje is a clear signal of his commitment for resolution of this problem.

7th JPC Meeting in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia



On the 7th JPC Meeting held on 18th and 19th February 2010 in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, both MPs and MEPs taking part at the meeting, had the opportunity to exchange views on the relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the EU with Mr. Vasko Naumovski, Vice-Prime Minister in charge for European Issues, Mr. Antonio Miloshoski, Minister on Foreign Affairs, representing the Government. The European Union was represented by Mr. Erwan Fouéré, Special EU Representative and Head of the EU Mission in the Republic of Macedonia, and the European Commission by Ms. Alexandra Cas Granje, Director in the DG Enlargement.

In the adopted Recommendations addressed to the institutions in the Republic of Macedonia and those of the EU, the JPC welcomed the fact that the political parties in the Republic of Macedonia, both in government and in opposition are united, with wide spread public support, in the goal of the accession of Macedonia to the EU. The accession to the EU is based on accomplishment of the Copenhagen Criteria and the principle of fair conditionality and member states should not take advantage of the EU institutions for their own interest, which does not go in favour and is contrary to the EU enlargement policy. JPC urged the Council to review the issue on opening negotiations as soon as possible and to grant a date on opening accession negotiations to the Republic of Macedonia. The reforms made in the decentralization, the public administration, in the field of judiciary and anti-corruption policy, as well as in the economy, the environmental legislation and the establishment of appropriate structures for decentralized IPA funds management were welcomed. JPC recommended

to the Macedonian institutions to continue and to make further progress in the political dialogue and to continue with the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, especially with regard to full equality of all ethnic communities in the country. JPC also called for further strengthening of the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, decrease of the unemployment, strengthening of transport and infrastructure administrative capacities and strict management of the IPA funds.

■ Adopted recommendations

Public Debate: Gender Policies in the EU

The Women Parliamentarians' Club organized a public debate on the topic "Gender Policies in the European Union" on 24 February 2010. Ms. Slavica Grkovska- Loshkova opened this debate.



Mr. Erwan Fouéré, EU Special Representative and Head of the EU Mission to the Republic of Macedonia, Ms Simeone Filipini, Ambassador from Netherlands to the Republic of Macedonia, Ms. Natalia Drozd- Deputy-Head of OSCE Mission to Macedonia and Ms. Asia Varbanova- Head of Program and Head of UNIFEM Office in the Republic of Macedonia had their introductory addresses, and caused big interest among the present participants who presented their points of view, suggestions and proposals for promotion of the gender equality in the Republic of Macedonia.

The EP Resolution on Srebrenica Supported by Large Majority

The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, during its session held on 4th February 2010, adopted with large majority a Declaration to support the EP Resolution on Srebrenica (adopted on 15 January 2009). In the

Declaration forwarded to the President of the European Parliament and to the President of the Parliamentary



Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Assembly expresses its strong commitment to build relations between the countries based on good-neighborly relations and peaceful cooperation and a belief that reconciliation and lasting peace among the nations in the region are the preconditions for integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures. The Assembly decided to appropriately commemorate the 11th July, the day of Commemoration of the Srebrenica Genocide, in honor of the victims of the massacre in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Public Debate on the Occasion of the European Day on Safer Internet

The Macedonian part of the JPC EU -RM organised a public debate on 9th February 2010 - the European Day on Safer Internet. Both the Assembly President Trajko Veljanoski and the Vice President, Jani Makraduli, had introductory speeches at the debate. Representatives from the EU Delegation in the Republic of Macedonia, prominent university professors, experts, NGO's, representatives of the municipalities, government representatives and state agencies took part in this debate.

The aim of the public debate was to raise the citizens' awareness both for the benefits and the risks of using internet, especially for protection of the privacy, seen through the prism of the Member States' practices, as well as for increased social protection in the Republic of Macedonia of children and young people from the contents available on Internet. On the basis of the presented opinions, proposals and recommendations, a Declaration for Safer Internet was prepared and adopted on a plenary session of the Parliament.

- Declaration for Safer Internet
- Address of President Veljanoski

CARNIVALS' SEASON IN MACEDONIA

Strumica Carnival



www.strumickikarneval.com

Vevcani Carnival



www.vevcani.gov.mk

Prilep Carnival



www.karnevalprilep.mk

JPCCommittee - News from the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, No. 2 - February 2010

The JPC Newsletter is published by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia (www.mfa.gov.mk) and Macedonian Information Centre (www.micnews.com.mk).

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