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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 the EU acquis in **September 2011**:

- Law ratifying the Agreement on the application of Article 65 of the Convention on the Grant of European Patents and London Agreement
- Law amending the Health and Safety at Work Law

20 Years of Macedonian Independence stamp



The two JPC Co-Chairs met for the first time on the 5th September 2011 in the Macedonian Parliament to exchange views on the incoming JPC activities. They both welcomed the fruitful cooperation in the past and expressed hope that this positive atmosphere will continue to be present in the future work of Committee.

Dear JPC Colleagues,

Allow me at the beginning of the new mandate of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia 2011-2015, as the JPC Co-Chair in this parliamentary composition, to greet you warmly in the latest edition of our Newsletter that will continue as before, to inform you on the Euro-Integration processes of our Parliament. I have accepted with pleasure my appointment for the new office and I am sincerely counting on your close and open cooperation in the next years of this mandate.

The JPC has always been a forum for discussion of topics important both for the Republic of Macedonia and the European Union, where various views have been exchanged on the methods and the realization of the priorities for the Republic of Macedonia: membership in the European Union. Our commitments to this goal shall continue in the future and with the same pace as before, with a hope that at the next JPC meetings and other related activities of the Co-Chairs from the two delegations, we shall continue to bring Republic of Macedonia closer to its strategic goal to

be part of the European family of nations.

The fact that I have been appointed as Head of this Delegation as representative from the Turkish community in the Republic of Macedonia shows the unity of all ethnic communities in the state to reach our goal. Therefore, I sincerely count on your support for our Euro-Integration path as a candidate country for EU membership.

On behalf of our new Vice Co-Chairs, Mr. Andrej Petrov and Ms. Ermira Mehmeti Devaja, and on my personal behalf, I am looking forward to welcoming you at our next JPC Meeting that will be held on 3-4 November 2011 in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. Until then, allow me to send you the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Kenan HASIPI,
Co-Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee
Republic of Macedonia - European Union



A lot of events took place on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Macedonia. The main ceremony began in front of the Parliament, where the President of the Parliament, Mr. Trajko Veljanoski, passed on the Declaration of Independence

adopted by the Parliament back in 1991 to the President of the Republic, Mr. Gjorgje Ivanov, who then in an official ceremony carried the document to the laid down the document in the Museum of the Macedonian Struggle. Mr. Veljanoski, in his address on the event, said that all nations have their great, historical dates and events that shape the awareness of the citizens and create the paths we move on. Ilinden 1903, ASNOM 1944, and 8th September 1991, our "third Ilinden" as he said, was the turning point, when the citizens in Macedonia decided on a referendum, by writing a new page in the Macedonian history, to live in a sovereign and independent state. In the Declaration, the vital interest is expressed for inclusion in the Euro-Integration processes, as well as for respect of the territorial integrity and sovereignty and peaceful solution of problems, based on negotiations and mutual trust between the parties.

President Veljanoski mentioned that in the past 20 years, the Republic of Macedonia and its citizens have achieved a lot, solved many important issues, faced many challenges and had to take decisive actions. As a result of this policy, Macedonia became a member of many international

organizations, and a respected partner in the international cooperation with other states in the world. "Today, 20 years after the historical 8th September, we are faced again with major challengers. Today, when our destiny depends on ourselves, we bear greater responsibility and greater expectations. I am confident that we will overcome them successfully. We must complete our Euro-Atlantic Integration! Macedonia is Europe and Europe is Macedonia!", said Mr. Veljanoski.



President Veljanoski Met the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan



President Trajko Veljanoski met the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in the framework of his official visit to the Republic of Macedonia. The meeting was in the spirit of the traditionally good and friendly relations between the two states. Intensive political and economic relations will bring benefit for the citizens, said President Veljanoski, emphasizing that Turkey is among Macedonia's 10 most important trade partners. He also expressed pleasure with the opening of the new Skopje Airport "Alexander the Great", under concession by the international company TAV, as the most contemporary airport in the Balkans and a reference for future Turkish projects in the Republic of Macedonia. Mr. Veljanoski emphasized the good cooperation on parliamentary level and invited the President of the Grand National Assembly of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Cemil Çiçek to visit the Republic of Macedonia during 2012. Republic

of Macedonia appreciates the support by the Republic of Turkey in the framework of the Euro Atlantic integration processes, clearly demonstrated during the NATO Summit in Bucharest in 2008, and especially the use of the constitutional name the Republic of Macedonia both on bilateral and multilateral level by the Republic of Turkey.

Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan mentioned several aspects of the successful cooperation between the two friendly and brotherly countries, such as the economic cooperation and the elimination of the barriers for successful business, and announced future support in the field of defence, security, logistics and training of our security forces. Regarding the Euro-Integration processes, Mr. Erdogan expressed support to the Republic of Macedonia, which he said, should not be discouraged by the Turkish EU integration experience.

MEP Rapporteur Howitt Meets Key People in the Parliament

At the first meeting, President Veljanoski informed him on the past achievements of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, always highly evaluated in the yearly EC Progress Reports and a result of a team work by the Vice-Presidents, Coordinators and all MPs, regardless of their party or ethnic origin. "We will all continue to work as a team to achieve the strategic goals. All the reforms are implemented mainly for the citizens, for our economic prospect and for the promotion of our competitiveness on the European markets and wider", said Mr. Veljanoski. The President expressed conviction that this year's Progress Report will be positive and that we will again receive a recommendation for opening negotiations. In this context, he underlined his belief that the Mr. Howitt reports will be a realistic and objective review of what has been done and achieved by every political entity. Mr. Howitt had also meetings with the JPC Co-Chair, Mr. Hasipi, the Chair of the National Euro-Integration Council, Mrs. Radmila Šekerinska, and the Chair of the Committee on European Issues, Mr. Hajrula Misini. They shared their view on



the developments in the Republic of Macedonia, agreeing that the Euro-Integration process and getting the date for opening the accession negotiations with the European Union are the main priorities of the country. The JPC Co-Chair Hasipi pointed out that the remarks in the EC Progress Reports are important and serve as guidelines for the state in the process of European integration. Ms Šekerinska, talked about the situation with the media in the country and asked for stronger support from the

European Parliament for the Euro-integration aspirations of the Republic of Macedonia. However, she emphasized that we need to present a clear and realistic picture of the situation in the country. Mr. Misini, mentioned the name issue with Greece as the main obstacle for Macedonia to become a member of the EU. "The country has repeatedly received a recommendation for opening of accession negotiations, but has still not been given the date", said Mr. Misini. He appealed to Mr. Hewitt to discuss this issue with his Greek colleagues.

MEP Howitt agreed that the economic progress is crucial and that the economic growth is expected with our membership in the EU. He also stated that there has been a step forward and that there is a cooperation among the political entities. Mr. Howitt underlined that his evaluation will be made in an objective and supra-party manner. His intention is to support the overall development of the Republic of Macedonia and to foster the dynamics toward EU integration across the region. Regarding the issue with Greece, both sides expressed their conviction that this issue should be resolved and the President of the Assembly, Mr. Veljanoski underlined that efforts for raising the trust between the two states are necessary.

First Session of the NEUC

The National Euro-Integration Council (NEUC) had its first session in the new mandate, inviting the Vice-President of the Government on EU Affairs, Ms. Teuta Arifi, to address the members of the Council and exchange views regarding EU affairs in the state. Representatives from the EU Delegation and the Embassy of Poland in the Republic of Macedonia were also present at the meeting.

Ms. Arifi presented the challenges for Macedonia in the EU integration process. The first aspect she said, is the internal policy and the concepts that need to be fulfilled regarding the concepts required for EU membership, and the foreign political aspect is regarding the regional activities of the state. They emphasized that the last parliamentary elections give a positive picture about the state and add to building

of democracy and internal processes in the state. Ms. Arifi informed on the Action Plan and the activities that need to be taken until the end of the year on the EC recommendations on issues such as reforms in the public administration and the judiciary, anti-corruption measures, freedom of media and freedom of expression, as well as on ethnic representation based on quality of young people in the administration.

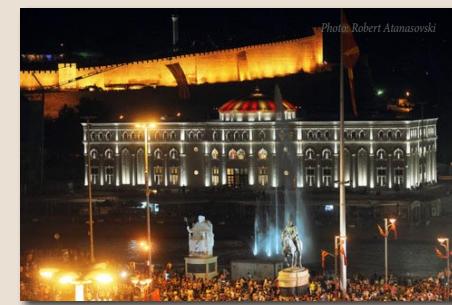
Having in mind that the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Republic of Macedonia and getting a date for negotiations is related to the name issue with Greece and the use of our constitutional name, it is necessary to show a good will to face the problem, but also to expect good will shown from the other side as well.

She concluded that the solutions for the problems of the Balkan countries lie in the future, i.e. their Euro-Atlantic integration. It is of regional interest to establish regular



dialogue between the authorities of all states from the Western Balkans with the European Union.

Macedonia Celebrates Its Independence



JPC Committee - News from the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, No. 15, September 2011.

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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