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### Your links:

Members of the Assembly

Councils of the Assembly

Working bodies of the Assembly

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 November / December 2012:

- Law Amending the Law on Police
- Law Amending the Electoral Code
- Law Amending the Law on Financing of Political Parties
- Law Amending the Law on Criminal Code
- Law on Civil Accountability for Defamation and Libel
- Law Amending the Law on Inland Waterway Navigation

### The City of Skopje Celebrates Liberation Day



Dear colleagues,

Dear friends,

On the eve of the third anniversary of the JPC Newsletter, I am addressing you on behalf of the Delegation from the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia in the Joint Parliamentary Committee - European Union and the Republic of Macedonia and on my personal behalf, to wish you happy holidays, good health and many professional and personal successes. In the past three years, with our Newsletter, we have tried to inform you on the Euro-Integration processes of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and the efforts we have been making to accomplish our strategic goal for a European vision for the Republic of Macedonia. Our commitments have been properly reflected in the European Commission Progress Reports, but also in the JPC Final Recommendations, which we have achieved with our fellow parliamentarians.

### 3rd Anniversary of the JPC Newsletter

## MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS

Exchanging opinions and positions on the criteria to be fulfilled by the Republic of Macedonia for EU membership and the ways in which that is done, the JPC meetings proved that members of both parliaments, although often having different positions to some issues, can reach consensus and send a strong, clear and positive message for the European path of the Republic of Macedonia. In this context, I would like to emphasize the constructive role of all Co-Chairs so far and their unselfish engagement for successful JPC meetings. I sincerely hope that the close and successful cooperation shall continue in future, especially during the forthcoming JPC meeting in February 2013, when the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia will be hosting the meeting.

Our common goal as parliamentarians is to make European values a reality and to help the Republic of Macedonia to become part of the European Union. Despite all the challenges and difficulties, we remain fully determined to work on the future of our state and achieve what has been given with our mandate as people's rep-

resentatives. On this path, I expect sincere support from your side as colleagues Euro-Parliamentarians, but also from all colleagues from the parliaments in Europe.

The Republic of Macedonia has painstakingly and patiently completed its tasks, responsibilities and criteria. It is time that the European Union takes a step ahead and evaluates the huge efforts that my state has been making in the past years and to finally open the true European future for our citizens. I am confident you share my belief that membership of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union shall enable long-term regional stability, prosperity for the Union and European life for all the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia who deserved this.

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

Sincerely,

Kenan HASIPI, JPC Co-Chair



## PRESIDENT VELJANOSKI AT THE CONFERENCE OF MANU ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF TOLERANCE



"This is the time of challenges and new solutions, time of building a new, true ethics of tolerance. The tolerance cannot be practiced partially, to be a passive act or just a consequence, outcome or something else. It cannot be a second degree category that is being activated when

necessary, and in the meantime to be overruled by the indifference... International standards and recommendations request the governance and the public institutions to fight against the hate speech, and in the same time obligation to promote respect and tolerance. We live in times when the principles of democracy on the so-called model of joint living of different communities with different barriers from the aspect of culture and religion are being accepted. The key and the challenge for the tolerance is building a quality society that provides participation in argument-based debates, listening to others and integrating the different points... Schools, universities, homes and institutions are very important locations for promotion of the tolerance, braking stereotypes and inherited prejudice. Additional efforts are needed, especially in teaching the children on tolerance and human rights, on differences, other cultures and manners

of life... It should be seen as a new construction, based on the establishment of the relation and culture toward the different, as a treasure of the world and the universal human experience and knowledge... The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia participates in the establishment of the legal framework which regulates this area in a modern manner. The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia adopted the Law on Civil Liability in Cases of Insult and Defamation, as well as the Law on Protection from Discrimination, which provide prevention in most sensitive areas of protection of the human rights and freedoms... The Republic of Macedonia is strongly determined to integrate in the modern world, in the Euro-Atlantic integrations... We are responsible to protect those that are vulnerable to discrimination, regardless if the discrimination is on the basis of race, religion, nationality, language..."

## MACEDONIAN DELEGATION IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



Parliamentary Seminar on protection of human rights and the situation of women and children was held on 14 and 15 November in the European Parliament in Brussels. At this event, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia was represented by Ms. Liljana Popovska, Mr. Anotnijo Milososki, Mr. Gordana Georgiev and Ms. Hajrije Misimi. During the debate, Mr. Anotnijo Milososki emphasized the importance of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the application of the Badinter principle in the process of adoption of decisions and the right of all the ethnic communities to use their language in the society, giving the example of the media - the national TV and Radio has programmes on the languages of all the ethnic communities.

Ms. Liljana Popovska spoke about the improved situation of women in politics and society, especially in the administration regarding education of Roma women, the importance of regular health checks for prevention of malignant diseases, and the improved status of women as active members of society in general. Regarding the efficiency of the Law on Protection against Discrimination, Ms. Popovska said that it is a functional solution that reflects the current developments in the society and that it is a step forward in the overall reform processes. Ms. Hajrije Misimi pointed out the need for increased activity of the institutions of the state in order to improve the situation of women and children in rural areas, their status, access to education and securing adequate health protection. Mr. Milososki informed the participants about the recently adopted Law on Civil Accountability for Defamation and Libel that will contribute to the strengthening of freedom of expression and the situation with the media in the country. Ms. Popovska welcomed the appointment of Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis as European Union's Special Representative for Human Rights and expressed her belief that his work will contribute to the improvement of the situation with human rights in the region and that he will encourage his own country to ratify the European Convention for Protection of National Minorities.

## DRAFT-LAW ON ASYLUM AND TEMPORARY PROTECTION DEBATED IN THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The National Euro-Integration Council held a public debate on the Draft - Law Amending the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, envisaged in the NPAA -Revision 2012. The Draft-Law was presented by the Deputy Minister of Interior, Mr. Xhelal Bajrami, who mentioned Articles 68 and 75 from the Stabilization and Association Agreement between the Republic of Macedonia and the European Union, which stipulate that the national legislation in the field of asylum and migration should be harmonized with the EU acquis. Due to that reason, the Draft-Law is fully harmonized with the Council Directive 2003/9/EC laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers, the Council Directive 2004/83/EC on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted, and the Council Directive 2005/85/EC on minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status.



Mr. Bajrami stated that the Draft-Law was prepared in a transparent manner, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Secretariat for European Affairs, the Ministry of Education and the UNHCR Office in Skopje, and was also submitted to the European Commission in Brussels. The law defines the cases in which the person can not be granted the right to asylum in cases when a country national incites encourages or participates in criminal acts. Documents for identification of the asylum seeker are envisaged, i.e. the ID card of the recognized refugee or person under subsidiary protection, in order to determine the right to stay, as well as data for migration, visas and the deadline for their maintenance. Asylum seekers have the right to free legal aid and right to education, and they should be informed for their rights by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. These legal provisions regarding maintenance of data in the Integrated

Data Base were also positively assessed by the Data Protection Directorate in the Republic of Macedonia.

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE „WOMEN IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT - SEE WORD PROJECT“



The Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men from the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, in cooperation with the Gender Equality Committee of the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia and GTF - Regional Center for Gender Equality held a conference on the Project „Women in Rural Development - SEE WoRD Project“. Members of Parliament from the SEE region, representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Macedonia, representatives of local gender equality committees in municipalities, rural development networks and women farmers' network, as well as GTF representatives took part in the debate.

The Conference adopted conclusions, in which they stated that important results have been achieved within the framework of the SEE WoRD Project in all seven participating SEE countries (Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Serbia), especially regarding the understanding of women in rural areas, understanding the EU Leader-approach between institutions and the citizens, networking of thousands of women in the rural development through the seven SEE WoRD initiatives, increased visibility of rural women in public and exchange of good practices.

The participants welcomed the establishment of SEE rural development women network, with the aim to become a European network, and they gave full support to the women in rural development and expressed readiness to be engaged in their activities.

At the end, the participants encouraged institutions in their countries and the NGO sector to work more intensively and to improve the status of women in rural areas, and the rural development in general and agreed to work and make 2013 a year for rural women.

## WINTER MOUNTAINEERING IN MACEDONIA



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