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## PRESIDENT TRAJKO VELJANOSKI MEETS UN SECRETARY GENERAL BAN KI-MOON

The meeting with the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon in New York came as a follow-up of the meeting during his visit to Macedonia with Mr. Nimitz in July last year.

President Veljanoski expressed appreciation for his active and vital contribution to the talks on finding a solution for the dispute in which we find ourselves with the southern neighbor, Republic of Greece, having in mind the need for resolving this issue that affects our integration in the EU and NATO as soon as possible. Concerning the parliamentary cooperation in the region, both men agreed that parliamentary democracy is an increasingly important instrument for establishing closer cooperation

with the southern neighbor and for finding solutions for open issues. President Veljanoski stated that he expects a meeting in the near future between the speakers of the two parliaments that would be a starting point for the parliamentary cooperation on all levels. Speaking about the parliamentary cooperation on a global level, they expressed mutual satisfaction with the level of cooperation between with the United Nations, i.e. with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). They also exchanged views on the development of capacities of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia as an institution that should continually invest in this field in order to be able to meet future challenges.

## Macedonian legislation harmonized with the EU acquis in:

### January 2013

- Law Amending the Law on Higher Education
- Law on Pupil's Standard
- Law Amending the Law on Agencies for Part-Time Employment
- Law Amending the Law on Labour Relations

### February 2013

- Law Amending the Law on Vine
- Law on Protection of Children
- Law Ratifying the Agreement Between the Republic of Macedonia and Republic of Serbia for Mutual Implementation of Court Decisions in Criminal Matters
- Law Amending the Law on VET Education and Training
- Law Amending the Law on Establishment of National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility
- Law Amending the Law on Banks
- Law Amending the Law on Health and Safety at Work

## DELEGATION HEADED BY MEP WORTMANN-KOOL MEETS MACEDONIAN MPS

The President Trajko Veljanoski and MPs from the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia welcomed the European Parliament Delegation and informed them on the general political and economic situation in the Republic of Macedonia. Regarding the work of the Assembly, President Veljanoski underlined that the focus is mostly on the process of European Integration and underlined that the country will use all efforts to achieve its strategic goals - integration in EU and NATO and solution of the dispute with the Southern neighbour. However, President Veljanoski underlined that the Republic of Macedonia has received recommendation from the European Commission for opening negotiations with EU in the past three consecutive years and using

this opportunity, appealed to the MEPs in the Delegation to act within their competences and help the integration process of the Republic of Macedonia as soon as possible.

Expressing appreciation and pleasure from the visit to the Republic of Macedonia, Ms. Corien Wortmann-Kool underlined that there is progress in the achieved reforms and that the Republic of Macedonia should receive support from all EU Member States. She also stated that she had a positive opinion regarding the inclusion of the young people in the social flows of the state and expressed her wish that the name dispute between the two states is resolved as soon as possible to open the path of the Republic of Macedonia to the European family.



## MEP RICHARD HOWITT LEADS THE EP HUMAN RIGHTS SUB-COMMITTEE IN MACEDONIA



The Chair Mr. Bekim Fazliu and the Members of the Standing Inquiry Committee for Protection of Civil Rights and Freedoms met a Delegation from the EP AFET Human Rights Subcommittee, headed by MEP and Rapporteur Richard Howitt. He informed the Macedonian MPs on the final phase of the EP Resolution on Macedonia and was interested to hear about the situation with the civil rights in the country. The Chair Bekim Fazliu informed the guests that they receive many complaints from the citizens on the work of the judiciary, which according to his opinion is still not fully reformed and transparent. In this context, Vice-President of the Assembly, Mrs. Suzana

Saliu pointed out that the problem in the Republic of Macedonia is not in the adoption with the laws made according to all EU standards, but their implementation and the proper functioning of independent institutions. On the other hand, Mrs. Liljana Kuzmanovska said that institutions are constantly monitored and thus they have to implement the existing laws. Regarding improvement of the human rights in the state, she gave examples such as the right for sexual orientation, rights of people with disabilities and women rights. At the end, they expressed pleasure from the meeting, agreeing that they still have many things to do in the future.

## DELEGATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AT THE EP SEMINAR ON ENERGY POLICY

A Delegation of the Committee on Economy of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia participated at the parliamentary seminar on the topic: "The EU energy policy and its impact on the pre-accession countries", that was held on 21 and 22 February 2013 in the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium. Members of the pre-accession countries' parliaments and of the European Parliament, as well as experts in the field of energy, participated at the seminar.

In the presentation on the topic for the situation in the Republic of Macedonia, Ms. Avirović said that the Republic of Macedonia is faced with the challenges of efficient implementation of the comprehensive reform of the system. The standards for cooperation with the EU energy sector reflect the principle of market economy and the provisions of the Energy Charter Treaty. The complete liberalization of the electricity and gas markets



is planned to be finalized by January 2015. Ms. Avirović underlined that the adopted Strategy for Development of the Energy Sector defines the most appropriate long-term development of the energy sector in the country,

in line with the following priorities: maintenance, revitalization and modernization of the existing and construction of new, modern infrastructures for the purposes of energy production and utilization; use of the domestic resources (lignite reserves, hydro-electric potential and solar energy); increased utilization of renewable energy sources; and establishing economic price of energy. Here Ms. Avirović emphasized the future increased use of the solar energy, having in mind the fact that Macedonia has approximately 300 sunny days during the year and that and the fact that the country is planning to build small hydro-electric plants and wind farms. She mentioned that the newly adopted Law on Energy is more in line with the EU acquis, as well as with the obligations deriving from the Stabilization and Association Agreement and the Treaty Establishing the Energy Community.

## PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

The Committee on Equal Opportunity of Women and Men, in cooperation with the Chamber of Craftsmen in the Republic of Macedonia and the Business Confederation of Macedonia, held a joint debate on the European Strategy for Women Empowerment (Strategy 2020). After the fruitful debate, the conclusions were adopted which emphasized the interest of the Committee on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men for this Strategy containing acceptable guidelines for the Republic of Macedonia. They recommended to Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Ministry of Economy, as well as other state institutions to implement the proposed guidelines through laws and measures for economic

empowerment of women, including the possibility for maintaining a balance between the professional and private life of women. The Committee also considered these measures to be compatible with government commitments to prepare a Strategy for Sustainable Population Policy in the Republic of Macedonia and encouraged the NGOs, the business community and the experts to apply the commitments contained in the Strategy 2020. The Committee underlined at the end that in the processes of economic empowerment of women, all women in Macedonia should be included, regardless of their ethnic or religious origin, place of residents, or urban or rural areas.



## STRUMICA CARNIVAL

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