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PRESIDENT XHAFERI MEETS PRESIDENT BAS IN THE GERMAN BUDESTAG

The President of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia Talat Xhaferi met Ms. Bärbel Bas, President of the German Bundestag, during the special visit organized within the frames of the donor program for parliamentary security independence. At the meeting, President Xhaferi expressed gratitude for the continuous support of the Bundestag in the last 5 years of experience sharing in different reform areas. Regarding the multilateral cooperation within the NATO Ms. Bas welcomed the adoption of the Declaration on Ukraine and the country's alignment with sanctions against the Russian Federation, showing the maturity of the country and its clear commitment to membership in the Union. In this context, President Xhaferi expressed confidence that the country will receive a date for opening accession negotiations with the Union at the June Summit. President Bas underlined that she would do everything personally and institutionally to realize this commitment. President Xhaferi informed about several aspects of the bilateral dispute with Bulgaria, stressing that one country cannot influence other people's personal, national or linguistic feelings; in addition, no one has been able to correct or change history, but many have managed to overcome themselves and look to the future. President Xhaferi used the opportunity to invite Ms. Bas to pay an official visit to the Republic of North Macedonia, which she gladly accepted.



MEETING WITH THE EU AFFAIRS COMMITTEET IN BERLIN

The Assembly leadership met with the Chairman and the Members of the European Union Affairs Committee in the German Bundestag. At the meeting, the the President of the Committee on European Affairs and DUI Coordinator Mr. Arber Ademi outlined the brave and big steps taken by the state, as the internal reforms and good neighborly agreements, acceptance and adaptation to the new enlargement methodology, and now we are facing the blockade from the Republic of Bulgaria. Ademi informed about the disappointment of the citizens from this process, but stressed that he is convinced that the situation will change by June, especially given the credibility of the EU and its role and impact not only for North Macedonia but also the region. Other members of the Delegation expressed gratitude for the continuous support in the context of European integration and stressed that political parties in the Assembly unanimously strive and work to meet the expectations of citizens for EU membership.



Mr. Hofreiter emphasized that majority of EU member states support the EU membership of North Macedonia and that German parliamentarians are well informed about the Bulgarian veto. The war in Ukraine showed that time should not be wasted and things need to move forward, since EU membership offers more jobs, open market opportunities and better future for the citizens.



2022-2024 GENDER SENSITIVITY PLAN DEBATED IN PARLIAMENT

The Committee on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, in cooperation with the Women MPs Club and OSCE Mission to Skopje, organized a Public Debate on the 2022-2024 Draft-Plan of Activities for Promotion of Gender Sensitivity. Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova, Chairwoman of the Committee said that this Plan largely corresponds to the proposals and views of all present at the public debate and arises from current activities. Ms. Lolita Ristova, Chairwoman of the Women MPs Club stated that the need to use all mechanisms is more than clear, in order to identify and regulate behaviors and actions, which are forbidden for the MPs and the parliamentary service and they are consistently respected. Rezart Mehmed from the OSCE Mission emphasized that in the past period an Analysis of the Rules of Procedure and the Law on Parliament from a gender aspect were prepared, a Manual for Gender Equality for MPs and a professional service was prepared, trainings on gender equality for the MPs and the professional service have been conducted, a new job has been systematized for the position of advisor for gender equality and the legal framework for gender equality has been improved. The Committee decided to establish a working group for the implementation of this Action Plan.



CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL DIALOGUE

A joint meeting of the Committee on Economic Affairs, the Committee on Finance and Budget and the Committee on European Affairs was held with representatives of the Delegation of the European Union in Skopje. The chairmen of the three parliamentary committees positively assessed the initiative for holding a joint meeting, expressing hope for deepening of the cooperation with the EU Delegation in the future. The presentation of the joint conclusions was made by Stephen Hudolin, Head of the Cooperation Department at the EU Delegation, who outlined the necessary reforms to be undertaken by the country, such as use of the available fiscal space in the budget for 2022 to mitigate the potential impact of the negative shocks through targeted support for vulnerable households and companies; submission of the new Law on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to the Assembly for adoption; implementation of the new organic budget law as soon as it is adopted by the Assembly, taking necessary legislative and organizational steps to enable the new Fiscal Council to start work; assessment and analysis of price developments to tighten monetary policy, if necessary, for maintenance of price stability in the medium term, as well as further reduction of institutional and legal barriers to resolve non-functional loans quickly and effectively. He also called for continuation with the digitalization of public services for businesses and citizens, adoption a comprehensive new strategy and Action Plan for formalizing the informal economy 2023-2025, high level of political commitment to all institutions relevant to coordination and implementation, increase of the number of employees in the Ministry of Economy and the Energy Agency, adoption and implementation of energy efficiency legisla-



tion, establishment of the envisaged Energy Efficiency Fund, development of new vocational education and training (VET) legislation focusing on inclusion, labor market needs and new VET funding methodology, and provision of an annual report for improvement of higher education.

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ENERGY COMMUNITY PARLIAMENTARY PLENUM IN BRUSSELS

MPs Laze Tanevski and Zorancho Jovancev, members of the Committee on Economic Affairs, participated at the meeting of the Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum dedicated to current security of energy supply, organized by the Secretariat of the Energy Community in the European Parliament in Brussels. The participants stressed the need for use of new energy sources to reduce dependence on energy imports from the Russian Federation, for significant investments in energy infrastructure and energy connection between EU member states and the Energy Community Contracting Parties. MP Laze Tanevski stated that the Republic of North Macedonia provides gas from imports through the main interconnection pipeline with the Republic of Bulgaria, where the gas is imported from the Russian Federation. In order to diversify the sources of supply of this energy, the country recently joined the project for construction of a liquefied gas terminal in Alexandroupoli, Greece and will participate with 10 percent of the shares of the gas terminal, since it is of great importance to the region both in terms of diversification and greater security of natural gas supply and is expected to reduce dependence on gas imports from the Russian Federation. The liquefied natural gas terminal is of great importance for the development of the energy sector in the region through the energy connection of the countries of Central and Southeast Europe. It is a step further towards the connection of energy systems and further integration of the energy market throughout the region. The realization of this project opens potentials for investment in the



construction of other energy facilities and to improve the overall competitiveness of the region.

NCEI CHAIR NIKOLOVSKI AT MEETINGS IN ZAGREB

The Chair of the National Council for European Integration, Aleksandar Nikoloski, met with the Members of the Croatian Parliament - Gary Capelli, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Marijana Petir, Chairwoman of the Committee on Agriculture and Member of the Committee on European Affairs and with Goran Grlic Radman, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia. At the meetings in the Parliament and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, Nikoloski was accompanied by our Ambassador in Zagreb, prof. Dr. Milaim Fetaj. The bilateral relations between the two countries were discussed, where all interlocutors expressed satisfaction with the excellent and friendly relations and that there is room for further strengthening of cooperation in the field of the economy and trade. In the process of EU accession, our country can expect any necessary professional and technical assistance from the Republic of Croatia. Nikoloski expressed gratitude for the strong support from the Republic of Croatia so far, as well as for the offered assistance in the future and strongly appealed to the country to start negotiations with the EU as soon as possible. He referred to the challenges faced by the country in the EU accession process, emphasizing the great responsibility to the citizens who should be informed about the steps taken by the country in the EU integration process.



LAKE OHRID NORTH MACEDONIA



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