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## NORTH MACEDONIA AND ALBANIA SHARE COMMON GOALS ON THEIR EU PATH

At the meeting with Igli Hasani, Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania, President Xhaferi emphasized that the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Albania share common goals and interests on the foreign policy level. The two countries support each other in all fields, and after the completion of the screening process, they are ready to speed up their European integration. He underlined the exceptional importance of interconnection and emphasized that the construction of Corridor 8 remains a priority in cooperation. Minister Hasani emphasized that the excellent bilateral relations between the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia are characterized by intense political dialogue and cooperation in a significant number of areas of mutual interest. Referring to European integrations, Hassani emphasized that both countries showed special commitment and achieved impressive results in the screening process, with mutual support and assistance. At the same time, he expressed hope that the upcoming elections in the country will not bring about a change in commitment to the European future. Hassani congratulated Xhaferi, who has been proposed as the first Albanian prime minister in the history of North Macedonia, and assessed that this is a confirmation of the progress the country has made, as well as the constructive role of the Albanians in North Macedonia in the political processes and stability of the country and the region.



## PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION IN THE SWEDISH RIKSDAG

Parliamentary delegation as members of the Steering Group within the long-term Project with the Swedish Riksdag paid a visit to Stockholm, to conclude the cooperation between the two parliaments initiated and financed by the Swedish Riksdag since 2020 and dedicated to parliamentary democracy. During the visit, they had the opportunity to exchange views and experiences on the vote of confidence of a government minister, the role of special inter-party commissions for reaching broad political agreements and long-term strategies in certain areas, the role of the coordinators and the consultations with the President. MPs had the opportunity to debate as well on the procedures for adoption of the State Budget and the role of the Finance Committee. Particular attention was paid to the discussion on democratic dialogue between the government parties and the opposition, that is, on the understanding and respect of political disagreements, the differences between the parliamentary majority and the opposition, inter-party negotiations, compromises and consensus. The importance of trust in functioning institutions, openness and transparency in the work of the parliament, working conditions of journalists in parliaments, as well as anti-corruption, independent and impartial institutions were also considered during the meetings. At the end, parliamentarians, discussed gender equality and democracy, various instruments of parliamentary control, the State Audit Office and parliamentary control of the Government and public agencies. On administrative level, exchanges between the parliamentary services took place as well. Secretary General Cvetanka Ivanova held a meeting with her Swedish colleague Ingvar Matson, where they talked about the possibilities for future cooperation in the areas of strengthening parliamentary supervision, the work calendar of the legislature, as well as the role of the parliamentary service in the process of accession to the European Union.



## PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE DRAFT LAW ON HEALTH CARE INSURANCE



The Health Care Committee held a public hearing on the Draft Law on Health Insurance. Invited guests at the public hearing included representatives from the Network for Protection against Discrimination - Platform for Gender Equality, the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, Program - Public Health and Women's Health, the National Federation of Farmers and the Rural Coalition. Women registered as individual farmers were excluded as a category from the Law on Health Insurance in the part of benefits due to illness, workplace injury and absence due to pregnancy, childbirth and maternity. The fact that this category pays a smaller amount for contributions cannot be seen as a reason for their exclusion from health insurance rights, but quite the opposite - it should be an affirmative measure that aimed to include a marginalized category in the system of social and health insurance and as an economic measure, which aims to encourage the development of agriculture, as one of the most important primary economic activities. In that context, it was emphasized that the proposed legal solution will protect motherhood as a fundamental right of women, which is provided for by the Constitution and international acts on human rights, i.e. international conventions, and will enable the right to monetary compensation during maternity leave of the farmers. In this way, it was indicated that this category of people will be provided with adequate health conditions and a standard of living.

## FRENCH EXPERTS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY TV CHANNEL

Experts from the French National Assembly shared their knowledge and experience with colleagues in the Parliamentary TV Channel. Speaking about the setting of the French Assembly channel, which has been operating with its own programming scheme since the mid-nineties of the last century, Director Delphine Gouedart said that its work is regulated by a special law. The basic principle of this law is the independence of the channel, which is not under the influence of the MPs, even though it works for the Parliament. The channel council, as a political body, decides on technical and financial matters, while regarding the programs it gives general guidelines, without going into the content of the programs. During the meetings, experiences were also exchanged on the ethical principles of parliamentary broadcasting and professionalism in parliamentary TV production. The Parliamentary TV Channel in the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia is operational and started broadcasting studio programs.



## CELEBRATION OF EPIPHANY IN THE VILLAGE OF BITUSHE



## JOVAN MITRESKI TOOK OVER THE OFFICE AS PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY

On 26th January 2024, Jovan Mitreski took over the position of President of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia from the current President Talat Xhaferi, who left for a new position in the executive branch. After taking the solemn oath, Mitreski thanked the MPs for their trust and support, stressing that choosing this position is a great honor and that he will continue to work in the interest of the functionality of the Assembly and that I will cooperate with all MPs and parliamentary groups, in the interest of the strategic priorities for the state. President Mitreski thanked the previous president for the successful presidency in the past seven years and emphasized that during this period, the Assembly managed to fully advance its independence, but also to strengthen the democratic processes and, most importantly, to advance the dialogue.



## CELEBRATION OF EPIPHANY IN THE VILLAGE OF BITUSHE



## STRONG EU SUPPORT FOR CONCLUSION OF REMAINING PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITIES



The President of the Assembly Jovan Mitreski, met today with the Ambassador of the EU Delegation in the Republic of North Macedonia, David Geer. Ambassador Geer expressed unreserved support for the newly elected President and the institution, which, as he emphasized, will continue in the coming months, with the aim of completing the unfinished activities and legislative procedures related to the reform obligations, which arise from our European integration path. President Mitreski pointed out that the appointment of this post represents an honor and responsibility for him to lead the legislative power until the constitutive session of the next parliamentary composition. Mitreski said that he will do everything in his power to wrap up the issues that have not yet been resolved in the Parliament, and are of particular importance for the functioning of the institutions and for our European file as a country. The interlocutors agreed that this cooperation will continue, especially in relation to the activities of the Western Balkans Growth Plan of the European Commission and other issues of priority and interest for both sides.

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