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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 **October 2012**:

- Law Ratifying the Agreement Between the Republic of Macedonia and the Czech Republic on International Road Transport
- Law on Mineral Raw Materials

MACEDONIA CELEBRATES 71ST ANNIVERSARY OF 11 OCTOBER, REVOLUTION DAY



The official visit of the President of the Hungarian Parliament, Dr. László Kövér started with laying wreaths at the Monument of the Fallen Heroes for Macedonia. At the meeting with President of the Assembly of the Republic

PRESIDENT OF HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENT IN MACEDONIA

of Macedonia, Mr. Trajko Veljanoski, both interlocutors underlined the highly developed friendly relations between the two states, including the parliamentary cooperation based on the 2008 Memorandum of Cooperation signed between the two parliaments.

President Veljanoski expressed hope that Macedonia, after being granted 4 consecutive recommendations will receive a date for opening negotiations this December, and that Hungary will continue as our true friend and a state, to support and invest in our integration in NATO and the EU.

President Kövér expressed appreciation for the warm welcome, underlining that the integration of Macedonia as well as of the other countries in region represents a national interest for Hungary and that they will fully support the recommendation in the EC Progress Report in December for opening accession negotiations. "We are

looking forward to the EU membership of the Republic of Macedonia, since we will get another ally to help us solve many issues the European Union is faced with", said President Kövér. He also had meeting with the Committee on Relation Among Communities, where he has been informed that the Committee contributes to the development of the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic dimension of the Macedonian society for a true co-existence of all citizens, and by that to the strengthening of the parliamentary democracy in the state. President Kövér mentioned the positive examples of Hungary and its National Council on Minorities, and has been interested to hear more on the rights of smaller communities in Macedonia.

All members of the Committee expressed appreciation for the friendly relations between the two states and the commitment by Hungary for the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Republic of Macedonia.

EDUCATION IS THE BEST BRIDGE FOR DEEPENING MUTUAL COOPERATION

President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Trajko Veljanoski, and MPs from the Group for Cooperation paid first official bilateral parliamentary visit to the Slovak Republic since its independence. At the meeting with his colleague Pavol Paška, both Presidents expressed interest for further promotion of the bilateral relations especially with regard to the EU integration issues and strengthening of the economic cooperation between the two states. President Veljanoski expressed gratitude for the support of the Slovak Republic to the Republic of Macedonia and outlined that the country will continue to fulfill the criteria for membership and to work on finding solution with our southern neighbor on the name issue, based on the principle of safeguard of national identity. President Paška welcomed the relatively positive indicators on the economic cooperation and expressed further interest for increased exchange in future. The two Presidents concluded that the education is the best bridge for deepening of the cooperation, especially through mutual cherishing the Cyril and Methodius tradition. In

this regard, President Paška invited President Veljanoski to attend next year the 1150th Anniversary of the mission of the Cyril and Methodius in Slovakia, where numerous activities and events will be organized by the Slovak Republic. President Veljanoski expressed gratitude for the invitation and also for the possibility for Macedonian students to study in the Slovak Republic under the same conditions as the Slovak students.

The Macedonian Delegation also met the Deputy Prime -Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Miroslav Lajčák. President Veljanoski pointed out that the public interest is huge for membership in NATO and the EU and that is our strategic goal, but the reforms are made in the state to the benefit of the Macedonian society and economy. Regarding current political events, he emphasized that Macedonia and its institutions have the necessary capacity to cope with the challenges and solve the issues within institutions of the system. Minister Lajčák expressed huge satisfaction from this, as he said historical visit, having a President from the Macedonian Parliament



for the first time in the Slovak Republic, and outlined the great role that parliamentary diplomacy can play in the promotion of the bilateral and multilateral relations between the states. He showed interest for our Euro-Integration process and expressed commitment to get a date for negotiations for the Republic of Macedonia.

15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARLIAMENTARY DIMENSION OF SEECP



The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia hosted the International Conference "15 Years of the SEEC Parliamentary Dimension: the Past, the Present and the European Future of the Region", within the frames of the Macedonian Chairmanship with the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC). During the Conference, 7th Meeting of the Working Group of the SEEC Parliamentary dimension was held. President Veljanoski, Deputy-Foreign Minister Zoran Petrov, Dr. Heinz Bongarts from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in Macedonia, Mr. Dimitar Mircev, Honorary President of the European Movement in Macedonia, and Mrs. Petra Bless, former Vice-President of the Bundestag and senior expert, took part in the debate. Opening the Conference, President Veljanoski stated that it is a fact that SEEC has become the authentic voice of the region. Despite the negative heritage from the past, in the name of the future, countries must overcome the differences and develop neighborly relations. From "Balkan", they should switch to the "Nordic" mentality of mutual trust, support and cooperation, and the leading concept in this sense should be things that connect us, mutually and not those that divide us, said President Veljanoski.

MFA Petrov presented the priorities of the Macedonian Chairmanship under the motto: "Solidarity in Action" where all countries in the process should show solidarity for a better future, solidarity for peace, stability and prosperity in the region. President of the Working Group, Mrs. Ermira Mehmeti Devaja welcomed the participants at the conference and focused on the Macedonian priorities during the Presidency, where the MPs could also contribute on parliamentary basis. She mentioned the cross-border cooperation for protection and control of border lakes and rivers. In this regard, she stated that Parliaments can encourage governments and municipalities to take actions and to harmonize the European legislation in this field.

EC PROGRESS REPORT DEBATED IN THE NATIONAL EURO-INTEGRATION COUNCIL AND THE EU AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The National Euro-Integration Council and the Committee on EU Affairs Committee held a joint session on the 2012 EC Progress Report for the Republic of Macedonia. The meeting resulted with Conclusions, in which they welcomed the Progress Report as a reflection of the real situation in the Republic of Macedonia and its achievements and measures taken in 2012. They also welcomed the renewed recommendation for start of negotiations, which gives strong impetus to the European perspective of the state, especially in the context of the High Level Accession Dialogue. The Council and the Committee welcomed the return of the adjective "Macedonian" in the Progress Report, in accordance of the principle of respect of European differences and in the context of language and cultural specificities in Republic of Macedonia, as well as pursuant to the official UN terminology. The Council and the Committee consider that the decision of the European Council for start of negotiations will contribute to creation of favorable conditions for finding solution over the differences on the name issue and welcomed the initiative of the European Commission for a



solution in the early phase of the accession negotiations. They also called on the member states to grant launching of the second phase of the Stabilization and Association Agreement. Implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement remains essential for development of democracy and rule of law in the state. The Council and the Committee called on the relevant institutions to analyze the remarks in the Report and to submit plan for realization of the recommendations, with stakeholders and deadlines for implementation, as well as to actively engage the potential in the state in getting a date for negotiations and to prepare activities that will follow after the date for negotiations. They emphasized the need to continue with the regional

cooperation especially within the SEEC, RCC and CEFTA, as well as with EU member states and EU institutions. The conclusions were addressed to the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, the Government and the Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of Macedonia.

REMAINING TASKS SHOULD BE COMPLETED UNTIL DECEMBER



The Committee on EU Affairs had a meeting with Dr. Peter Schoof, Special Representative for EU External Relations and Relations with EU Member States in the Federal Foreign Office of the Republic of Germany. The Chair Misini welcomed the activities taken by Germany for the integration of our state in the EU and for the support by German MPs and MEPs in the European Parliament. He expressed hope that Germany will use its influence at the EC December Summit. Dr. Schoof presented the German engagement for implementation of the Thessaloniki agenda for European perspective for the Western Balkans, the recommendation of the European Commission for start of negotiations, and the importance of completing the remaining challenges enumerated in the Progress Report, which was carefully reviewed by their side. He put particular accent on the rule of law, freedom of the media, reforms in the judicial system and fight against corruption. The challenges should be met by December before the EC Summit.

Macedonian MPs presented the reforms made in the past several months, and asked for support on the Hague decision, having in mind that Greece is an EU member state and should respect this international verdict. Dr. Schoof showed understanding for the disappointment of the previous veto, but he pointed out that Republic of Macedonia should not lose its goal - the road towards EU, and expressed hope that the decision in December will be constructive for the Republic of Macedonia.

Skopje Jazz Festival 2012



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