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Working bodies of the Assembly

Joint Parliamentary Committee EU -RNM

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Culture

MACEDONIAN LEGISLATION HARMONIZED WITH THE EU ACQUIS IN MAY 2023:

- Law Amending the Law on Labor Relations
- Law Amending the Law on Urban Planning
- Law Amending the Law on Construction
- Law Amending the Law on Expropriation
- Law Amending the Law on determining public interest and nominating a strategic partner for the implementation of the project for the construction of the infrastructure Corridor 8 (section: Tetovo - Gostivar - Bukojčani and the project for the highway Trebishtia - Struga - Qafasan) and the Corridor 10 d (section of the Prilep-Bitola highway) in the Republic of North Macedonia



PRESIDENT XHAFERI MEETS MEPS FROM THE EP JPC DELEGATION

The President of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, Talat Xhaferi, met with MEPs Andreas Schieder, Marion Walsmann, Alexander Jordanov, Bogdan Rzonca and Tijs Reuten, before the start of the 21st JPC Meeting. President Xhaferi expressed expectation the EP Resolution for our country would be objective and contain the country's progress related to the Copenhagen criteria. He informed that the screening process is in an advanced stage and that the roadmaps that will emerge from the process are expected, which the state is ready to fulfill at the highest level. He emphasized that work is dedicated to domestic reforms related to EU chapters and legislation, and full alignment with the EU's foreign and security policy has been achieved in terms of sanctions against Russia due to the invasion of Ukraine. President Xhaferi also referred to the country's presidency of the OSCE during 2023, and emphasized that it is a great honor and responsibility and that the country is making efforts to finish the presidency successfully and, as much as possible in the current circumstances, to contribute to peace in Europe and the world. The JPC Co-Chair Andreas Schieder, pointed out that relations with the Republic of North Macedonia are very important and welcomed the decision for the country to continue on the European path. He underlined that membership in the Union implies numerous reforms and welcomed the fulfillment of all that has been done so far, but emphasized that more can always be done. He emphasized the importance of unity between the ruling majority and the opposition on the way to the European Union. They also discussed the Jean Monnet Dialogue, which is conducted under the auspices of the European Parliament and aims to improve the procedures defined in the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.



PRESIDENT XHAFERI MEETS EP AFCO DELEGATION

President Xhaferi also met Rainer Wieland, Vice President of the European Parliament and Sven Simon, both members of the EP Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO). This meeting is taking place in a truly significant period for the country, that is, when we are in the phase of taking steps to make constitutional changes. He informed the interlocutors about the necessity of making constitutional amendments for further progress of the process, and that it is high time for all political parties to decide on the European integration and take the necessary step to achieve such strategic determination. MEP Simon thanked for the opportunity to meet with President Xhaferi and the Members of the Constitutional Committee, showing interest whether all the possibilities for a positive approach of the opposition in finding a solution to this issue have been exhausted.



TAKING OVER THE SEECP PA CHAIRMANSHIP

At the SEECP PA held in Montenegro, President Xhaferi took over the chairmanship of the process from his colleague Daniela Gjurovic. President Xhaferi expressed his pleasure for this honor, having in mind that the process represents an important forum for strengthening good-neighborly relations and the relations between all the countries of Southeast Europe. "We all have a common responsibility to contribute to preserving peace in Europe and building a democratic, safe and prosperous continent. We will pay more attention to regional cooperation, which helps to strengthen ties between people in the direction of deepening economic cooperation. We must focus on supporting cooperation between foreign direct investment agencies in the direction of promoting key goods and values in the region. Good economic relations must be accompanied by good political relations, because only in that way will the prosperity of our region become a reality", stated President Xhaferi.

30 YEARS OF EXCELLENT POLITICAL RELATIONS AND DYNAMIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION

At the meeting of President Xhaferi and the President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament, Lorenzo Fontana the 30 years of excellent political relations and dynamic economic cooperation were confirmed. President Xhaferi expressed gratitude for the continuous Italian support on our EU path, informing his counterpart on the screening process and the process of constitutional changes. President Fontana emphasized cooperation on a bilateral level, as a basis for constructive cooperation, as well as within the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative and the Central-European Initiative, where Italy is a founding country. He reiterated the support of the Italian Republic for the European integration and in that context welcomed the state's progress in the screening process, stressing that the process for constitutional amendments is a particularly significant step forward.



21 JPC MEETING IN SKOPJE

The 21 JPC Meeting was held in Skopje. Member of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia and the European Parliament discussed the rule of law and the fight against corruption, civil society and the media, good neighborly relations and regional cooperation, measures to deal with pollution and the energy crisis and state of play in the Jean Monnet Dialogue. At the end of the meeting, they adopted [joint recommendations](#), in which they expressed high appreciation of the steady EU-integration course of the country; encouraging it to continue with the accession process, despite the challenges, as a confirmation of its strong commitment to a fully-fledged membership in the EU. They encouraged all efforts for maintaining a constructive dialogue and reducing divisions across party lines, calling on all parties represented in the Parliament to continue working constructively in the spirit of consensus on EU-related reforms. Members also praised the country's continued commitment to nurturing and promoting good neighborly relations and regional cooperation and its role as a model for the peaceful resolution of bilateral disputes through dialogue and mutual understanding, highlighting at the same time, its proactive approach to implementing bilateral agreements by delivering concrete results to all stakeholders. The ongoing meetings between North Macedonia and Bulgaria, including those on expert level, were welcomed, aimed at further implementation of the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation, which needs to continue to be implemented consistently and in good faith by both sides; in this context, they stressed the importance of excluding the cultural-historical issues from the negotiation process and addressing them on bilateral level. The hosting of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue meeting in Ohrid was also welcomed, which confirmed the country's credibility as a constructive regional partner and its commitment to contribute to the efforts of the international community towards normalisation of relations between Parties.



REFORMS ARE NEEDED TO MAKE FURTHER PROGRESS



The President of the Commission for European Affairs, Arber Ademi and the members of the Committee met with a Delegation from the Austrian Parliamentary Group for cooperation with the Assembly, led by Stephanie Krisper. Ademi recalled the difficulties the country faced in the past, such as disputes, problems, sensitive issues, for which it was forced to accept difficult solutions. He informed his Austrian colleagues on the ongoing process of preparation of constitutional amendments. MP Krisper emphasized Austria's support on the road to the EU and expressed understanding for the difficulties the country has overcome with the name change due to the dispute with Greece and now with Bulgaria. In order to make progress, there must be reforms. Corruption hinders the functioning of democratic institutions, and they are needed to get closer to the EU, said Crisper. Opposing opinions followed, with specific examples regarding the use, that is, the abuse of the European flag, the passing of laws by abbreviated procedure, for the current laws for corridors 8 and 10 e, as well as the constitutional amendments. At the same time, it was pointed out that European integration implies a reform agenda, implementing European values at home. All parties should be responsible to fulfill the goal - entry into the EU, jointly observing the issues, developing the culture of togetherness, more responsible behavior, guided by the interests of the citizens.





SHIKOVSKA: EACH CITIZEN MATTERS!

The Inter-Party Parliamentary Group for support of Roma rights, their inclusion and integration in the Republic of North Macedonia and the Committee for Relations between Communities, held a working meeting with representatives of the Coalition of Civil Organizations - Forum of Minority Communities in the Republic. The purpose of this first meeting was to consider the current state of play on the rights of minority communities, the challenges and needs in the processes of the EU integration path of the country. Representatives of the Forum of Minority Communities pointed out that the Vlach community is the most critical and marginalized, because the number of speakers is decreasing. At the same time, a request was made for the ratification of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. They called for abolishment of the quota of minimum 15 students to exercise the right to study the mother tongue as an optional subject, as well as a systematic and permanent solution for registration and obtaining a certificate of birth certificate, for about 700 people, who live in the territory of the state, and who, for certain reasons, do not have an identification document.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION ARE KEY EU VALUES

The Inter-Party Parliamentary Group (IPPG) for the promotion of the rights of LGBTI persons, today marked May 17 - the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. The event was opened by MP Maja Morachanin, Coordinator of the Group, who mentioned that they have been continuously commemorating this day and remain committed to the promotion of the rights of LGBTI people, which are in essence human rights. US Ambassador Angela Ageler addressed the event, emphasizing that in the recent years things have changed for the better in terms of the rights of LGBTI people and that society can be judged by how it treats its most vulnerable members. The EU Ambassador David Geer referred to the Declaration of Human Rights, where it is said that all humans are born equal. Geer emphasized that the key values of the European Union are equality and non-discrimination. Lila Milic from the Citizens' Initiative for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Transgender Persons "TransFormA" also addressed the audience, who spoke about transgender women, which are the most exposed to violence and murder worldwide. Milic, as a transgender woman, shared her experience with the institutions of the system that do not recognize her identity. She appealed to the MPs to support the amendments to the Law on Civil Registry, which should enter the parliamentary procedure.



CERTIFICATES FOR THE FOLLOWERS OF THE SIGN LANGUAGE IN THE ASSEMBLY



SPECIAL GERMAN ENVOY SARRAZIN MEETS MPS IN THE PARLIAMENT

Manuel Sarrazin, Special Envoy of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Western Balkans, held separate meetings in the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, held separate meetings with deputies from various parliamentary groups represented in the legislature. T the meetings, he reaffirmed Germany's continuous support for the process of integration of North Macedonia into the EU, noting, among other things, that the country should also use this momentum to continue with the negotiation process with the Union. Sarrazin referred to the necessity of constitutional amendments, in accordance with the Negotiating Framework, pointing out that the country should not be allowed to lose at least two to three more years on the way to full EU membership.



EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN MPS IN STOCHKHOLM



Within the framework of the cooperation for democratic development, which is taking place for the third year already between the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Swedish Riksdag, members from the two parliaments in Stockholm, exchanged experiences about the working conditions of the deputies. The Swedish MPs also informed about the register of financial interests, which exists in the Riksdag and the obligations of the MPs to declare their assets. They also shared experiences about the role of the media and journalists who report on the work of the legislature. Accredited journalists and photographers have access everywhere in the building, except for the MPs' offices and the Speaker's area. During the visit, MPs from the Assembly were briefed on the Swedish Anti-Corruption Institute, a non-profit organization established in 1923. The Institute's mission is to promote ethical decision-making processes in business as well as in the rest of the community and to prevent the use of bribery and other types of corruption as a means of influencing decision-making processes. Since its foundation, the Institute has been working on self-regulation as a means of fighting corruption in society. Planning, structuring and organizing work in the parliament and strengthening procedures and administration were further discussed. Opinions were exchanged on planning and organizing the work of a plenary session in order to facilitate the democratic process and give MPs the best opportunity to carry out their duties.



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