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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 FEBRUARY- MARCH - APRIL 2022:

- Law Amending the Law on Personal ID
- Law Amending the Law on Personal ID Number
- Law Amending the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of North Macedonia
- Law Amending the Law on Registration of Residence and Stay of Citizens
- Law Amending the Law on Passports of the Citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia
- Law Amending the Law on Personal Name
- Law on Payment Services and Payment Systems
- Law Amending the Law on Police
- Law Amending the Law on Internal Affairs
- Law Amending the Law on Environment
- Law Amending the Law on Performing Activities for Representation in Customs Procedures
- Law Amending the Law on Technical Inspection
- Law on Inspection Oversight in the Environment
- Law Amending the Law for Mineral Resources.

PRESIDENT XHAFERI VISITS UKRAINE

The President of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, Talat Xhaferi, together with his colleagues, Mr. Florin Citu, President of the Romanian Senate and Ms. Irene Kalin, President of the National Council of the Swiss Confederation met Mr. Ruslan Stefanchuk, Chairman of the Supreme Rada of Ukraine. President Xhaferi expressed gratitude for the invitation to come to Ukraine and convey his unconditional personal and institutional support to the Supreme Rada and its Members and to the Ukrainian people. He informed about the restrictive measures and sanctions towards the Russian Federation and all decisions on the territorial integrity of Ukraine, as well as to all appeals to the Russian Federation to stop the invasion and to refrain from further military activities. President Xhaferi pointed out that the Republic of North Macedonia will join the efforts for reconstruction of Ukraine after the end of this war.



THE EU ENLARGEMENT PROCESS IS MORE THAN NECESSARY AT THE TIME BEING

The EU High Representative and EC Vice-President Josep Borell met with the President and the Coordinators of the Parliamentary Groups during his visit to the country. President Xhaferi stated that the strong confirmation of the European perspective is more than needed, having in mind the current developments in Ukraine, as well as in the neighborhood showing how fast peace and stability can change on the continent. He informed his interlocutor about the reform activities and efforts to overcome open issues, and called for a start without further delay of the negotiations for EU membership. Mr. Borell welcomed the steps taken on the Euro-Integration path and reminded of issues to be resolved pointed by the European Commission that go in favor primarily to the national interest. He also welcomed the constructive approach of the governments both in Skopje and Sofia and confirmed the active engagement of the EU leadership for a sooner start of negotiations. Representatives of parliamentary political parties confirmed their determination to promote the European Integration process, and also informed on the decreased support for EU membership by citizens if the situation remains unchanged, as well on the strong support for Ukraine and its right for self-determination in its internationally recognized borders.



MEETING WITH THE ITALIAN PRESIDENT FICO

President Xhaferi had a meeting with the President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies Roberto Fico, who paid a working visit to the country. Mutual satisfaction was expressed of the traditionally good and friendly bilateral relations and the support by the Republic of Italy to our EU integration process. President Xhaferi expressed gratitude to the Italian Parliament for the resolutions adopted also on start of negotiations for North Macedonia and Albania, pointing that any further delay may make the situation worse, from the economic, energetic and security point of view. President Fico proposed the discontinuity in the parliamentary cooperation to be replaced with dynamic and fruitful meetings through a Protocol for cooperation to be signed by the two Presidents. He concluded that Italy supports all Western Balkan countries membership in the EU, and that the Republic of North Macedonia, due to the brave steps taken, deserves a positive signal for start of negotiations.



MEETING WITH LATVIA STATE PRESIDENT LEVITS

President Xhaferi met the Latvia's State President Eglis Levits who paid official visit to the Republic of North Macedonia. He expressed gratitude for the principle stand of Latvia that the enlargement policy is one of the most successful policies of the Union and according to the criteria for membership and each country's merits. President Xhaferi informed the guests of our activities in NATO deriving from our membership and regarding developments with Bulgaria, which look optimistic for start of negotiations during the French Presidency. State President Levits stated that this is the right time for the start of negotiations having in mind the progress made by the Republic of North Macedonia to avoid putting in question the EU credibility and to contribute to the geopolitical security. He welcomed the decision for a military presence of a contingent from the Republic of North Macedonia at the NATO's Eastern flank to be deployed by June 2022.



LITHUANIAN MFA IN PARLIAMENT

At the meeting with the Lithuanian MFA Gabrielius Landsbergis, President Xhaferi expressed gratitude for the Lithuanian support to our Euro-Atlantic integrations and informed his collocutor on the measures taken in NATO, as well as for our EU membership and for support of Ukraine. Minister Landsbergis pointed to the importance of maintenance of sanctions against Russian Federation as in the EU, and expressed disagreement with the Bulgarian veto for the start of negotiations, especially in times with European security at stake, when solidarity and unity need to be demonstrated in practice.



INTEGRATION OF WESTERN BALKANS IN THE EU IS ALSO A SECURITY ISSUE

Austrian Federal Minister for EU and Constitutional Karoline Edtstadler met with President Xhaferi to express support to the EU integration process and optimism due to the positive developments with Bulgaria for reaching of an agreement. She considered that now is the time for dynamic enlargement process as a matter of security for the Union. Ms Edtstadler also informed President Xhaferi for the interest of Austrian businessmen for an increased economic cooperation between the two states. President Xhaferi expressed gratitude for all the support, including during the pandemic and the fires during the last year. He informed her on the current developments in the Parliament, the EU integration process and the fruitful bilateral cooperation with the Austrian Parliament.



EUROPEAN ISSUES COMMITTEE IN CROATIA

A delegation of the from the Committee on European Affairs paid a working visit to the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia. At the meeting with their Croatian counterparts, the Chair Arber Ademi expressed satisfaction and deep gratitude for their continuous support on our path to European integration. He also pointed out that he expects a fruitful process of cooperation, emphasizing that the Republic of North Macedonia has fully achieved and fulfilled the recommendations by the European Union, emphasizing the need for a fair evaluation of the progress achieved. The Croatian Chair Domagoj Hajdukovic stressed that he appreciates the efforts, progress and reforms that the country has made to move closer to the EU. Regarding the bilateral cooperation, he pointed out that we nurture excellent relations and called for deepening that cooperation in other areas, such as youth policies and the economy. The Croatian representatives stressed that they will continue to wholeheartedly support North Macedonia, reminding that the Croatian Parliament was among the first parliaments to ratify the Protocol on our NATO membership. The interlocutors agreed that the integration of the Western Balkan countries is crucial for the stability and prosperity of the region and Europe as a whole.



PRESIDENT XHAFERI MEETS ROMANIAN MFA

Romanian MFS Bogdan Aurescu met with President Xhaferi during his official visit to the country, to express support for our Euro-Integration process as a major strategic interest of the Union. President Xhaferi emphasized that he considers the visit as an encouragement for a further development of our bilateral cooperation. Both interlocutors agreed that military actions in Ukraine should stop immediately and solution should be found by dialogue from both sides, and that actions are needed to prevent further implications on the overall European security.



MEETING WITH THE SLOVENIAN DELEGATION FROM THE FOREIGN POLICY COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Foreign Policy Committee, Antonio Milososki, had a working meeting with the Delegation of the Foreign Policy Committee of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, led by Monika Gregorich Head of the Delegation. Milososki referred to the obstacles that stand in the way of the formal start of accession negotiations with the Union, emphasizing, above all, the problem imposed by the Republic of Bulgaria. In that regard, he stressed that the blockade of the Republic of Bulgaria towards the European integration processes of our country is absurd. Gregorich expressed interest in the current political developments, giving full support to the European integration by the Republic of Slovenia. In her address, she referred to the opportunities for deepening economic cooperation between the two countries and increasing investment. At the meeting views were also exchanged on the current political situation and the perspective of the Western Balkans. The interlocutors also discussed the challenges facing the two countries with Euroscepticism. Namely, the delay in the opening of negotiations with Macedonia is in favor of Eurosceptics. It was also emphasized that it is necessary to maintain the will of the citizens for EU membership, given that our country has been waiting for a long time to start accession negotiations. At the end of the meeting, Milososki stressed that he expects the continuation and dynamization of mutual parliamentary cooperation at the level of parliamentary committees.



CELEBRATING ROMA DAY IN PARLIAMENT

The Inter-Party Parliamentary Group (IPPG) for support of Roma rights, their inclusion and integration in the Republic of North Macedonia celebrated 8th April, the International Roma Day. The Group Chair Shikovska stated the commitment of the society towards Roma integration and expressed expectations for the areas that need to be improved, including measures for increased pre-school, primary and secondary education, employment, health care and proper housing. In the field of culture, she talked about the need for encouragement of Roman artists and provision of scholarships in the field of ethnology, writing, drama, music and archeology that will contribute to their deeper integration in the society. Ms. Shikovska called for a legal solution of persons without documents and for those registered in a special register without birth certificates.



INTER-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE PAID A FIELD VISIT TO THE MAVROVO NATIONAL PARK

Members of Parliament from the Inter-Party Group (IPPG) for protection of nature and combat against pollution and climate change, supported by the National Democratic Institute, and several partner organizations, on the occasion of the Earth Day 22 April, paid a field visit to the Mavrovo National Park to see the management of the area, compared to the reports by experts and non-governmental organizations. They discussed with relevant authorities about the urgent need for protection of the animal life and eco-system, and prevention of further constriction activities. Members had an opportunity to be informed about the needs of the national park, including the Study for Valorization of the Mavrovo National Park, as well as about the harmonization of the package of environmental legislation to avoid collision. They decided to organize a public debate in parliament on these issues.



PRIORITIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Parliamentary Club for Youth Issues and Policies held a meeting with young people with disabilities. The meeting was attended by young activists, representatives of several civil society organizations: The Group Coordinator, MP Monika Zajkova, stressed that the Club is open to young people, including young people with disabilities and has an open door for proposals and recommendations in the interest of young people. Attendees discussed recommendations for ways to provide more accessible infrastructure, access to public services and education. Sign language recognition, accessible literature for visually impaired students, availability of orthopedic aids and health services were also discussed at the meeting.



CROATIAN EXPERIENCE WITH ENERGY TRANSITION AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

MPs Maja Moracanin and Olga Lozanovska, members of the informal Green Parliamentary Group obtained experiences on alignment with EU energy goals and transport, as part of the project “Strengthening the Capacities of the Unofficial Green Parliamentary Group in SEE”. The purpose was to acquaint members from SEE countries with the best practices in the Republic of Croatia in the field of energy transition, as well as climate protection. The delegations visited the residence of the State President, as part of the project “Green Office”. It envisages the entire residential building to be transformed into green energy from renewable energy sources, as an incentive for other state institutions to move towards a green transition. At the meeting with the Commission for Nature and Environment Protection experiences were exchanged on the fossil fuel dependence of the Western Balkan countries and solutions for its reduction, development of regional railway networks, as well as for climate policies in urban areas and local government units.



NATIONAL PARKS IN NORTH MACEDONIA



SHAR MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

FIGHT AGAINST HATE SPEECH

The Committee on Inter-Community Relations held a session dedicated to hate speech as a currency of nationalism, with special emphasis on the ambivalent role of education and tackling hate speech and nationalism through education. The participants gave unreserved support for the discussion on this topic, concluding that hate speech causes emotional pain and that the fight against hate speech is a fight of us all. It was assessed that hate speech should not have a place in educational institutions, that more educational measures are needed, fewer monoethnic schools, more physical interaction among young people, more extracurricular activities, inclusion of all relevant factors, inclusiveness, one-shift work in multilingual schools and greater mobility among students. It was assessed that a multicultural society is a treasure and that is why in the battle with hate speech one should start from each individual. The speakers jointly concluded that in relation to the past, the communication between the youth has improved and that the physical fights have decreased and that the relations between the youth have become more relaxed.



PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

The Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the Standing Inquiry Committee on the Protection of Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, together with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and the HUGEN Network (Network of Human Rights and Gender Equality Committees in the Western Balkans), organized the Third Annual Conference of the HUGEN network. The Chair of the Standing Inquiry Committee, Halil Snopce focused his discussion on the fact that in the country there is a lack of respect and security, and even violations of basic human rights due to the lack of independence of public institutions, which are obliged to protect basic human rights and freedoms of the citizen. The Chair of Committee on Equal Opportunities Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova gave a historical overview of the introduction of quotas for the underrepresented gender, which resulted in 50 women MPs in the current term. She also stressed how difficult it is to identify with a parliament that has not yet had a woman president, as well as with a government that has not yet had a prime minister, and it is difficult to enter the presidential race if you did not have a woman president, but the situation is most difficult in political parties, where there is only one woman leader. She also referred to the division of functions in the judiciary, higher education institutions and government in terms of gender



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Representatives of several companies presented the benefits of their work and achievements so far, as part of the celebration of the 19th anniversary of the Parliamentary Club of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia and International Women's Day March 8. The MPs had the opportunity to get acquainted in more detail with the activities of these companies. Speakers presented some of the activities implemented by the social enterprises. Legal changes related to the operation of social enterprises were highlighted as particularly important. MPs had the opportunity to be at the forefront of the adoption of legal changes that would be beneficial for fulfilling the potential by the social enterprises, above all, in the part of economic empowerment of women.



NATIONAL PARKS IN NORTH MACEDONIA



Pelister National Park



Mavrovo National Park



Galicica National Park

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