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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 July - August 2013:

- Law Amending the Law on Customs Tariff
- Law Ratifying the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context
- Law Amending the Law on Firearms Manufacturing and Turnover of Military Equipment

August 2, Macedonia's Day of the Republic



PRESIDENT TRAJKO VELJANOSKI WELCOMES SLOVENIAN STATE PRESIDENT BORUT PAHOR

The President of the Assembly, Mr. Trajko Veljanoski welcomed the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Borut Pahor, during his official visit to the Republic of Macedonia. President Veljanoski informed his guest on the current political situation in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as the normalized situation following the December events last year and he also shared with his guest the commitment for implementation of reforms for Euro-Atlantic integration of the state, as well as for improvement of the life of all citizens. President Pahor, expressed his pleasure to be in Macedonia, and conveyed

to President Veljanoski regards from his Slovenian colleague, the President of the Assembly of Slovenia, Mr. Janko Veber. He also shared his belief that these meetings contribute towards strengthening the overall relations between the two friendly countries.

The interlocutors exchanged opinions regarding a date for opening accession negotiations for the Republic of Macedonia. In this context, President Pahor expressed preparedness by the Republic of Slovenia to do everything in its ability to help the integration of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union.

LITHUANIAN PRESIDENCY PRIORITIES PRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT

The National Euro-Integration Council and the EU Affairs Committee held a joint session where H.E. Ambassador Renatas Juška presented the six-months Program and the Priorities of the Lithuanian Presidency with the Council of the European Union. MPs from the Foreign Policy Committee and the Joint Parliamentary Committee EU-Republic of Macedonia, as well as the Ambassadors of EU Member States also attended the meeting. The National Euro-Integration Council Chair, Ms. Shekerinska welcomed the recent membership of Croatia in the European Union and

also expressed appreciation for the EU continuous enlargement policy. Ambassador Juška presented the current political and economic developments in Lithuania, the recent elections in the state and the Lithuanian economy as the second highest growing economy among EU Member States in the last two years. The Lithuanian Presidency priorities focus on credible, growing and open Europe, strengthening of EU as a global model of openness and security and closer integration in the EU for its Eastern partners and EU enlargement process, said Ambassador Juška.



THE NETHERLANDS - A FRIENDLY COUNTRY WITH CONTINUOUS SUPPORT FOR MACEDONIA



A Delegation of the European Affairs Committee of the Dutch Parliament paid official visit to the Republic of Macedonia. At the meeting with their colleagues from the European Affairs Committee and the National Council for European Integration, the host Committee Vice-Chair Jakupi welcomed the guests and expressed appreciation for the continued support that Netherlands, as a friendly country, gives to the Republic of Macedonia in the Euro-Integration process. He also welcomed the efforts for promotion of parliamentary cooperation between the

two Committees. Regarding the economic cooperation, Mr. Jakupi particularly welcomed the establishment of the Macedonian-Dutch Chamber of Commerce, members of which are around fifty Macedonian companies. Mr. Alexander Pechtold, Member of the Committee on European Affairs of the Parliament of the Netherlands, expressed interest about the rule of law regarding the minorities, the situation with the human rights, the events of 24 December, the attack on the LGBT center, as well as about the situation with the media.

Tourism and agriculture were the main topics of discussion at the meeting of the Parliamentary Group for Cooperation with the Parliament of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, since tourism proved to be the strongest link between the two countries. Good advertizing, the high-quality travel agencies and tour operators were mentioned as the key factors for its further development. The Netherlands is known for its well organized agriculture, and having in mind the fact that Macedonia pays special attention to agriculture, it would be very useful to use the experiences of the Netherlands in this field in order to utilize better its potentials and the favorable climate in Macedonia. The two sides agreed to intensify the cooperation and exchange of experiences in the field of agriculture, as well as regarding exchange of students, especially because of the fact that the Netherlands has one of the best universities of applied sciences in Europe

Expressing appreciation for the hospitality, the guests pointed out the large number of people coming from the Netherlands on holiday in Macedonia. They said that they are following closely the developments in our country and that they are aware of the problems we are facing on our path towards membership in the European Union, adding that they fully support our country in its aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration. The Macedonian parliamentarians emphasized the importance of the exchange of experiences in various areas with experts from the Netherlands, as one of the oldest European Union Member State, and asked for their continued support.



SUPERVISORY DEBATE ON THE USE OF IPA FUNDS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The Committee on European Issues held two sessions of the Supervisory debate on the Use of Pre-Accession IPA Funds in the Republic of Macedonia. Representatives from the EU Delegation and the NDI Office in the Republic of Macedonia followed the debate. In his expose, the Vice-Prime Minister in charge of EU Affairs, Mr. Fatmir Besimi outlined that IPA is used to strengthen the state capacities in the process of Euro-Integration and that so far, 37% of the Agreements for implementation have been signed for the IPA envisaged projects, showing that decentralized management in Macedonia operates efficiently. The Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Mr. Zoran Stavrevski, mentioned that we have

obtained 4 accreditations for 4 IPA Components and that until the end of the year, the use of IPA funds will be 47%, which is in the average of 48-50% in other accession states using similar funds. Ms. Tanja Hanfer and Mr. Aleksandar Krzalovski from the NGO sector, called for the need for greater inclusion of NGO's in the project preparation phase in order to have greater use of these funds for the non-governmental organizations. MPs called the relevant officials to give answers on the level of use of the IPA funds, the institutional capacity to manage the funds. The debate will continue in September with other government officials who will have to provide answers to the Members of the EU Affairs Committee.



OHRID SUMMER FESTIVAL



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