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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 April 2013:

- Law Amending the Criminal Code

SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROCESS

Macedonian Chairmanship-in-Office 2012-2013

PARLIAMENT DIMENSION



In the framework of the Macedonian Chairmanship-in-Office of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC), the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and the European Movement organized a Conference on the topic: European Integration through Cooperation of Parliaments, Civil Society and Independent Regulatory Bod-

The European Commissioner Stefan Fule met with the EU related bodies in Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, as he said key players in the integration process, ensuring inclusiveness for the country's strategic goal. Mr. Fule emphasized that the dynamism injected by HLAD, as catalyst for reforms, which was recognised by all Member States when they issued their most forward looking conclusion-the possibility of opening accession negotiations. Progress was made in the rule of law, the improved efficiency of the judicial system and the reform of the public administration. Concerning the freedom of expression and the media, he pointed out that it is of crucial importance to continue the dialogue with the journalists in a transparent and open manner. Regarding the economy, the Government has met all its obligations towards the companies, especially the action plan on youth employment. He assessed the local elections as

PRESIDENT VELJANOSKI OPENS THE SEEC CONFERENCE IN SKOPJE

ies in SEE. President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Trajko Veljanoski, in his opening speech said functioning of the independent regulatory bodies in SEE protects the rights of the citizens and the work of all state institutions. Building of democratic principles is a never-ending process, and the role of regulatory bodies gradually increases towards EU integration. Exchange of views on regional basis also contributes to increase transparency in the media and the public. In this sense, continuous cooperation is needed between parliaments, regulatory bodies and civil society.

Having in mind that the recommendations of these bodies are not obligatory, President Veljanoski said that the role of the civil society and the public are of exceptional importance to create a societal pressure for their implementation. In this regard, regulatory bodies and the civil society act as natural allies, especially in the field of corruption and anti-discrimination. Only adequate legislation and its full implementation can help regula-

tory bodies to act independently and transparently. Part of that mechanism is also the monitoring by the civil society. The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia introduced mechanisms to include participation of the non-governmental sector and the independent regulatory bodies in the process of law-adoption. The mechanism should help this process and improve the legislation under adoption by convening public debates and following implementation of laws by convening supervisory debates with government representatives. We also expect greater inclusion from the civil society through MPs local offices equipped with IT software that will boost mutual communication, said President Veljanoski. At the end, he concluded that EU Member States that are members of SEEC should assist aspiring countries through good practices in this field and thus express their regional solidarity and cooperation. This will influence societies in South-Eastern Europe and develop a pan-European citizenship.

THE POLITICAL PARTIES SHOULD FOCUS ON EU INTEGRATION

well organized and competitive, and urged the mayors to build bonds and confidence among all citizens and to represent their interests equally, regardless of their ethnic background. He also called for establishment of the the Inquiry Committee that will examine the events of 24 December as soon as possible, and that all parties sign a memorandum on commitment to the Euro-integration processes. The Chairperson of the National European Integration Council, Ms. Radmila Sekerinska, expressed appreciation for his decisive engagement to overcome the political crisis after the events on 24 December in the Assembly. The Deputy Prime Minister in charge of European Integration Mr. Besimi, pointed out that the integration in the EU is the best and only alternative if we want to have a stable, peaceful, and prosperous country. Mr. Naser Selmani - President of the Association of Journalists of Macedonia and Ms.

Tanja Hafner-Ademi from the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation called for greater inclusion of their associations in the decision-making process related to EU integration in future.





ROMA MPS GATHER FOR PROMOTION OF THE REGIONAL COOPERATION

In cooperation with OSCE/ODIHR, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia hosted the preliminary meeting of the Roma Parliamentarians from the region aimed, to encourage cooperation on all levels. Roma parliamentarians from several countries in the region discussed the idea for establishing closer cooperation between Roma Members of Parliament for better promotion and raising the awareness about the problems and interests of the Roma in Europe. They also

discussed the possibilities for promotion of solidarity, equality, transparency, common responsibility and representation. The Roma MPs from the region also exchanged views on issues such as the common interests of all the Roma, regardless of their place of living and origin, emphasizing the common ethnic origin of the Roma and the joint interest in lobbying and voicing their concerns and opinions.



SHARED HEALTH-CARE EXPERIENCES BETWEEN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND MACEDONIA

The Committees on Health-Care from the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and the Czech Parliament met to exchange their experiences in the field of health-care, with the aim to improve the health protection of their citizens. Macedonian Committee Chair, Mr. Mende Dinevski, mentioned the changes in the Law on Health Care that will improve the system and the patients' health-care. Mr. Aleš Roztočil, Deputy-Chair of the Czech Health Care Committee, presented the reforms made in their system, emphasizing that they have impressive

results in some of the areas, while others should be improved, like prevention as a basic condition of the population. Despite the benefits of their health-care system, the population from the socially problematic areas does not use these opportunities. The MPs exchanged views on the HPV vaccines, PAP tests, rehabilitation medicine etc. The participants expressed that they were pleased with the meeting that may contribute to improvement of the health-care system in both states.

FROM CONSUMER, MACEDONIA IS NOW EXPORTER OF STABILITY



A Delegation off from the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, headed by Lord Jopling visited the Republic of Macedonia. At the meeting, they expressed interest in the developments after the events in the Assembly

on 24 December and the dispute over the name with Greece. Vice-President of the Assembly, Mr. Svetlana Jakimovska elaborated on the situation in the Assembly prior to 24 December. Ms. Mehmeti Devaja, Head of the Macedonian NATO Delegation, said that the agreement reached on 1 March should put an end to the incident. She added that from consumer of stability, Macedonia is now exporter of stability and that the country deserves to be part of the Alliance. Ms. Jakimovska expressed appreciation for the NATO's consistent support and readiness for cooperation. She emphasized the strategic commitment of the Republic of Macedonia with the participation in the NATO missions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Regarding the name dispute, Ms. Jakimovska pointed out that the Republic of Macedonia continues to be committed to finding a mutually acceptable solution, which will have to be accepted by the citizens in a referendum. MP Pavle Trajanov assessed the territorial claims that the Republic

of Macedonia allegedly has towards Greece and Bulgaria presented to the international community, reminding the guests that Macedonia has expressed its readiness for signing an agreement on inviolability of the borders with its neighbours. The Chairman of the Foreign Policy Committee Mr. Antonio Milošoski said that, as part of the NATO led operations, the Republic of Macedonia is ranked as the 4th largest contributor per capita to the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan. On request of the NATO Delegation, the Macedonian MPs discussed also the situation with the media and freedom of expression, the strategic commitment and the political and ethnic consensus regarding EU and NATO integration, as well as the possibilities for increasing the defence budget. Expressing his satisfaction from the meeting, Lord Jopling highly assessed the contribution that the Republic of Macedonia is giving with the participation in the peace keeping missions, and expressed hope that very soon the country will join NATO and the EU.



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