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PRESIDENT IVANOV VISITS POLAND

Macedonian President Gjorge Ivanov paid a working visit to the Republic of Poland on 8–9 September, where he attended the 25th Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój, focusing on the economic and political situation in Europe and the world, energy security and innovations. President Ivanov addressed the session “Toward a Flexible Europe: Strategies for the Future” and the session “Leaders of Tomorrow—What Kind of Leaders Does Europe Need?” at the Economic Forum of Young Leaders that took place in Nowy Sącz.

President Ivanov also met the newly elected Polish President, Andrzej Duda. The main accent at that meeting was put on the forthcoming NATO summit and



Poland's support for Macedonia's NATO membership bid. On the occasion of Macedonia's Independence Day, President Ivanov also hosted a Macedonian evening in Krynica-Zdrój. Furkan Chako, Minister without Portfolio, who was a member of the Macedonian delegation, promoted to the present Polish businessmen the possibilities for investment in the Republic of Macedonia.

PRESIDENT IVANOV PAYS OFFICIAL VISIT TO MONTENEGRO

The President of the Republic of Macedonia, Gjorge Ivanov, paid an official visit to Montenegro on 15–16 September, at the invitation of his Montenegrin counterpart, Filip Vujanović. At their meeting in Cetinje, the two heads of state confirmed the excellent friendly relations between their two nations and committed to closer economic cooperation. The importance of being extended invitations for NATO membership, which would be of interest to both the Alliance and regional security and stability, was stressed as a priority at the meeting. Regional and multilateral cooperation and the ongoing migrant crisis were also tabled.

President Ivanov held separate meetings with the Prime Minister of Montenegro,



Milo Đukanović, and Parliament Speaker Ranko Krivokapić. In Podgorica, on 16 September, a Macedonian-Montenegrin Business Forum was held, in which representatives of 45 companies of both countries participated. The possibilities for investment in the Republic of Macedonia and Macedonia's hospitable business environment and regulations for starting new businesses were promoted on that occasion.

PRESIDENT IVANOV VISITS TURKEY

The President of the Republic of Macedonia, Gjorge Ivanov, paid a working visit to the Republic of Turkey on 25 September and met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Istanbul. The traditionally friendly relations between the two countries and the commitment to promoting cooperation further in all areas of shared interest, the economic area in particular, were jointly reconfirmed over the course of their talks. The

presidents also shared views on the ongoing political situations, the foreign policy goals and priorities of both countries and the migrant crisis.

During his visit to Istanbul, President Ivanov also attended the funeral of Ibrahim Cevahir, Turkish businessman and owner of Cevahir Holding, a company investing in the Republic of Macedonia.

GOVERNMENT DELEGATION VISITS USA

A government delegation led by Macedonia's Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski launched a multiple-day visit to the United States of America on 25 September.

Prime Minister Gruevski and the delegation attended a business forum in Columbus, Ohio, during their US visit. Prime Minister Gruevski emphasized on that occasion the set of incentives offered to investors by Macedonia's authorities. During their visit to Columbus, the Macedonian delegation also held a meeting with the local Macedonian community.

The Macedonian delegation attended the gala dinner of the Macedonia 2025 organization hosted for the purpose of raising funds for the education and support of young talents, as part of Macedonia 2025's education programs.

On 30 September, Prime Minister Gruevski and the delegation addressed the business forum in New Jersey attended by many businessmen from various industries. On this occasion, too, Prime Minister Gruevski and the government delegation met representatives of the Macedonian Diaspora.



GEORGE W. BUSH AWARDED MEDAL OF MACEDONIA

In Columbus, Ohio, on 26 September, at the gala dinner hosted by the Macedonia 2025 organization in honor of the Macedonian government delegation's visit to the United States of America, Macedonia's Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski presented George W. Bush, the 43rd US President, with the Medal of the Republic of Macedonia conferred by the Macedonian president. George W. Bush was awarded the medal for his outstanding contribution to the promotion of friendly relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the United States of America.



PM GRUEVSKI AT 70TH SESSION OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Macedonia's Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski took part in the 70th jubilee Session of the UN General Assembly, which started in New York on 28 September. Before the official start of the UN General Assembly's work, he addressed the Sustainable Development Summit, at which new global development goals were adopted. Together with Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki, he also attended the Leaders' Summit on Combating ISIL and Violent Extremism, at which taking of joint measures in combating terrorism and securing global peace and stability was tabled. Prime Minister Gruevski attended the reception hosted by US President Barack Obama for the participants in the UN General Assembly. He held a number of meetings with foreign officials on this occasion, including a brief informal one with his Greek counterpart, Alexis Tsipras.

Prime Minister Gruevski addressed the UN General Assembly and met UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on 2 October. On the sidelines of this global event, he met a great many prime ministers and presidents from the countries of the Region and beyond.



FM POPOSKI'S ACTIVITIES AT 70TH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

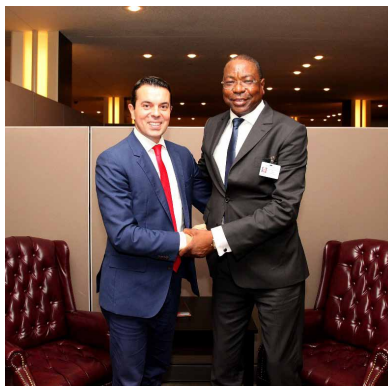
Macedonia's Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki accompanied Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski at the opening of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and during his address at the General Debate.

Minister Poposki represented the Republic of Macedonia at the summit on UN peacekeeping operations and the high-level event organized by the Secretary General of the International Organization of La Francophonie, Ms. Michaëlle Jean, titled "Objective 2030: A Francophone Momentum for the Success of the New Sustainable Development Program".

Minister Poposki also took part in the meeting of the member states of the Adriatic Charter on partnership among the USA, Macedonia, Albania, Croatia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the meeting, held under the chairmanship of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the ministers of foreign affairs shared views on further cooperation within the framework of the Charter. Minister Poposki also attended the working lunch of the ministers of foreign affairs of the Western Balkan countries hosted by the Regional Cooperation Council, in which EU Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn also took part.



On the sidelines of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly, Minister Poposki held numerous informal meetings with counterparts from Europe, as well as Iran, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and other countries, at which current international challenges and candidacies, and possibilities for further cooperation were discussed.



BIH FM CRNADAK PAYS OFFICIAL VISIT TO MACEDONIA

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Igor Crnadak, paid an official visit to the Republic of Macedonia on 23 September. Minister Crnadak and his host, Macedonia's Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki, confirmed the good bilateral relations and emphasized the need for promoting economic cooperation further and encouraging business communities via the organization of business forums. They also discussed signing agreements of mutual interest in the fields of tourism and diplomatic education, and launching a process that would ultimately result in a deal on entry and stay of citizens of both countries with biometric identification cards. Among the issues tabled was also regional cooperation, with special stress being laid on the activities taken under Macedonia's Chairmanship of CEI and Bosnia and Herzegovina's Chairmanship of the Council of Europe, the migrant crisis and Macedonia's effort in this regard.



Minister Crnadak was also received by the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Gjorge Ivanov.

FM POPOSKI AT INFORMAL GYMnich MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS OF EU MEMBER STATES AND CANDIDATE MEMBER STATES

At the invitation of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg, Jean Asselborn (his country currently presiding over the Council of the EU), Macedonia's Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki attended the informal meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs of the EU member states and candidate member states—Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey—in Luxembourg on 4–5 September.

The ongoing migrant crisis stemming from the EU's southern neighborhood and its management by the candidate member states faced with an overwhelming influx of illegal newcomers were discussed at the meeting. Minister Poposki spoke about the migrant crisis in the Republic of Macedonia, underlining the need for Europe to provide a joint response given that no country is capable of resolving this problem alone, relying solely on its own resources. He highlighted solidarity and shared responsibility as crucial for dealing with the crisis.



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On the sidelines of the meeting, Minister Poposki attended the working breakfast of the ministers of foreign affairs with the EPP group at the invitation of Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz and the Chairman of the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee, Elmar Brok.

FM POPOSKI MEETS FRENCH SECRETARY OF STATE DÉSIR

The Secretary of State for European Affairs of the French Republic, Harlem Désir, paid a visit to the Republic of Macedonia on 2 September. During his visit, he was received by his Macedonian counterpart, Nikola Poposki. The two officials tabled the Macedonian-French relations, underscoring the importance of promoting further political dialogue and economic cooperation.

Mr. Désir emphasized the French support for the integration of the Republic of Macedonia into the European Union.

He was also received by the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Gjorge Ivanov, and Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski.



MEETING OF NATO NORTH-ATLANTIC COUNCIL WITH REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AT NATO HQ IN BRUSSELS

A delegation of the Republic of Macedonia led by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense, Nikola Poposki and Zoran Jolevski, participated in the annual meeting with the North-Atlantic Council at the level of ambassadors of the NATO member states at the NATO HQ in Brussels on 16 September. Ministers Poposki and Jolevski spoke in their addresses about the achieved results within the framework of the political, economic and defense reform in the Republic of Macedonia.

Minister Poposki appealed for reaching of a consensus regarding the decision to extend Macedonia a NATO membership invitation, underlining the country's reform achievements, met standards and considerable contribution to NATO's missions.

Within the framework of the meeting, Minister Poposki also met the EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos, and the Secretary General of the European External Action Service, Alain Le Roy.



Ministers Poposki and Jolevski had a meeting with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, at which opinions were shared on the ongoing political situation in Macedonia and the challenges the country faces in dealing with the refugee crisis.

FM POPOSKI MEETS BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE WESTERN BALKANS DIRECTOR MCILWHAM

Macedonian Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki received the Director for the Western Balkans and EU Enlargement at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Fiona McIlwham, on 15 September.

It was said at the meeting relations between Macedonia and Great Britain were continuously growing. Minister Poposki stressed the significance of the British support for the Republic of Macedonia and its chief priorities—EU and NATO membership.

Ms. McIlwham reiterated Great Britain's principled support for the European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the Republic of Macedonia.



BRICE LALONDE HOLDS LECTURE ON GLOBAL MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The former French Minister of the Environment, Brice Lalonde, held a lecture on "Global Management and Sustainable Development" in Skopje on 9 September, organized by the Diplomatic Academy Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Embassy of the French Republic in Skopje.

The event was opened by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, Nikola Poposki, who underlined in his opening remarks the great significance of climate change in the world and the activities of the Republic of Macedonia in the field of sustainable development.

The guest from France addressed in his lecture the global initiatives and talks being conducted in the spheres of sustainable development, environment and climate change. He laid stress on the UN mechanisms and programs, the multilateral negotiations and the forthcoming climate change conference. Mr. Lalonde is a

Special Advisor on Sustainable Development to the UN and sitting Chair of the Sustainable Development Roundtable for the OECD.

The French Ambassador to Macedonia, Laurence Auer, also addressed the present diplomats.



MINISTER POPOSKI ATTENDS BLEED STRATEGIC FORUM

Macedonia's Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki participated in the Bled Strategic Forum titled "Visions for New Partnerships" that took place for the 10th time in Bled, Slovenia, from 31 August to 1 September.

Forum participants discussed current political situations, regional cooperation, and the role of partnerships and cooperation in security, trade and economy, with stress being laid on exercising human rights.

Minister Poposki addressed the panel discussion "Western Balkans: The Region at the Center of Geostrategic Deliberations". On the sidelines of the Forum, he held meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Karl Erjavec, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Hoyt Brian Yee, the Minister of State for Europe at the German Federal Foreign Office, Michael Roth, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Igor Crnadak, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, Péter Szijjártó, and the General



Manager of Slovenia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Samo Hribar Milič.

REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AND EUROPEAN COMMISSION HOLD 5TH HLAD MEETING

The 5th meeting of the High Level Accession Dialogue (HLAD) between the Republic of Macedonia and the European Commission, which took place in Skopje on 18 September, was co-chaired by Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and the Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn. Aside from the cabinet ministers, the meeting was also attended by the president and vice president of the National European Integration Council, and representatives of Macedonia's four major political parties in parliament.

The progress in implementing the political agreement and the urgent reform priorities in the fields of judiciary, media, rule of law, fundamental rights, and public administration and election legislation reform were tabled at the meeting. The appointment of a special prosecutor to look into the allegations arising from the illegal surveillance disclosures was also welcomed on that occasion.



DEPUTY FM KIPRIJANOVSKA ATTENDS WESTERN BALKANS REGIONAL COOPERATION CONFERENCE

Macedonia's Deputy Foreign Minister Dragana Kiprijanovska attended the conference "Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkans" hosted by Germany's Aspen Institute in Budva on 14-17 September. The conference focused on regional and security cooperation as well as on promoting cooperation in economy, energy and infrastructure in the Western Balkan countries.

On the sidelines of the conference, Deputy Minister Kiprijanovska met Andrija Pejović, the conference host, ambassador and chief negotiator for Montenegro's accession to the EU, as well as other counterparts from the Region.

MACEDONIA'S HONORARY CONSUL IN SPAIN DELIVERS LECTURE

On 16 September, at the Iustinianus Primus Faculty of Law in Skopje, the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Macedonia in the Kingdom of Spain, Dr. Carlos Flores Juberías, Professor of

Comparative Constitutional Law at the University of Valencia Law School, delivered a lecture titled "40 Years of Democracy in Spain: A Mid-Life Crisis or a Terminal Illness?"

PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLITICAL AGREEMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

On 15 September, the Macedonian Parliament adopted a legislative proposal, unanimously agreed between the main political parties, regulating the appointment, work and functioning of a Special Prosecutor tasked to lead in full autonomy the investigations surrounding and arising from the interception of communications. The functions of the Special Prosecutor will be performed by Ms. Katica Janeva, public prosecutor in the town of Gevgelija. The appointment of a special prosecutor by 15 September was one of the major commitments under the 15 July political agreement.

A considerable progress was made in the implementation of the remaining commitments of the political agreement. The opposition returned to Parliament on 1 September, thus returning the political debate and dialogue into the democratic institutions. As regards the electoral reform, there is a general agreement on the methodology to examine the electoral lists, the modification of the State Election Commission composition as well as the amendments to the Electoral Code to implement OSCE/ODIHR recommendations.

Under the 15 July agreement, with a view to holding early parliamentary elections on 24 April 2016:

The composition of the State Election Commission is to be reviewed, modified and given increased powers to ensure free and fair elections and a level playing field for all parties by 30 September. All recommendations of the OSCE/ODIHR are to be applied, including the examination of the electoral lists according to the new and agreed methodology. The government enacted a comprehensive Action Plan for implementation of key reform priorities covering the areas of rule of law and judiciary, public administration, media, electoral reform, inter-ethnic relations and economic governance, as well as the 24 December Inquiry Committee recommendations. To secure inclusiveness and thorough implementation of reforms, the government



Mr. Peter Vanhoutte speaks to members of the media

undertook a wide consultation process on the Action Plan with the main political parties and the civil society. The government took several implementing actions concerning the urgent reform priorities: suspended all government paid media campaigns until new methodology based on transparent, objective and non-discriminatory criteria is drawn up; proposed legal amendments to suspend the implementation of the Law on Lustration that were adopted by the Parliament; placed moratorium on new public administration employments; prepared and made available detailed public administration statistics; prepared and put forward for consultations a package of judiciary legislative changes; initiated a selection process for a strategic partner among EU Member States concerning the judicial and parliamentary supervision of communication surveillance, to analyse best practices and develop and implement a model that will ensure clear division of mandates and regulations on communication surveillance.

SRGJAN KERIM MACEDONIAN CANDIDATE FOR UN SECRETARY GENERAL

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia has nominated Dr. Srgjan Kerim, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia and Chairman of the 62nd Session of the UN General Assembly, for the position of UN Secretary General. After conducting diplomatic consultations and taking into account his extensive international experience, knowledge of the global processes and qualifications, and especially bearing in mind the acknowledgments he received from numerous member states about his General Assembly chairmanship, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia decided that Srgjan Kerim is the figure that meets all the required criteria to be nominated for the office of UN Secretary General.



This nomination is the result of the joint stance of the Eastern European Group at the UN, of which the Republic of Macedonia is also a member, assumed in November 2014 that the next UN secretary general, by the system of rotation, should be elected from its ranks.

TWENTY YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

H.E. Mr. Jess L. BAILY, U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia

THE TRUE STRENGTH OF OUR RELATIONSHIP IS IN THE BONDS FORMED BETWEEN OUR PEOPLE

The bilateral relationship between the United States and the Republic of Macedonia has been marked by friendship,



cooperation, and mutual support since we established diplomatic relations twenty years ago. From the small rented space where the U.S. Government set up our first liaison office to our Embassy by the Kale today, we have worked closely with the Government and the people of Macedonia to advance our shared goal of a peaceful, prosperous, multi-ethnic Macedonia, fully integrated into the Euro-Atlantic community.

The United States has provided more than one billion dollars of assistance to Macedonia over the past twenty years, and we are proud to work together with Macedonia in areas that include defense and security priorities; strengthening law enforcement,

agriculture, education, and civil society; and preserving cultural heritage. Additionally – and perhaps most importantly – we work together to create strong and lasting bonds between the people of our two countries. From the Peace Corps Volunteers who live and work in villages and towns throughout Macedonia, to the soldiers and citizens involved in the State Partnership program with Vermont, to the more than 20,000 exchange visitors from Macedonia who have traveled to the United States to teach, study, work, and build personal and professional connections, the true strength of our relationship is to be found in the bonds formed between our people.

Nowhere was the power of these bonds more evident to me than in the recent Food and Blood Drive held at the U.S. Embassy to mark our September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance. On this day I saw citizens of Macedonia from all regions, ethnicities, religions, and political affiliations come together with our Embassy staff to give back to the community. It was an inspiring illustration of what we can accomplish working together, and a testament to our lasting partnership.

We are proud to celebrate with Macedonia the 20th anniversary of our diplomatic relations, and we look forward to many more years of cooperation, collaboration, and achievement together.

TWENTY YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

H.E. Mr. Vasko NAUMOVSKI, Ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia to the USA

WE CONTINUE TO ACT TOGETHER FOR THE VALUES WE STAND FOR

For more than twenty years the Republic of Macedonia and the United States of America have cultivated friendly relations and close cooperation



on issues of mutual interest. The USA has been one of our closest allies since our independence in 1991, enriching our bilateral relations based on friendship and trust. Based on the common struggle for freedom in World War II, we continue to act together for the values we stand for, on the bilateral and multilateral levels. The United States has been a strong ally and key stakeholder

for Macedonia's aspirations for full Euro-Atlantic integration, supporting the accomplishment of our foreign policy goals. In this regard, the United States continues to support Macedonia's security, stability and economic development and we are fully committed to developing further our sincere partnership.

Macedonia is a committed partner in the fight against global terrorism and continues to make an important contribution to the promotion of international peace and stability. Our troops have served together in several peacekeeping missions around the world, confirming the continuous Macedonian commitment in this joint endeavor.

The Declaration for Strategic Partnership emphasizes the US commitment towards supporting Macedonia's security, stability and economic development, noting that a secure and prosperous Macedonia as an active participant in the regional and international economic, political and security fora is vital to

maintaining long lasting peace and stability in the whole region of Southeast Europe.

Another important aspect is the activity of the Macedonian diaspora in the US, contributing to closer bilateral relations, as well as to the promotion of the Macedonian culture and business opportunities. The Congressional Caucus on Macedonia and Macedonian Americans (Macedonia Caucus) is dedicated towards strengthening the relationship between the United States and Macedonia, as well as the appreciation for the contribution of the Macedonian Americans in the American society over the last century.

Several US companies have already invested in Macedonia, and we have strong expectations from many others to finalize their decisions to expand their businesses in our country. This aspect remains our key priority in the upcoming period, given the potential to further develop the economic ties and trade between our two countries. We are also continuing our efforts for more activities in the areas of parliamentary cooperation, youth exchange, educational and scientific projects, culture and as well as other areas that will enable deeper relations between Macedonians and Americans.

TWENTY YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

H.E. Mr. Iustinian FOCSA, Ambassador of Romania to the Republic of Macedonia

TWO DECADES OF COOPERATION MARKED BY OVER 40 HIGH-LEVEL VISITS



In 1995, Romania and the Republic of Macedonia agreed on establishing diplomatic relations. This was a clear sign of mutual respect and willingness to build a better future for our countries and the region of South Eastern Europe and a clear signal to the Romanian political

establishment to contribute to the new meaning of political realities in the region. These two decades have been marked by a dynamic agenda of over 40 high-level official visits of presidents, speakers of parliament, prime ministers, ministers of foreign affairs, parliamentary committee chairs and other officials. They have all contributed to advancing and deepening our cooperation in every area of common interest, including our common European future. Romania, as a fully fledged NATO and EU member state, is ready to support the Republic of Macedonia on its path towards EU and NATO integration.

Our excellent political relations are the basis for the economic and social pillars of our cooperation. As a result of mutual efforts, but also the mutual positive perception and mood of our business communities, in the past decades, we have created opportunities for a notable increase in the volume of trade. The Honorary Consulates of Romania in Štip,

Kumanovo and Bitola and of the Republic of Macedonia in Ploiești and Timișoara are essential in boosting economic ties and people to people contacts. The continuous Romanian–Macedonian dialogue in these fields in the past two decades created a new momentum for the Romanian kin minority in the Republic of Macedonia, persons belonging to Aromanian and Meglenoromanian communities. With their deep involvement in the historical development of the Macedonian society, Aromanians and Meglenoromanians, closely related and sharing the same spirituality with the Romanian people, are a real and solid bridge between Romania and the Republic of Macedonia. The same role is played by the Macedonian ethnic community in Romania which is, under the provisions of the Constitution of Romania, officially recognized and has a representative to the Romanian Parliament's lower house, the Chamber of Deputies.

TWENTY YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

H.E. Mrs. Rasa KAIRIENĖ, Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to the Republic of Macedonia

LITHUANIA CONTINUES TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR THE AMBITIOUS STATE OF MACEDONIA

As we approach the 20th anniversary of Lithuanian-Macedonian diplomatic relations, I applaud the progress I witnessed in your country. Namely the

recent developments on the governmental level and the resumed cooperation with the European Commission sustain hope of even further advancements.

Lithuania commits to assisting the Republic of Macedonia in the process of European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Our country is aware of the issues



small states have to cope with. Rule of law, political stability, media freedom

and judicial system in the Republic of Macedonia need urgent and comprehensive improvements, which can be addressed with our help. Consistent backing in bilateral and supranational level is crucial for small developing economies such as your country.

The already signed bilateral agreements for the mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments and for the Avoidance of Double Taxation are a way forward for the Lithuanian-Macedonian partnership. Nevertheless, further steps must be taken in order to advance economic and trade cooperation between our countries.

Furthermore, the European Commission Twinning project is a promising platform for cooperation between EU countries and the Republic of Macedonia. We are looking forward to sharing more of our good governance practices with you in the near future. Even more, together we are tackling military management issues and look for

possibilities of cooperation in the areas of military training and collaboration of military medicine experts.

Lithuania is open for scientific exchange, especially in the field of life sciences. Macedonian scientists are more than welcome in Lithuania's integrated Science, Studies and Business valleys. Regrettably, the Republic of Macedonia is still mostly an undiscovered gem for Lithuanian tourists. Thus we are stepping up this field together as well. Cultural cooperation is one of the means to facilitate our collaboration in tourism.

Finally, I must stress that I am exceptionally glad for the uninterrupted and fruitful relations our two countries share. With the bright perspective of Macedonian Euro-Atlantic integration, our partnership is bound to evolve and strengthen even beyond its current scope.

INTERVIEW

H.E. Mrs. Danijela BARIŠIĆ, Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia to the Republic of Macedonia

BALKAN REGION IS ON EUROPEAN TRACK



Your Excellency, the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Croatia established diplomatic relations on 30th March 1992. They share common history and links between Croats and Macedonians are very strong. As new Croatian Ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia, what're your views on further enhancement the cooperation between the two friendly countries, especially in the field of economy?

"Excellent relations with no open issues" is the most repeated sentence when describing the Croatian-Macedonian bilateral relations. But that makes my job no less interesting and challenging. During the visit of the Macedonian President, H.E. Ivanov, to Croatia in July this year, Croatian President Grabar Kitarović stressed that "Croatia is a member of the European Union and NATO, and wants to see Macedonia as their member, too, which is why we are continuing with the ongoing dialogue at all levels, including politics, economy, defense, national security, culture and science". So, I will do my best to further strengthen our relations in both our countries' best interest.

As far as economy is concerned, our economies are complementary and close links and contacts exist. Also, there is the rising interest of Croatian investors to invest in Macedonia. Macedonia is carrying out major infrastructure projects (highways, railways...) and this is an area in which Croatia has experience, but we can

also use some European funds together. The pharmaceutical industry, the food processing industry and tourism are also of common interest. Many Macedonians have visited Croatia this summer and by using more charter flights we can increase this number, both on Macedonian and Croatian side. And I can see a window of opportunity in medical and wellness tourisms, too. Anyway, I am happy to see there is will on both sides, so the next step is finding out how to make the plans operational.

There is no complete and stable Europe without the full inclusion of Southeast Europe, just as there is no stable region without its full integration with Europe. The Republic of Croatia is a strong supporter of Macedonian's European integration aspirations. Do you expect advancement in the European integration processes of the countries in the region this and next year?

I firmly believe that there is space for development in the European integration processes of the countries in the region. To that effect, the countries are implementing reforms, while the EU member states consider the European integration process as a tool for stabilization of the region and Europe as a whole. Of course, nothing is granted, and we can say it based on our own example. The process of European integration for us was a process of building state institutions and rebuilding our society after the period of war and instability.

If we take a look at the region we will see that four out of six countries are candidate member states; Bosnia and Herzegovina has activated the Stabilization and Association Agreement and Kosovo is negotiating it. Of course, one can say that it is not enough, but basically I would say that the region is on the European track.

The Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia includes Macedonians along 21 other national minorities. How do you assess the activities of the Croatian community in Macedonia and the Macedonian community in Croatia in promoting bilateral relations?

Our minorities are one of our binding links and it is our common interest to ensure they can exercise all their rights and to protect their identity. Besides being recognized in Croatia's Constitution, the Macedonian minority also has one Member of Parliament. Furthermore, a Council for National Minorities shall be set up to consider and propose ways of regulating

and addressing issues related to the exercise and safeguarding of minority rights and freedoms.

Moreover, we have an excellent basis for protection of minorities, namely the Agreement between the Croatian Government and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia regarding the protection of the Croatian minority in the Republic of Macedonia and the Macedonian minority in Croatia. The implementation of this Agreement provides the Croats in Macedonia with a better position in exercising their guaranteed rights. On the basis of the signed and ratified Agreement, the Intergovernmental Mixed Committee was established whose task is to monitor the implementation of the Agreement and to implement specific measures by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the Croatian Government regarding the overall improvement of the status of both national minorities. So, I hope that the next meeting will be organized in due time.

The Western Balkans Summit has recently been held in Vienna as part of the Berlin Process, at which regional cooperation, the refugee crisis, interreligious dialogue and fighting extremism were addressed. What is the official position of the Republic of Croatia regarding the need for resolving the refugee crisis?

This is not just a European or a regional problem. This is a problem of the whole international community and we have to solve it together. We think that the

European Union will have to sit down and agree joint mechanisms, redefine common and individual policies and external border control, and agree a crisis management model. A direct solution should be sought in talks between the EU and Turkey. Also, the EU as well as the rest of the world should help the countries that have accepted the largest number of refugees, like Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, so that they can financially cope with the situation, and the whole situation can start improving when the war in Syria is stopped. Also, we have to involve all partners, Europe, the United States and the Russian Federation, as well as some of Syria and Iraq's neighbors.

When Ban Ki-moon's term ends next December, the world could be looking at two firsts in the new UN Secretary-General since they could be both from Eastern Europe and a woman for the first time. Your Excellency, do you believe H.E. Ms. Vesna Pusić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, could be appointed new UN Secretary-General?

Since the election process will be more transparent, candidates will be more visible, and the process will not take place behind closed doors as it has so far. The rotation of secretary-generals on a regional basis has not been abandoned and consensus has been reached that in this election preference should be given to candidates from Eastern Europe. So, I hope for the best.

INTERVIEW

Mr. Brice LALONDE, Special Advisor on Sustainable Development to the UN Global Compact

OUR PLANET NEEDS FORUM TO ADDRESS GLOBAL DIFFICULTIES

Your Excellency, as former Minister for the Environment of the French Republic, Special Advisor on Sustainable Development to the UN Global Compact and Chair of the Sustainable Development Roundtable at the OECD, would you please tell us your views on the global activities and achievements in sustainable

development, environmental protection and climate change?

There is a difference between local or national environmental issues and global problems. The first are being dealt reasonably well in national environmental policies. Of course one can argue that a lot



of governments don't pay enough attention to the environment. This is true, but the trend is in favor of blending the economy of nature—ecology—with the human economy, so that each one builds on the other instead of damaging it. But when it comes to the global environment, in fact the fundamental pillars of life on planet Earth, the international community faces more difficulties because of the magnitude of the problems and because the political and diplomatic tools are missing. The planet doesn't have a forum to address its global difficulties. The international system is based on the sovereignty of 195 national States. Only the European Union has created a supranational mechanism when it comes to solving European problems that concern all member states.

One day we shall have to design a platform to deal with our common goods: the atmosphere, the oceans. For the time being we have multilateral agreements like the climate or the biodiversity conventions. Some have been successful, some not at all. It is a good thing they exist, but they cut the global environment in isolated slices that ignore each other and therefore offer solutions to one slice that can become problems to another. For instance the Montreal protocol accepted gases as substitutes to those that were destroying the ozone layer without seeing they were powerful greenhouse gases.

I also believe that such important matters as the climate should involve heads of state because they can look ahead of narrow national interests. This means these negotiations must be less esoteric.

Based on your extensive CV, it is evident you have made a significant contribution to the activities of protection of man's environment and ecology in general not only nationally, in France, but also beyond. In your opinion, is enough attention paid to this issue at the UN?

The UN is the only place where the international community has the legitimacy to decide something for 195 countries. But it requires reaching a consensus. And when the UN was created the question of the environment was not as acute as it is today, so there was no agency devoted to energy, or water, or the ocean. Nevertheless, the UN inaugurated negotiations about sustainable development at a conference held in Stockholm in 1972. That conference created the first international body working on the environment, the UNEP, based in Nairobi. 20 years later it was the Earth Summit in Rio where the 3 famous conventions on climate, biodiversity and desertification were signed. Since then, I believe we have been able to distinguish between UN staff that can be very concerned by the environment and decision-makers, member states that can be less concerned. The main issue for the majority of member states is the elimination of poverty. But we know now that a healthy environment contributes to that goal. So it has become usual to merge environment and development at the UN. That's the purpose of sustainable development. Overall I think we need to upgrade the UN to cope with these new global threats.

The Republic of Macedonia as a UN member state is taking an active part in the development of UN priorities that serve as a bridge for connection and sharing of values with all states and peoples in the world. How do you see Macedonia's contribution in this regard?

I must say I was impressed to see that the Republic of Macedonia had sent its contribution for the protection of the climate before a lot of other countries.

What are your impressions of the achievements the Republic of Macedonia has so far made in the areas of ecology, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and environmental protection?

I don't know enough about the environmental policies of the Republic of Macedonia. I was lucky to see beautiful landscapes and a rich nature, to taste fresh vegetables, and I thought these were treasures to look after. But I understand that some cities have suffered from unexpected floods. That's the new reality of climate change. It must bring the authorities to control deforestation in slopes as the country is mountainous. I was also told that some progress could be achieved to reduce air pollution in cities. This is a worldwide problem. But I must come back to be able to really answer your question.

HUNGARIAN CORNER OPENED IN ILINDEN MUNICIPAL LIBRARY

The first Hungarian Corner was opened at the library of the Municipality of Ilinden on 23 September. Visitors will hereafter be able to learn more about Hungarian culture, art and literature. The Hungarian Corner consists of English language books on Hungarian topics, books translated from Hungarian into Macedonian, as well as a number of DVDs. The opening was attended by the Hungarian Ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia, József Bencze and Ilinden Mayor Žika Stojanovski. An exhibition showcasing Hungary's natural attractions was also staged at the Ilinden House of Culture.



MACEDONIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY MARKED



On the occasion of 8 September, Macedonia's Independence Day, Parliament Speaker Trajko Veljanoski hosted a reception attended by President Gjorge Ivanov, former and sitting Members of Parliament, ministers, religious dignitaries, army officials, ambassadors and other notable figures from Macedonia's political, cultural, academic and economic life.

Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski congratulated Independence Day to the people of Macedonia in his address at the ceremony staged at the Macedonian National Theater.

The 8 September National Award this year was presented at a ceremony at the Macedonian Parliament to Lazar Lečik for his lifetime achievements in sport, Ljupčo Stojčevski, Ruždija Kalač, Dimče Kičevski and Zdravko Dejanovik.

Macedonia's Independence Day was also celebrated at Macedonia's diplomatic missions and consular posts abroad, including those in Washington DC, Brussels, Berlin, Paris, London, Rome, Moskva, Vienna, Belgrade, Zagreb, Athens, Beijing, Tokyo, Melbourne, Ottawa, Toronto, New Delhi, Cairo, Astana and Detroit.



Washington D.C.



Brussels



Berlin



Vienna



New Delhi



London



Belgrade



Athens



Astana



Zagreb

SLOVAK EMBASSY MARKS CONSTITUTION DAY

On 1 September the Embassy of Slovakia hosted a reception to mark the 23rd Anniversary of the promulgation of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, which paved the way for the declaration of independence of the country on 1 January 1993. The event was attended by representatives of the parliament, government, political parties, universities, business sector, NGOs, Slovak diaspora and diplomatic corps.

"I strongly believe that the Republic of Macedonia will successfully overcome the political challenges it currently faces domestically and externally, and return to the Brussels trajectory with the dynamics

that was so characteristic for your country in the first stage of the Stabilization and Association Process. The return of MPs from the main opposition to the Parliament earlier today is an important step in that direction. Allow me once again to assure you that Slovakia is a reliable friend, partner and ally of Macedonia. More than two decades of diplomatic relations and cooperation, which we continuously deepen in all areas of common interest, are the best proof of it. You can count on Slovakia's support also during its forthcoming Presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2016," said Ambassador Bezák in his address.



MACEDONIAN YOUNG DIPLOMATS

EVERYTHING IS IN THE DETAILS!



Who are diplomats? They are people of sound but straightforward intelligence, people of simplified and limited sensitivity and a cool heart, but not without heart or any sensitivity; capable of deception, but not closed and mysterious, still less underhand; strong, but not rough; quick and decisive, but not hasty or impulsive; realistic, sober but not dry and dull. – Ivo Andric

Marija Prgommet Fidanova is a young diplomat with, however, an extensive work experience acquired at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the past six years.

She graduated and earned her Master's degree in international relations and diplomacy from the Justinianus Primus Faculty of Law. Right after graduation she started working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, first at the Directorate for Bilateral Relations with non-European Countries and later at the Minister's Office and the Directorate for Multilateral Relations.

"I regard my working for the Directorate for Bilateral Relations with non-European Countries as a challenge. It is a vast material to keep up with. Geopolitically important, strategically just as significant, the non-European countries require particular commitment and diligence.

My meetings with diplomats from the countries I am responsible for, most of them African and Arab states, made it possible for me to learn about new cultures, traditions, religions and philosophies. I learned a great deal about the politics and history of those faraway countries, their influence in the world, their relations with one another, and their cooperation with Macedonia.

I have always wondered what makes a diplomat successful and remembered. I

may still not have found the answer to that question yet I do know that a diplomat must never be ordinary. On the contrary, they should have an innate charisma, personality, amiable approach and ability to balance, all of which should be complemented with a great deal of knowledge and an unusual capacity for spotting details. A diplomat's job is to open many new doors, while never closing those opened before.

The ambitions and expectations of a young person at the very beginning of their career, in diplomacy in particular, are great. Over time, ambitions have to be lived up to and driven further up in many respects. It is often said that diplomacy is a form of art and therefore I trust that it is particularly suitable for open, communicative and creative personalities, hence the appeal I see in this profession that offers so many opportunities.

I hope I will be afforded an opportunity in near future to expand the experience I have so far gained as a career diplomat at some of the diplomatic missions or consular posts of the Republic of Macedonia.

Marija PRGOMET FIDANOVA
Sector for Bilateral Relations
with Eurasia, Africa,
the Middle East and South Asia

36TH MANAKI BROTHERS INTERNATIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHERS' FILM FESTIVAL

Gjorge Ivanov.

The Golden Camera 300 Special Award for Outstanding Contribution to Cinema went to actors Bruno Ganz and Aleksey Serebryakov; the Golden Camera 300 Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to cinematographer Ryszard Lenczewski; and the Great Star of Macedonian Cinema Award was presented to cartoonist and animated film maker Darko Markovik.

The festival opened with the premiere of Svetozar Ristovski's film *Lazar* and over the course of the following ten days 215 films were screened.

The highest Golden Camera 300 Award went to cinematographer Mátyás Erdély for his film *Son of Saul*, which the jury, led by Ryszard Lenczewski, described as "a film offering a new way of storytelling".

Under the motto "Film is Beautiful", the 36th Manaki Brothers International Cinematographers' Film Festival began at the Center of Culture in Bitola on 18 September. The event was opened by the President of the Republic of Macedonia,



40TH YOUTH OPEN THEATER

The 40th jubilee edition of the international theater festival Youth Open Theater (MOT) opened on the grand stage of the Macedonian Opera and Ballet on 23 September with the performance "Antes" of the Swiss dance group Alias of Geneva. "Barriers" was this year's motto of the festival. The audience saw seven international and just as many Macedonian productions, and attended the promotion of the book "The Power of Theater: 40 Years of MOT" by MOT's honorary president Ljubiša Nikodinovski-Biš. The festival closed on 28 September.

NATIONAL ARTIST TITLE AWARDED TO ANA DURLOVSKI

Ana Durlovski, Macedonia's opera singer of international standing, has been declared a national artist. She was awarded this highest national title by Macedonian

President Gjorge Ivanov. Durlovski has conquered European and world stages promoting the Republic of Macedonia as a country of supreme artists making their country known globally through their work. Following Simon Trpčevski, Milčo Mančevski, Esma Redžepova and Boris Trajanov, she is the fifth recipient of the national artist award. Over the course of her career, she played lead roles on the prestigious stages of Moscow, Vienna, Berlin, Madrid, Lausanne and all the countries of the region.



MDB would like to extend a warm welcome and wish a successful diplomatic mission in the Republic of Macedonia to:

H.E. Mr. Phoukhao PHOMMAVONGSA, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, resident in Vienna

H.E. Mr. Pedro Pablo San JORGE RODRIGUEZ, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Cuba, resident in Sofia

H.E. Mrs. Orietta CAPONI, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, resident in Sofia