

**DECLARATION OF MACEDONIAN SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE  
ON THE NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH  
TO INTERSTATE RELATIONS WITH MACEDONIA**

Macedonian Scientific Institute (MSI), bringing together the intellectual potential of scientists and academicians, knowledge of politicians, diplomats, lawyers and public figures, permanently monitors and analyzes social and political processes in Macedonia, Macedonia foreign policy and in particular the behaviour of the political top in Skopje to interstate relations with Bulgaria. The analysis, conducted in early March 2015, outlines a problematic picture of bilateral relations in general and in particular the opportunities for their near future normalization, for good neighbourliness and forthcoming cooperation within the European Union.

Since the establishment of the independence of the Republic of Macedonia in 1991 the government, including the party of Nikola Gruevski – Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (IMRO – DPMNU), not only inherit the hostile line towards Bulgaria and the Bulgarians on its territory, adopted during the former Yugoslavia, but also deepen the differences between the two countries which is confirmed also by the new doctrine of “antiquisation”. Today, with political and diplomatic activity and massive propaganda domestically and internationally, the thesis is promoted that in the geographical region of Macedonia historically dominated “Macedonian” ethnic group that formed a “Macedonian” nation, with “Macedonian” ethnic minorities in neighbouring countries, including Bulgaria. With such a policy and specific behaviour in relation to the idea of signing the Contract for good neighbourliness with Bulgaria, Skopje government makes it clear that they do not intend to make any compromise or retreat from the positions adopted, which nourish both their own beliefs and illusions and expectations internally and internationally, that Bulgaria is a country that should retreat and compromise, i.e. to sacrifice their basic state and national interests in favour of Macedonism. Moreover, a work is actively done for internationalization of bilateral issues with suggestions to Brussels and Washington to pressure and condemnation of Bulgaria and its policy on the Macedonian issue.

Unfortunately, the government in Skopje do not consider real gravity of the problems between the two countries created through no fault of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian people; do not approach statesmanlike responsibly the proposals from Sofia, the compromises and tolerance demonstrated in the name of good neighbourliness in regards to implanted, for decades in Macedonia, language of hatred and hostility against Bulgaria and Bulgarians. With the absurd claim – Bulgaria to recognize the existence of a “Macedonian nation” of historical continuity from Antiquity and the Middle Ages and “Macedonian national minority” in the Pirin region, they follow a policy of separation and alienation of the Bulgarians from both sides of the border. Skopje is obviously afraid of good neighbourliness, which could open the border for comprehensive cooperation and free communication of the population of the two countries and undermine the foundations of the macedonist doctrine.

As it is known, the Republic of Bulgaria the first recognized the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, declared its readiness for all-round development of interstate relations, made considerable political and diplomatic efforts for Macedonia recognition by other countries, as well as strengthening Macedonia positions as a subject in international relations.

Bulgaria gave grants to the new state at critical moments for its survival and stabilization, especially in the blockade with trade embargo in 1994-1995, and in the internal ethnic conflict in 2001.

Bulgaria proved, for a quarter century, that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Macedonia, does not interfere in its internal affairs and in its foreign policy orientation. Bulgaria has maintained a neutral stance on a number of open questions which the Republic of Macedonia is solving in respect to other neighbouring countries. Bulgaria does not interfere in the dispute between Athens and Skopje about the name, although the two countries do not always adhere to the historical, ethnic and political realities associated with the geographical region of Macedonia.

Bulgaria allowed the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia with proven Bulgarian ethnic to receive Bulgarian citizenship according to the established procedure by the state, taking into account their special status in the new country-candidate member of the EU and cherishing their right to seek personal and family security, to maintain contact with their relatives in Bulgaria, to educate in Bulgarian schools and communicate with Bulgarian culture and art, to seek solutions to their social and economic problems.

Bulgaria is offering to Macedonia, for two decades, an intergovernmental agreement for good neighbourliness reflecting the general political will to find a solution to the problematic issues accumulated from World War II until today, being the only condition for support membership of the new country in NATO and the EU.

Meanwhile, Bulgaria's policy towards the Republic of Macedonia gives the impression of hesitancy, defensiveness and ambiguity both for Bulgarian public and the Bulgarians abroad, including those in the Republic of Macedonia and its partners in the EU and NATO. Bulgaria avoids openly pointing out what the real problems are in relations with Macedonia and publicly condemning the appropriation of Bulgarian heritage and discrimination of ethnic Bulgarians in Macedonia. It is not clear what efforts are underway to convince EU partners and NATO and other members of the international community in the merits of the Bulgarian arguments.

Macedonian Scientific Institute, since its recovery in 1990, has repeatedly insisted on the reevaluation of the policy to government in Skopje. Today MSI believes that a critical moment has been reached in international relations with Macedonia, requiring a new approach in Bulgarian policy, an approach free of complexes and conformism. Bulgaria should react adequately to the demonstration and challenging efforts of the political top in the Republic of Macedonia to continue the course of forming the new nation on anti-Bulgarian basis by accepting and defending, at the highest state level, both in negotiations with the government in Skopje and in the politico diplomatic activities internationally, primarily with NATO partners and the EU, the following positions:

- Bulgaria cannot and will not accept, in the Republic of Macedonia, contrary to accepted European norms and standards, the Bulgarian history to be falsified, as documented and known to civilized peoples; the created for centuries Bulgarian material and spiritual, cultural and historical Heritage to be robbed and destroyed; total discrimination of Bulgarians to be carried out.

- Historical science has given irrefutable arguments that in the geographical area of Macedonia for centuries the dominant population are Bulgarians. On August 2, 1944, the Vardar share of Macedonia was proclaimed a constituent republic of Yugoslavia, without there being a "Macedonian nation", "Macedonian language" and "Macedonian Church". After that date anti-Bulgarian doctrine of Macedonism was imposed by institutional coercion and violence. Macedonia claims that in Bulgaria there are "Macedonian ethnic minority" are absurd and can only be qualified as unfriendly act.

- Good neighbourliness is an essential condition for EU membership required by the EU of the Republic of Macedonia. Bulgaria should not allow internationalize problems with Macedonia.

- Bulgaria is obliged to state that without concrete actions of the political top in Macedonia for recognition and condemnation of crimes against the Bulgarians in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia after the Second World War, without the inclusion of Bulgarians in the Constitution and in public and political life of the country with the same status and rights as other ethnic communities, without regard to academic research and the history books with historical truth, and without correction of media and information policy, nourishing hate speech towards Bulgarians, it will not support the membership of the Republic of Macedonia in EU and NATO. Bulgaria cannot accept that current bilateral issues with Macedonia tomorrow become problems of the European Union.

Macedonian Scientific Institute is, taking into account the actual state of bilateral relations, convinced that the drafting and signing of the Contract for good neighbourliness with Macedonia as a political document adopted by consensus at the highest government level, is an important nation-wide priority. To fulfil its purpose, it is necessary that simultaneously with this document a "Road map" be signed for the normalization of bilateral relations containing specific commitments of Sofia and Skopje pursuant to the Treaty and the timing of their implementation. The Bulgarian public should promptly be informed about the contents of the two documents proposed by the Bulgarian side, and also our partners in the EU and NATO.