

EU-FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

**12th meeting
26-27 November 2014
Strasbourg**

Statement by the Co-Chairs

The EU - former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Joint Parliamentary Committee held its 12th meeting in Strasbourg on 26-27 November 2014 under the joint Chairmanship of Mr Alojz PETERLE (EPP, Slovenia) and Mr Kenan HASIPI (DPT, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

The Co-Chairs underline the importance of the JPC as an important platform of inter-parliamentary contacts and discussions and welcome the organisation of the 12th JPC meeting in the new mandate, after elections to both parliaments.

At this meeting, the Committee held an exchange of views with Mr Fatmir BESIMI, Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mr Jean-Eric PAQUET, on behalf of the European Commission, Mr Eduard AUER, on behalf of the European External Action Service and Mr Ivo VAJGL, standing rapporteur of the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee on the Commission's Progress Report. The Joint Parliamentary Committee exchanged views on the following subjects:

- European Union - former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia relations;
- Political situation in the country after the early parliamentary elections in 2014;
- Rule of law, reforms in the field of judiciary and public administration, and fight against corruption;
- Freedom of expression and media;
- Economic and financial developments;
- Good neighborly relations and regional cooperation within the SEECP context.

The Co-Chairs point out that the JPC will strive to make a genuine contribution to the accession process and indicate that they will put all their efforts to improve the overall political context, and in search of the way out from the current delay in the enlargement process.

The Co-Chairs are looking forward to working in the format of a fully functional JPC with proper representation of all parliamentary parties. In that sense, they encourage both the government and opposition to ensure that the political debate takes place in the parliament, as a precondition for an open and constructive dialogue and achieving concrete results.