

**Question for written answer E-001030/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Angel Dzhambazki (ECR)**

Subject: Hate speech in the Skopje media – article entitled ‘Bulgarian Bug\*ers’ published on an Internet portal

Article 11(6) of the Treaty on Good Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of North Macedonia states:

‘The two Contracting Parties will take effective measures to prevent malicious propaganda by institutions and agencies and will discourage acts of private entities aimed at instigating violence, hatred or other similar acts which would harm their relations.’

On 3 February 2022, an article entitled ‘Bulgarian Bug\*ers’ was published. The text of the article is filled with hate towards Bulgaria, including towards initiatives to bring people on either side of the border closer together by showing that the two countries share a common history, language and past. Rather than looking for common ground between people from the two countries, media space is being granted to writers of vicious articles like these which repeat the lie that there was fascism in Bulgaria. That is categorically untrue. One should remember that it was precisely the Kingdom of Bulgaria which saved Jews rather than sending them to the death camps.

Hate speech towards Bulgarians has become the norm, and the Macedonian authorities are taking no measures to stop it, which is a breach of the above-mentioned clause in the Treaty.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission support the use of such language towards Bulgaria and Bulgarian society?
2. Does the Commission consider that the Republic of North Macedonia should be able to open EU membership negotiations without complying with the Treaty on Good Neighbourliness with Bulgaria?