

**Question for written answer E-002131/2022  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Angel Dzhambazki (ECR)**

**Subject:** Arson attack on the Bulgarian Cultural Centre in Bitola

The 'Ivan Mihaylov' Bulgarian Cultural Centre was officially opened in Bitola, North Macedonia, on 16 April 2022. During the opening ceremony there were anti-Bulgarian demonstrations, which the Prime Minister and President of the Republic of North Macedonia described as provocation.

Today, 4 June 2022, this Bulgarian Cultural Centre, which was to serve to build a bridge of friendship between people in North Macedonia and Bulgaria, has been set on fire. This is an unacceptable, but also symbolic, attack. This act of hatred simply is an illustration and evidence of what is happening in the Republic of North Macedonia. The hate speech used by politicians and public figures against Bulgaria and Bulgarians, as well as their continual discrimination, is what leads precisely to this kind of monstrous act.

The falsification of history, hate-filled rhetoric, discrimination and the total ignoring of these issues by the Skopje authorities are a trigger for such acts of hatred.

In view of this, can the Commission state:

1. What action it will take to oblige the Skopje authorities to abide by the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourhood and Cooperation?
2. Whether it considers that, given this trampling underfoot of human rights and spreading of hatred, the Republic of North Macedonia is in a position to start accession negotiations?