

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001411/24
to the Commission
Emmanouil Kefalogiannis (PPE)
(24 July 2024)**

Subject: Unacceptable statements and actions by the new political and State leadership of Skopje

The new political and State leadership of Skopje, one of the countries applying for membership of the EU, is, through its continual statements, violating the substance of erga omnes obligations, and choosing to use a name other than the constitutionally defined name for domestic use. In addition to that, recently, as stated in a post by the presidency on the subject, the president met with the alleged representatives of the ‘child refugees from Macedonia of the Aegean’, with whom she discussed ‘the celebrations marking the 75th anniversary of the expulsion of the Macedonians of the Aegean’. This marks a return to unhistorical acts that suggest an irredentist attitude, thus moving her country further and further away from the good neighbourly relations that constitute the core of the European *acquis* and international law.

This is a policy that flies in the face of European principles and the decisions taken by consensus by all Member States, of international commitments, and, above all, of Skopje's citizens, who have very clearly expressed their wish for their country to join the EU.

In view of this:

What comments does the Commission have on the above-mentioned unacceptable statements and actions by the new political and State leadership of Skopje, and what impact will they have on the country's path to accession?

Submitted: 24.7.2024

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(16 October 2024)**

The Prespa Agreement between Greece and North Macedonia, signed in June 2018, resolved a long state dispute between the two countries and aimed at strengthening cooperation.

The Commission reiterates the importance of the Prespa Agreement, which is binding under international law and sets an example of reconciliation for the Western Balkans and beyond.

The Commission regrets statements and actions in violation of the Prespa Agreement, notably statements that were made by the authorities of North Macedonia not using the constitutional name of the country.

As recalled in the December 2023 Council conclusions ⁽¹⁾ and in the 2023 Commission enlargement package on North Macedonia ⁽²⁾, the Prespa Agreement needs to be implemented in good faith by all parties.

All parties have to date publicly confirmed their commitment to abide by the agreement. Good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation remain essential elements of the enlargement process.

The Commission recalls the importance of full respect for existing, legally binding agreements, including the Prespa Agreement with Greece.

The Commission will continue to call for adherence to such bilateral agreements. The EU is actively addressing the matter with the authorities of North Macedonia ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-16707-2023-INIT/en/pdf>

⁽²⁾ SWD(2023) 693 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=SWD:2023:693:FIN>

⁽³⁾ European External Action Service, Statement by the spokesperson on the use of the constitutional name by the new President in her address at the swearing in ceremony, 12 May 2024, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/north-macedonia-statement-spokesperson-use-constitutional-name-new-president-her-address-swearing_en