



Provisional edition

Wednesday 22 June 2022, morning

Official report of debates

Debate: Preventing and combating antisemitism in Europe

Mr Aleksandar NIKOLOSKI (North Macedonia, EPP/CD): Thank you very much.

I would like to support the report that was presented today. I think these challenges are still faced in front of us. As you might know, there was a big community mainly in Skopje but as well in Macedonia, that unfortunately, during the the Second World War, mainly most of the people that lived in Skopje, actually over 90 per cent were deported to Treblinka at that time to the death camps. Now there is a small community, but we built a museum of the Holocaust, one of the few that are around Europe in the very centre of the city where we would like to commemorate the victims.

One other thing I would like to raise connected with this, but as well, with the present times. You all know that Macedonia has a huge problem with Bulgaria over starting accession talks with the European Union. One of the key issues that we are facing is connected with the history and as well with the denial of the Bulgarian state that during the Second World War they were the ones who occupied nowadays Macedonia. They were the ones who, unfortunately, organised the expulsion of the Jewish community. They were the ones who sent them to Treblinka. What we are asking for from them is to commemorate this and to acknowledge that it happened. Unfortunately, what we see is complete denial and, by using the force of membership into the European Union, pushing us to reverse the history in a way to open accession talks. Believe it or not, what we are asking for is to change the history, to change the identity of the land of the nation, even to speak about the language, only to start accession talks with the European Union, using their membership into the European Union to rewrite history in a more, I would say polite way, from them, but in a way that is completely false, that is not true and that is against the history and against what happened during the Second World War.

I would like to ask here from Strasbourg, that this practice be changed. This week there is a European Council happening in Brussels where there will be a meeting as well with the leaders of the Western Balkans. I ask Bulgaria to change their behaviour to allow the opening accession talks and to face the reality, to face their historic problems but as well to face history as it is and to face that there is a nation that exists on their border, which is called the Macedonian nation and a state that is Macedonian. Only by accepting the common values can we go further. A step that the Bulgarian prime minister can do is to come to the Museum of the Holocaust in Skopje and ask for one big story from the victims.

Thank you.

In this report:

1. Speeches in English, French, German and Italian are reported in full in English.
2. Speeches in other languages are summarised from the interpretation and indicated by an asterisk (*).
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