



ЗДРУЖЕНИЕ НА ДИПЛОМИРАНИ СТУДЕНТИ  
ОД РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА НА  
ЕВРОПСКИОТ ЦЕНТАР ЗА БЕЗБЕДНОСНИ СТУДИИ  
„ЏОРџ К. МАРШАЛ“ - С К О П Ј Е



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### from the forum

“THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA IN THE RUN-UP TO THE NATO SUMMIT IN LISBON:  
ACTIVE PARTNER OR FULLY-FLEDGED MEMBER”

### organized by

The Association of Macedonian Alumni of  
the “George C. Marshall” European Center for Security Studies,

**Skopje, 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2010**

As part of its 2010 program, the Association of Macedonian Alumni of the “George C. Marshall” European Center for Security Studies held a forum entitled “*The Republic of Macedonia in the run-up to the NATO Summit in Lisbon: Active Partner or Fully Fledged Member ?*” at the Army House in Skopje. Numerous members of the association attended the event, along with representatives of the media, NGO’s, ministries and government agencies.

The forum began with welcoming remarks from the president of the association, Prof. Dr. Stojan Slaveski. The audience also heard brief remarks from Mr. Emil Dimitrov, deputy Defense Minister in the government of the Republic of Macedonia, H.E. Mr. Philip Ricker, U.S. ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia, and Ms. Barbara Wither from the “George C. Marshall” European Center for Security Studies.

During the working part of the forum, presentations were given by: Prof. John Krindler from the ECSS “George K. Marshall”, Prof. Dr. Stojan Kuzev from the European University, Skopje and Prof. Dr. Zoran Ivanovski, Chancellor of the European University, Skopje.

The goal of the forum was to review and analyze the current position of the Republic of Macedonia in the run-up to the NATO Summit, to contribute to the efforts of the state institutions for our country's integration into the Alliance, and to encourage the resolution of certain issues which impede the country's integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures. The forum provided an opportunity for academic and other experts to present their opinions for discussion by association members and other prominent experts. The event proved a useful forum, yielding a critical assessment and recommendations for intensifying efforts for Macedonia's full integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures.

Up until a few years ago, or more precisely until the NATO Summit in Bucharest, numerous conferences were held in the country in the run-up to the Alliance’s summits. The topics of these conferences dealt with Euro-Atlantic integration. However, little is being said in Macedonia about this forthcoming NATO summit, even though major decisions will have to be made concerning the Alliance's future development. Indeed, now that it is becoming clear that the dispute with Greece will not be

resolved before the end of the Spanish presidency – as the EU had urged – we are hearing more and more references to the Lisbon summit, but only insofar as it presents a new deadline for resolving the two-decade-long dispute with our southern neighbor.

As we all know, during the Bucharest summit two years ago it was concluded that the Republic of Macedonia had fulfilled all the criteria for Alliance membership. However, that was not enough for the country to become a fully-fledged member. The reason was the Greek position on the question of the name under which Macedonia would be admitted to the Alliance. NATO authorities expected a quick resolution. Therefore, the North Atlantic Council, the Alliance's highest decision-making body, which meets several times a month, was authorized to act on our accession, instead of waiting for a new summit, which only happens every two or three years. However, more than two years passed and another NATO summit was held, but the name issue with Greece has not been solved. As a result, the question has been raised as to whether a solution will be found and the country will become a fully-fledged NATO member with all the attendant rights and responsibilities, or whether it will become an active partner, like Sweden, Finland, Austria and Switzerland, which are not Alliance members but are very active as partners. Already, the level of Macedonia's contributions to NATO missions is no different from that of many member-countries. Indeed, if one looks at the size of our armed forces and the percentage thereof that we contribute to NATO peace-keeping missions, it will be seen that we are doing more than some NATO nations. But we don't have the rights of the NATO nations, such as the right to vote in NATO bodies, and, of course, we don't enjoy the security guarantees granted by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.

Another dimension of our relationships with NATO has to do with the Alliance's transformation process and the planned adoption of the new strategic concept at the November summit in Lisbon. This significant document, which is expected to mark a new chapter in the evolution of the Alliance, has been under preparation for some considerable time. We live in an extremely dynamic world, and NATO seeks to track all the changes in the security environment and to adapt its operational strategy to them. However, the question arises as to whether the Republic of Macedonia as a candidate country is tracking these changes and harmonizing its strategic documents with the corresponding documents of the Alliance. The Republic of Macedonia has adopted all the strategic documents which define its security policy, such as the National Security and Defense Concept of 2004 and the Defense Strategy, which was implemented this year. In the meantime one more significant document has been adopted: the National Security Strategy, which was supposed to be the link between the two previously-mentioned documents. Unfortunately, this document has been declared classified information and is therefore not available to the academic and expert community. This flies in the face of the Alliance's principle that the security policy of its member nations should be transparent. An additional problem is that NATO's original assessment that Macedonia has met the criteria for membership could be revoked if we do not devote sufficient attention to defense and if the reform process is brought to a halt. Recently published research by SIPRI (the widely respected Stockholm Institute for Peace Research) shows that despite the economic crisis, defense spending worldwide is growing, mostly due to engagement in Afghanistan. In contrast with this global trend, the defense budget of the Republic of Macedonia has shrunk, even though the ARM is participating in the Afghanistan mission. NATO headquarters has already admonished us on this matter. It goes without saying that in an economic crisis the government is the one that sets the priorities. However, the Administration must not shortchange defense. Furthermore, it needs to keep the reform process on track, especially if it truly wants to become part of the Alliance.

As time goes by, we may become exhausted by the prolonged wait at NATO's gates. This has two dimensions. One has to do with public support for Alliance membership. Public opinion polls show that this is falling, although with 80% still in favor it remains extremely high. However, if changing the name of the country is mentioned as a condition for membership, support falls off considerably. The other dimension is fatigue within the Macedonian government and NATO itself regarding the accession process. To recap: since 1999, Macedonia has been a part of the NATO membership Action Plan, which consists of a series of plans and programs aimed at fulfilling the standards for NATO membership. At the beginning we were part of the Vilnius group, consisting of nine aspirants that jointly worked on criteria fulfillment. Croatia joined this group later. Of this group, seven countries received membership

invitations at NATO's 2002 summit in Prague. Macedonia, Albania and Croatia were not invited. Later, these three countries established the so-called Adriatic Group. Once again, at the 2008 summit in Bucharest, Macedonia was the only one of the group which did not receive a membership invitation. It has now been a year since Albania and Croatia became fully-fledged Alliance members. Now, the new members of the Adriatic Group (popularly known as A5), Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina have received the membership Action Plan and will be sitting with us on the same bench in the waiting room. Already there have been suggestions that Montenegro is the most promising candidate of all and could easily become the first of the group to receive an invitation, which would inevitably cause new disappointment and fatigue in Macedonia. That being the case, the Republic of Macedonia urgently needs a new phase in its relations with the Alliance.

If we take into account the problems mentioned above, we are then obliged to tackle the issue of Macedonia's future relations with NATO: Does the Republic of Macedonia persist in its efforts to become a fully-fledged member of the Alliance, or does it seek another way to provide security and prosperity to its citizens? In the view of the participants in the forum, the best option for the future of the country remains its Euro-Atlantic integration. However, it is perfectly legitimate to raise the issue of other options. The current situation is not sustainable in the long term.

The Association wishes to express its continued readiness to participate in the activities of the state authorities regarding the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Republic of Macedonia. Specifically, we offer the government our intellectual resources in the work of creating and elaborating the state's strategic doctrines. We believe that the Association of Macedonian Alumni of the "George C. Marshall" European Center for Security Studies has again demonstrated that it is a significant element in the NGO sector: the Association has its own areas of expertise, but it can also draw on the pool of experts at the Marshall Center (Germany). The Association will maintain its commitment to analysis of the issues in the defense and security area and Euro-Atlantic integration. We affirm our readiness as a partner with the government to contribute our intellectual resources through the conclusions and recommendations of forums such as this one.

Skopje, 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2010

With respect

President  
of the Association of Macedonian Alumni of the "George C.  
Marshall" European Center for Security Studies  
Dr. Stojan Slaveski