



TELEGRAM DIPLOMATIK

ALBANIAN MFA NEWSLETTER

Meeting of the **US-Adriatic Charter Partnership Commission** held in Tirana



Ministerial Meeting of the US-Adriatic Charter held in Tirana on 15 December, 2014

The meeting of the Partnership Commission of the US-Adriatic Charter at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was held today in Tirana. This meeting was chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ditmir Bushati, in the quality of chairman of the US-Adriatic Charter during this year.

This meeting was attended by member countries of the US-Adriatic Charter: Albania, United States, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and its two observer countries, Kosovo and Serbia. The meeting focused on addressing topics such as the security situation in the Western Balkan region, strengthening of regional cooperation among A-5 member and observer countries, aiming at the

Minister Bushati holds **bilateral meetings** in the framework of **NATO Ministerial**

In the framework of the NATO Ministerial held in Brussels, Minister Bushati met with his Greek counterpart Evangelos Venizelos and that of the Netherlands, Bert Koenders.

During the meeting, the two Ministers welcomed the progress made in terms of bilateral relations and commended the finding of a solution to the issue of toponyms, as a concrete proof of the willingness to move forward and as a matter of direct impact on the citizens.

The two Ministers praised the reactivation of bilateral commissions, as real mechanisms to resolve issues faced by citizens and as catalysts which serve the building of mutual trust between the parties. They underlined the importance of

addressing all issues within the new realities, in accordance with the spirit of good neighborliness and European affiliation of the two countries, which are both NATO members.

At the meeting with Minister Koenders, they assessed the current level of political relations and agreed to take further steps to boost the bilateral economic cooperation. Minister Bushati extended his thanks for the continuous contribution of the Netherlands to several important sectors in Albania and informed his counterpart on the Albanian Government's. At both meetings, Minister Bushati extended his gratitude for the support that their countries have provided to integration processes in Albania.

full integration of the Euro-Atlantic region. The meeting also looked through ways of intensifying regional cooperation and underlined the importance of expanding the Adriatic Charter to address common security challenges.

Underlining the progress of our region in the path of Euro-Atlantic integration and intensification of regional cooperation over the past 11 years of the Adriatic Charter existence, member countries reaffirmed their aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration and commended the important contribution provided in this regard by Albania, Croatia and the United States, in the quality of NATO member states.

In his speech, Minister Bushati, after illustrating current challenges to the security of our region and the contribution of Albania in facing them, underlined the necessity of further strengthening regional cooperation in order to face common security challenges, not only for our region, but also beyond. Apart from assessing the contributions of countries to NATO-led operations, particularly in Afghanistan, Minister Bushati highlighted the necessity of expanding the Charter to include other countries in the region, which will serve its full Euro-Atlantic integration as well as the consolidation of peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

Participating countries, after commending the work of the Albanian Chairmanship to the Adriatic Charter during this year, supported the necessity of further intensifying regional cooperation, with a view to effectively face challenges and current threats to regional security and beyond.



► MFA Secretary General Qirjako Qirko meets with Greek counterpart Anastassis Mitsialis.

In the framework of negotiations at the level of Secretary Generals of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Albania and Greece, the Secretary General of the Albanian MFA Qirjako Qirko received his Greek counterpart, Ambassador Anastassis Mitsialis. The high representatives of diplomacy praised the current excellent level of relations between the two countries, the recent positive trend to seek, find and elaborate solutions of mutual interest as well as the spirit of understanding which has resulted in a cooperation of significant and beneficial results to citizens of both countries.



In this regard, they commended the reaching of an agreement between the two Foreign Ministers earlier this May on the issue of toponyms, which enables thousands of Albanian citizens to move freely in Greece. Moreover, Secretary Generals Qirko and Mitsialis expressed their support for advancing the work and activities of several joint committees at expert level between the two countries, a work successfully launched this year and one which needs to carry on towards tangible results in relevant areas of cooperation. Counterparts agreed on the necessity to promote the realization of many agreements in the process, which will be translated into mutual benefits for both countries, in areas such as tourism, agriculture, education and culture, etc. and reiterated the commitment of relevant institutions to continuously contribute in establishing and strengthening friendly relations between the two countries.

► Minister of Energy and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan meet with Minister Bushati.

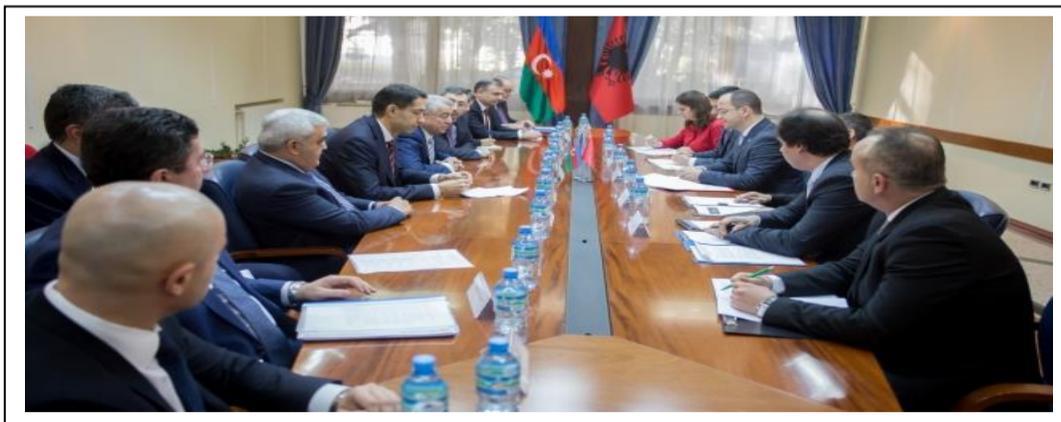
On December 19, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ditmir Bushati met with the Azeri Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Natig Aliyev, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Khalaf Khalafov and the President of the SOCAR company, Mr. Rovnag Abdullayev. The meeting was held in the framework of their visit to Tirana for the signing of the Memorandum of

Understanding between the Republic of Albania and the Republic of Azerbaijan "On cooperation in the development of the Gas Master Plan of Albania".

During the meeting, parties welcomed the signing of this memorandum, considering it as the starting point for concrete and substantial steps of cooperation in realizing the gasification process of Albania.

Minister Bushati commended the excellent level of relations between our two countries and expressed the commitment of the Albanian Government to intensify political dialogue through the exchange of high level visits and increase economic cooperation especially in the energy sector, taking into account the broad perspective offered by the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) project. Minister Bushati reiterated that this project offers a balanced distribution of energy resources in the region and beyond. Furthermore, he extended his gratitude to the Government of Azerbaijan for the support given to the TAP project as the most feasible and important one for Albania and the entire Balkan region.

The interlocutors shared the same opinion on the intensification of contacts and consultations between the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs. They also underlined that international and regional activities should be an important part of the on-going bilateral agenda.



► Mr. Bushati receives Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Peter Szijjártó

During the meeting, the two ministers discussed bilateral cooperation and the further intensification of good relations between our two countries. The interlocutors exchanged views on areas of bilateral cooperation, focusing on economic and trade collaboration between our two countries with a view to attract Hungarian investments in the Albanian market.

During their meeting, they also discussed the prospects of Albania's integration into the EU, particularly the accession negotiations after receiving the candidate country status. Minister Bushati praised the crucial role of Hungary in Albania's integration process, as well as its ongoing support to Albania for receiving the candidate country status. Furthermore, Minister Bushati highlighted the concrete steps that the Albanian government has undertaken to support the reform process and to firmly continue in its EU integration path.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Szijjártó praised the role of Albania in the region and assured his Albanian counterpart on the continued support of Hungary in the process of Albania's EU integration. Also, Minister Szijjártó assessed the reforms undertaken in consolidating the rule of law, which will positively impact Albania's further advancement towards integration processes.

In conclusion, an agreement on social protection was signed between the Republic of Albania and that of Hungary. At the end of the meeting, the two ministers held a joint press conference.



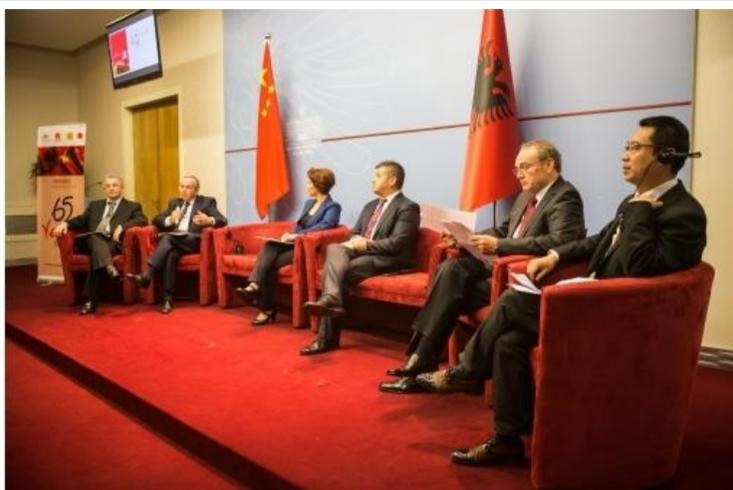
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania receives Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro, Igor Lukšić.



Minister of Foreign Affairs Ditmir Bushati received today the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro, Igor Lukšić. During the meeting, the two ministers exchanged views on the relations between our countries, the situation in the region and the future bilateral and regional cooperation in order for our countries and the region to be integrated into Euro-Atlantic structures.

The two ministers expressed their satisfaction at the excellent relations and close cooperation between Tirana and Podgorica, and they agreed to further deepen these relations in the spirit and the new climate of cooperation between the Western Balkan countries, to the benefit of both countries as well as the prosperity, peace and stability in the region. During their talks, both ministers commended the role of the Albanian community in Montenegro, as a linking bridge strengthening friendship and cooperation between our two countries. Parties highlighted the importance of the further institutionalization of political dialogue between Albania and Montenegro through high-level contacts and intensification of trade and economic relations. In the framework of bilateral cooperation and further integration of the region in Euro-Atlantic structures, Minister Bushati expressed support that our country provides to Montenegro in the process of NATO integration. Special attention was paid to cooperation in regional initiatives and organizations.

Diplomatic Agenda



"65 years of Albania-China relations" conference held at the MFA

On the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Albania and China, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Tirana organized the conference entitled "65 years of Albania-China relations". Attending the conference were former presidents, ministers, MPs, representatives of the diplomatic corps, representatives of NGOs operating in the field of foreign affairs, scholars, diplomats, students of international relations, etc. In his speech, Minister Bushati focused on the friendship between our two countries and peoples, which is particularly unique, for it relies not only upon diplomatic and economic ties, but also on cultural, artistic, educational and sports' relations. This conference was also greeted by the Ambassador Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China in Albania, H. E. Mr. Ye Hao.

The conference proceeded with the panel on "Albania-China relations: general overview on the historical, diplomatic, economic and cultural field; the present and future of this cooperation". In this panel, speeches were held by Prof. As. Petrit Nathanaili, historian, Hajdar Muneka, former ambassador of the RA in the PR of China, Alfred Peza, MP, member of the Parliamentary Friendship Group China-Albania, Iljaz Spahiu, journalist and sinologist, Xu Yongjian, Administrator of China Copper Corporation, Tirana. The 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations was also conveyed through the documentary exhibition provided by the Historical Archive of the MFA, the exhibition of mutual publications (National Library and MFA library), as well as the joint photographic exhibition (ATA and the Embassy of the Republic of China). The realization of this conference was made possible thanks to the help and support of the Chamber of Commerce Albania-China and the Albanian Post.

Statement of Foreign Minister Ditmir Bushati on the occasion of Human Rights Day.

Today is the United Nations Human Rights Day. December 10th, a day commemorating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, constitutes a moment of reflection and commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. Albania supports the universality and indivisibility of human rights. The best defense of our rights and freedoms is inextricably linked with the development of a democratic society. To Albania, respect for human rights is a crucial element for the consolidation of democracy, rule of law and increase of the role of the individual in society. Likewise, the respect of fundamental freedoms and human rights constitutes the cornerstone of the exercise of our foreign policy.

Our country has solid indicators in meeting human rights' standards, a fact well-known and praised by international organizations. Therefore, together with its international partners, Albania contributes in addressing international crises where freedoms, human rights and human dignity are under threat. This year, December 10th finds Albania as a first time-elected member to the Human Rights Council. The choice of Albania in this well-respected international body constitutes an appreciation and additional guarantee for a consistent commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. Albania has much to offer to the world through its characteristic values, such as religious coexistence, the commitment to peace and democratic stability in the region, tolerance and hospitality.



Albania granted observer country status at the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)



Albania was granted the observer status at the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The decision was announced today during the II Plenary Session of Great Britain's Chairmanship of the IHRA. The IHRA observer status enables all stakeholders and experts of the academic, historical, scientific research, archives, educational and cultural field of Albania to apply for national or regional projects that promote religious and community coexistence, tolerance, peace and raise awareness on the avoidance of bias on ethnic and religious grounds.

In her welcoming remarks, the Head of the Albanian delegation in this meeting, Ms. Albana Dautllari, Director of the Economic and Public Diplomacy Directorate at the MFA, apart from the Albanian contribution to saving the lives of Jewish people during WWII, put the emphasis on the excellent interreligious coexistence in Albania as an example of tolerance of our society, where values and principles of religion serve the further democratization of the Albanian society in its path towards European integration.

Economic diplomacy in focus.

The activation and strengthening of economic diplomacy is one of the key priorities of the Albanian diplomacy. At a time when this issue is at the core of agendas of most foreign services around the globe and they are customizing their external services in this regard, Albania cannot stay behind. Economic diplomacy, whose main goal is to promote economic opportunities, potentials and natural, human and physical resources of Albania, needs to coordinate the work of all stakeholders, be they private or public.



For this reason, several objectives have been identified, among which the improvement of our country's image with regard to the development of free trade and foreign investment industries with a view to enable the increasing number of foreign direct investments in the country as an opportunity for improving the economic climate and welfare. In this regard, the MFA will continue to work in order to promote economic potentials and opportunities of Albania, to raise awareness and increase the interest for international participation and investments in strategic sectors of the Albanian economy, to find markets for exporting Albanian products, thus serving their increase and better geographical diversification, as well as to boost the overall level of bilateral economic cooperation. The integration and coordination of economic activities, both within the Foreign Ministry as well as with our Diplomatic Missions in the world or other institutions, brings an added value to the transmission of the message that we seek to convey, increases efficiency by eliminating duplication and is more efficient in financial terms.

In order to achieve this goal, the MFA is focused on training its diplomats, keeping in mind that the increase of their professional capacities in economic terms will play an important role in properly advertising certain aspects of the Albanian economy and trade, thus enabling a dignified representation of our country in the world. The role of economic diplomacy is comprehensive and provides, among other things, commitments related to foreign trade and import-export relations, negotiation and reaching of economic and trade agreements, as well as cooperation to eliminate divergences and harmonization of standards in the economic field. With a view to promote foreign enterprise, the MFA has worked for the signing of several agreements that facilitate the presence of foreign investors in the country, such as the agreements on investment protection and avoidance of double taxation with different countries, etc., while bilateral agreements concerning free trade have been on the daily agenda of any diplomat's work for quite some time.

Another important aspect of economic diplomacy is regional cooperation, which constitutes a very important and growing dimension of the Albanian diplomacy in general. Practice has shown that national interests and the liberalization of national economies have been facilitated and significantly favored within the framework of mechanisms and instruments of a clear regional focus. The removal of borders and the opening of markets is achieved more easily and successfully in a regional context. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Directorate of Economic and Public Diplomacy will continue to cooperate with other ministries and chambers of commerce for organizing events such as the weeks of Albanian products, business forums, promotion of Albanian tourism, presentations and roundtables, etc., focusing on the foreign public, aiming to increase the presence of Albanian goods in the foreign markets and promote foreign investments in the country.

Ms. Albana Dautllari, Director of Economic and Public Diplomacy

Albanian Embassy in Kosovo promotes Albanian products at a gala evening in Pristina.

On the occasion of the season's holidays, the Embassy of the Republic of Albania in Kosovo organized the "Best of Albania 2014" gala evening at the Swiss Diamond Hotel in Pristina. This event aimed at introducing those present to some of the best culinary products coming from Albania, as a means of promoting our Mediterranean cuisine and wines. The food served during this gala evening, which contained organic products from Albania, was cooked by ten cooks arrived in Pristina from Blerimi Complex in Lushnje and was accompanied by Albanian wine from the Çobo winery and by Albanian sounds.



The event was attended by local politicians, the Diplomatic Corps accredited in Pristina, The Speaker of the Albanian Parliament, Mr. Ilir Meta, and his spouse, MP Monika Kryemadhi, the Speaker of the Parliament of Kosovo, Mr. Kadri Veseli, representatives of art, culture and media in the This is the first of many such events that our network of embassies is preparing to organize in the years to come and which aim to promoting the best values of our intangible cultural heritage, thus giving an invaluable contribution to the promotion of the image of the country, etc.

Turkish Airlines official Magazine **Skyline** promotes Albania as rising tourism destination

The official magazine of Turkish Airlines, *Skyline*, has recently published a lengthy article on the beauties of Albania.

This publication constitutes a major publicity for Albanian tourism, given the great number of passengers that run through the pages of *Skyline* every day.



The article, published in the December issue of the magazine with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Albanian Embassy in Ankara, describes different tourism destinations in Albania, such as Berat, Tirana, Kruja, the Albanian Riviera, etc., as well as the particularities of our culture and cuisine, thus providing its hundreds of thousands of passengers with a tourism destination worthy of discovery.

“What’s up Albania”, MFA interns publication



In the framework of Public Diplomacy, interns at Albanian MFA for the period October-December 2014, have taken the initiative to make a Newsletter targeting young people within the country and abroad.

This project, the first of its kind, is called *What's up Albania* and provides interesting information about Albania, accompanied by attractive images, as its main focus group are young people.

For more information please click on the link:

<http://ministriapunevejas.wix.com/whatsupalbania>

