



# TELEGRAM DIPLOMATIK

## ALBANIAN MFA NEWSLETTER

### ► **Minister Bushati** meets with **Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina Igor Crnadak**



Minister of Foreign Affairs Ditmir Bushati welcomed today the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Igor Crnadak, who is paying a working visit to Albania.

During the meeting, the two foreign ministers talked about bilateral cooperation, with particular focus on economy and trade. They underlined the need to strengthen such cooperation and expand the legal framework with a new set of bilateral agreements.

Moreover, ministers discussed issues concerning the Euro-Atlantic integration of countries in the region as well as recent developments within the framework of the Berlin Process, on the eve of the upcoming conference in Vienna.

Albania fully supports the Euro-Atlantic integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina and considers the German-British initiative and the entry into force of the SAA very important steps to bring Bosnia and Herzegovina closer to the EU. Meanwhile Albania, as a supporter of the 'open doors' policy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, supports the invitation addressed to BiH to join NATO.

In this framework, while discussing regional developments and contributions our two countries provided and continue to provide with a view to strengthening stability, security and consolidating the democratic progress and prosperity in the spirit of reliance and closer cooperation, Minister Bushati put the emphasis on the all-inclusive character of regional organizations and initiatives, as a necessity for the cohesion of the Western Balkans and the creation of the necessary synergy to meet our common objectives and aspirations.

In this context, Minister Bushati asked his Bosnian counterpart to support Kosovo's membership in regional initiatives like the A-5 and RACVIAC, as well as to recognize it as an independent state.

During this visit, the two ministers signed the "Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the mutual movement of citizens with Identity Cards."

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## Foreign Minister Ditmir Bushati pays working visit to the Kingdom of Norway



On July 17, 2015, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ditmir Bushati paid a working visit to the Kingdom of Norway, where he met with the Foreign Minister of Norway, Børge Brende.

During the meeting, Minister Bushati praised the support that Norway has given over the years through development project financing in our country, and introduced his colleague to the structural reforms undertaken by the Albanian Government to strengthen the rule of law in economy, with a view to enable and increase the inflow of investments, including those of Norway, in Albania.

Both ministers shared the view that the partnership established between the two countries will be boosted especially in the field of hydro energy, where concrete and long-term investments have already been planned.

On his part, Minister Brende praised Albania's active role in the region and encouraged the continuation of efforts in order to strengthen peace, interconnections and energy security, as components of stability and prosperity in the Western Balkans.

During his visit to Norway, Minister Bushati also held a meeting with the management team of Statkraft Company, present in Albania since 2007. Statkraft representatives appreciated the support of the Albanian government in boosting investments in our country and expressed optimism on exploiting existing potentials. In this framework, they praised Albania's stand as a country with a specific regional role in the energy sector.

## Minister Bushati meets with Greek Foreign Minister Nikolaos Kotzias

On July 14, 2015, MFA Ditmir Bushati held a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, Nikolaos Kotzias.

This meeting focused on addressing all issues relevant to historic and present bilateral relations between the two countries, regional cooperation and the European integration of the Western Balkans.

Among the main topics of discussion between the foreign ministers were the confirmation of the common European perspective and determination to advance the process of European integration of the region, the intensification of bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest, the revival of official high level contacts between the two countries, the willingness to collaborate and materialize regional development as well as energy projects.

In this context, parties talked about finding mechanisms that would lead to the legal dismantling of the war law.

Regarding the delimitation of the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone, parties agreed that initially, their respective teams should conduct a technical assessment and determine the modalities which will lead to the delivery of a sustainable solution.



If no agreement is reached, it will be required to address the issue within the norms of international law and the European spirit, oriented towards the mechanisms or instruments that can provide a definitive solution.

Parties also noted that it is time to take new steps, by revising the implementation of the existing Treaty of Friendship. This revision will serve to establish a new legal framework, so that specific problems can be solved through new mechanisms, in accordance with their real weight, and by taking into account all responsibilities in the region, the spirit of equality, mutual respect, far from any tinge of nationalistic rhetoric.

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Both interlocutors noted that relations between our neighboring countries should be oriented towards finding better, mutually accepted solutions between the parties for problems inherited from the distant or recent past, inspired and defined by the European affiliation and co-participation in NATO, based on the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, Good Neighborliness and Security and in accordance with the domestic legal framework of each country and the international law.

The two Ministers underlined the strategic importance of bilateral relations and reaffirmed that they will continue to be supported and guided by the principles of international law and European spirit.

During this visit, ministers Bushati, Ahmetaj and Panariti signed three agreements with Minister Kotzias on specific areas of bilateral cooperation, namely:

1. Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Resources of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of Reconstruction of Production, Environment and Energy of the Hellenic Republic "On cooperation in the field of agriculture".
2. Joint Action Plan between the Ministry of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of Economy, Infrastructure, Maritime Affairs and Tourism of the Hellenic Republic, "For the period 2015-2018 in the field of tourism".
3. Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic "On the acceleration of the integration process of the Republic of Albania in the European Union".

## ➤ **Ministers Bushati and Gjoshaj meet with French Secretary of State for European Affairs Harlem Désir**



On July 14, 2015, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ditmir Bushati and Minister of European Integration Klajda Gjoshaj held a meeting with the French Secretary of State for European Affairs, Harlem Désir

During the meeting, they discussed the prospects of Albania's integration in the European Union, in the framework of preparations for the opening of accession negotiations after receiving the candidate country status. Minister Bushati praised the important role of France in the integration processes and its continued support for the granting of candidate country status to Albania.

Ministers Bushati and Gjoshaj focused on the concrete steps taken by the Albanian government with regard to the reform process as a whole, focusing on the judicial reform and in particular, on addressing the five key priorities which will lead the country towards the opening of accession negotiations. By reiterating the continued support of France in the process of Albania's integration in the EU, State Secretary Désir praised the progress made in the reform process since obtaining the candidate country status, especially in the reform of public administration, as well as the French contribution in this process through twinning projects, such as the programs of the Public Administration School (ENA) and ERASMUS.

Praising the efforts to strengthen the rule of law, Minister Désir underlined the importance of the judicial reform, fight against corruption and organized crime, which would have a positive impact for Albania's further advancement towards integration processes.

The interlocutors noted the importance of Albania's European perspective in maintaining the momentum of reforms. They appreciated the complementary role of the Berlin and Brdo Process and the positive impact these initiatives have on the enlargement process and regional cooperation. In this context, Minister Bushati praised the commitment of France to hold the Western Balkans summit in Paris next year, as tangible evidence of the attention and interest of France towards our region. The interlocutors stressed the importance of promoting youth exchanges under the Franco-German model and highly appreciated Albania's commitment for the implementation of this initiative in the Vienna Summit.

During the meeting, the interlocutors praised the very good traditional relations between the two countries, extended in various areas of cooperation. At the same time, they put the emphasis on opportunities for further deepening and strengthening these relations, especially in the framework of economic cooperation and trade exchanges between the two countries, with a view to attract French investments in the Albanian market.

Secretary of State Désir praised Albania's role in the region and encouraged its continuation towards the strengthening of peace, stability and prosperity in the Western Balkans. Minister Bushati underlined the importance of coordinating efforts at regional and EU level, with a view to have a unified approach in dealing with common challenges in the field of security. On behalf of the French government, Secretary of State Désir expressed his gratitude for the support and cooperation of Albania in the fight against terrorism.

## ➤ Minister Bushati attends Croatia Forum on Energy Security



Minister of Foreign Affairs Ditmir Bushati paid a working visit to Croatia in the framework of the annual Forum, which this year was focused on new development policies and their interdependence on energy and security policies.

Minister Bushati participated in a special session of this Conference which addressed energy security nexus, along with Croatian Minister Vesna Pusic, Italian Minister Paolo Gentiloni, European Commissioner for Energy and Climate Miguel Arias Cañete and Special Envoy of the State Department for International Energy Policy Amos Hochstein.

In his speech, Minister Bushati highlighted that "energy policies are part of Europe's most pressing concerns, amongst security, democratization and migration".

Moreover, "as the constant conflicts in the South and East have shown, energy security has been transformed into one of the most important geopolitical parameters of third actors' influence in the Western Balkan region" underlined Bushati.

Referring to various projects presented over the years, which were considered essential for the diversification of energy resources in Europe, Minister Bushati noted that, "apart from the TAP, other projects are still virtual and used as tools of political influence, thus creating uncertainty in matters of bilateral and multilateral relations in Southeast Europe".

"These uncertainties call for a structured approach by the EU and the US to connect the energy islands of the Western Balkan countries and financially support the current efforts of the region in the realization of concrete infrastructural projects," Minister Bushati stated.

The Croatia Forum was greeted by the highest representatives of Croatia, namely the President, Kolinda Grabar- Kitarović, Prime Minister Zoran Milanović and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Vesna Pusić. Also, present at this Forum were the Vice President of the European Commission for Energy Union, Maros Šefčovič, the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica and the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg.

## ➤ Western Balkan Ambassadors round table hosted by the Embassy of the Republic of Albania in Washington DC



The Embassy of the Republic of Albania to the U.S. initiated a working table with Ambassadors of the Western Balkan countries accredited in Washington DC. The premises of the Albanian Embassy, this time, gathered WB Ambassadors for a working breakfast, as the first step to the establishment of a regional table which will serve to discuss issues relevant to regional cooperation. The meeting was also attended by the Director for Central and Southern Europe in the U.S. Department of State, Mr. Thomas Yazdgerdi.

During the meeting, Ambassador Faber proposed that this table become a tradition and an important tool for promoting the most important common objective of the Western Balkan countries, regional cooperation. In the framework of the Berlin process, Western Balkan countries are engaged in a very positive joint effort. Governments have already agreed to support initiatives aiming at interconnecting the countries of the region through projects in transportation and energy infrastructure, as well as through cooperation in areas such as youth, civil society and academia.

During the meeting, parties agreed that this effort should find a wider reflection in activities and meetings that promote this new spirit and the tangible initiatives that accompany it. They also agreed to promote our countries and their economic potential as a regional market, as well as the development of joint projects in the field of tourism. The primary goal of this joint initiative, which aims at the preservation and promotion of the dynamics of EU enlargement, is to be enticing to Washington.