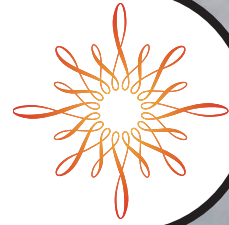


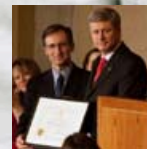
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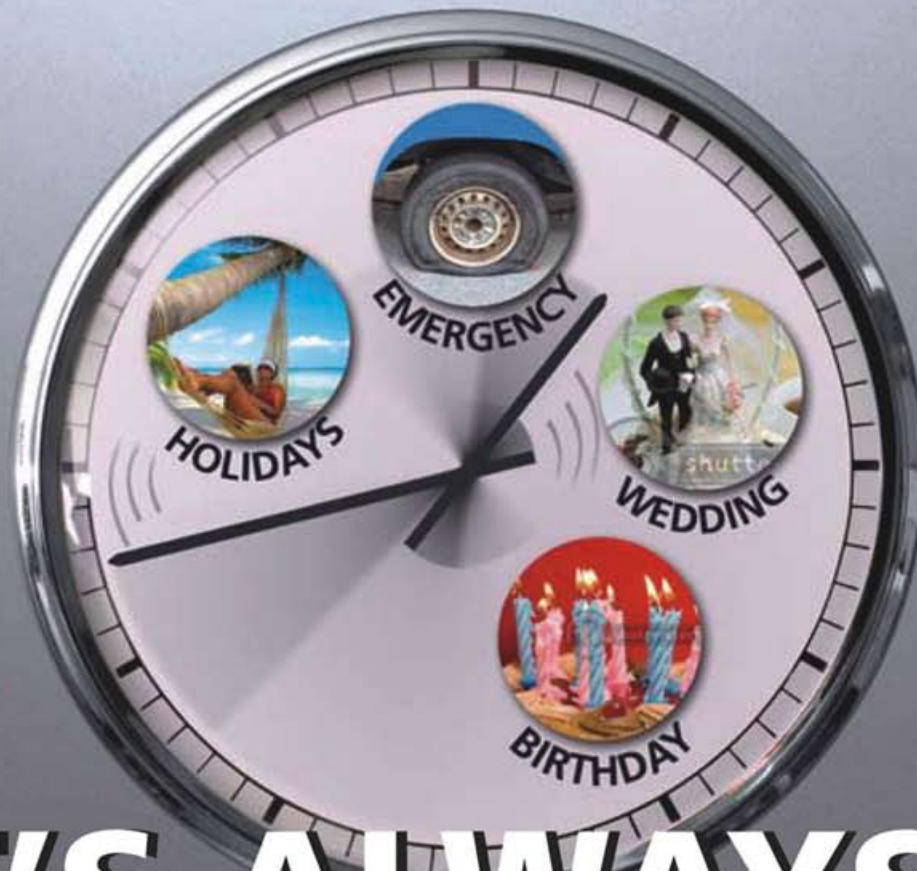
Fashion's Wizard of Oz: Toni Maticevski



UMD conducts exclusive interviews with Macedonia's leading presidential candidates



Canadian Prime Minister visits Toronto community



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United, we can make a difference. Join us!



**UNITED
MACEDONIAN
DIASPORA**

ОБЕДИНЕТА МАКЕДОНСКА ДИЈАСПОРА

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UNITED
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DIASPORA
ОБЕДИНЕТА МАКЕДОНСКА ДИЈАСПОРА

Founded in 2004, United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) is an international non-governmental organization addressing the interests and needs of Macedonians and Macedonian communities throughout the world.

With headquarters in Washington, D.C., UMD has representatives serving Macedonian communities around the world, including Berlin, Brussels, Canberra, London, Los Angeles, Melbourne, New York, Paris, Stuttgart, Sydney, Toronto, and Vienna.

UMD is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization.

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Letter from the President



Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 3rd issue of UMD Voice magazine! Our Editor Mark Branov, UMD Board Member Stojan Nikolov, and their dedicated team of volunteers have worked diligently these last few months to bring you this professional, informative, and quality publication. UMD is busy representing the global interests and needs of Macedonians.

I had the opportunity to meet Australian-born fashion designer Toni Maticevski, along with New York-based fashion designer Elizabetta Papuckoska, at Tony's show last September.

I was quite quite impressed with his enthusiasm for fashion and his interest in Macedonia. Read all about it in this issue.

With Macedonia's elections fast approaching on March 22nd, UMD conducted exclusive interviews with two of the leading presidential candidates, Gjorgji Ivanov of VMRO-DPMNE and Ljubomir Frckovski of SDSM.* Read about their visions for Macedonia's future, their opinions on the prospects for NATO and EU membership, and their comments about the importance of the Macedonian Diaspora. These elections are an important test of Macedonia's democratic development. UMD is calling for free and fair elections without intimidation, and we call on the government to do everything in its power to ensure successful elections.

For the past six and half months, Chair Aleksandra Trpkovska and the UMD Planning Committee have been preparing for our premier Global Conference, scheduled for June 11-13, 2009. Our primary theme is **The Way Ahead**; our secondary theme is **The Global Macedonian – United, We Can Make a Difference**. Both resonate perfectly with the wonderful program that we have planned for conference participants. This includes:

- meetings with members of Congress;
- a reception at the Embassy of Macedonia;
- luncheons on U.S.-Macedonian relations and human rights in South-east Europe;
- an evening boat cruise watching Washington, D.C. monuments;
- panel discussions on Macedonia's culture, language, history, and economy; and;
- a gala banquet featuring the Goce Delchev Macedonian Folk Dance Ensemble and the renowned St. Zlata Meglenska Women's Choir

Events will be held both in Washington, D.C. and in Arlington, Virginia at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel. See the detailed program of events, a listing of confirmed special guests, and a registration form in this issue.

UMD's Board of Directors and Planning Committee hope that you will join us to celebrate our collective success and educate ourselves on issues affecting the greater community. I personally look forward to seeing each and every one of you in Washington, D.C. for the 1st Annual UMD Global Conference.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy the magazine. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@umdiaspora.org or (202) 756-2244.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Metodija A. Koloski

*UMD reached out to all of Macedonia's presidential candidates but only Mr. Frckovski and Mr. Ivanov responded.

Letter from the Editor



Dear Readers,

At UMD Voice, we have at least two broad goals: to bring you a nuanced perspective on issues that affect the Macedonian Diaspora and also to portray the real Macedonian experience worldwide. I believe our Spring issue delivers on both counts.

In the latest from our biography series of Macedonian success stories, we feature Toni Maticovski, the world-renowned clothing designer. At just 32, Maticovski has already made a name for himself in the world of fashion. From his home in Melbourne, Australia, to the runways of New York, the sky is the limit for this successful entrepreneur.



No city in North America has a greater concentration of Macedonians than Toronto, and Canada's federal government has started to take notice like never before. On Goceva Vecer, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper honored Macedonian achievements in Canada at a gala 50th Anniversary banquet for the association United Macedonians.

All Macedonians seek peaceful Euro-Atlantic integration for the Republic, but this goal has been unjustly delayed by the empty rhetoric of Athens. In relation to this ongoing problem, our friends at the German-Macedonian group Korzo organized an important meeting in Stuttgart, discussing the next steps for Macedonia on the road to EU membership. Guests included MEP Heide Rühle of the German Green Party and Macedonian Ambassador to Germany, Dr. Gjorgji Filipov.

As always, we would like to thank you, our readers and friends, for your ongoing support of UMD. We hope you enjoy this issue, and we look forward to seeing you in Washington, D.C. this June, at UMD's first Global Conference.

Sincerely,

Mark Branov
Editor-in-Chief, UMD Voice

Comments

Hello Mr. Branov,

Thank you very much for this interesting magazine and for your engagement for Macedonia. It's encouraging to see Macedonians from the diaspora working for our dear country. Too often, our young people who emigrate for economic reasons assimilate so quickly that they lose their culture, and many have lost their confidence in the country.

Macedonia has serious problems, but they can be relieved with the help of the Macedonian diaspora worldwide. We need entrepreneurs to organize themselves and to invest in Macedonia, because the people need work and higher standard of living. This isn't easy, but there must be a way.

Thanks also to Mr. Koloski. Mr. Mitreski and to the whole team at UMD.

Anita Jovanovska
Switzerland

Mark,

I've come to the conclusion that we require acts of compassion, understanding, humility and forgiveness to those that have done us much wrong in the past and present. This way, we as Macedonians will evolve in peace and not in separation towards our cultural neighbors. It's difficult for many of us who have experienced wars and ethnic conflict, and the constant attacks by those who fear

us, and who fear the truth. But, it is time to stop "fighting fire with fire."

I would like to applaud the UMD's positive approach and its focus on the objectives at hand, whilst shrugging off the obstacles set by various professional lobby groups.

Robert Petrovski
Melbourne, Australia

Dear Readers,

UMD Voice is dedicated to providing an English-language perspective on all things Macedonian, and we strongly encourage your feedback, comments and suggestions. Please send your letters to:
editor@umdiaspora.org

Macedonia At The Front Gates of Europe

By Goce Peroski, edited by Mark Branov

On June 21st, 2008, the German-Macedonian Cultural Forum Korzo organized a public speech with the topic “Macedonia At The Front Gates of The Europe Union” in Stuttgart. In attendance were various dignitaries, including Mrs. Heide Rühle, representing the German Green Party in the European Parliament and Dr. Gjorgji Filipov, Ambassador for the Republic of Macedonia in Berlin. Korzo Vice-president, Mrs. Viktorija Gierer, M.Sc., welcomed the guests, of which the majority were Macedonians from the area of Stuttgart, but also Germans interested in the topic. A special guest from Munich was Mr. Andon Aleksoski from “Vinzhito” / “Rainbow”, the political party of Macedonians in Greece, and the speech was moderated by Mrs. Ina Rubbert, representing the Europe Centre Baden-Württemberg.

Dr. Filipov presented a short chronology of the relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the European Union. He emphasized that Macedonia became an official candidate country for membership in December 2005 and is expecting to start negotiations with the Union very soon. In addition, he informed the audience about the policy strategy of the Republic of Macedonia, characterized by the “three Cs”: consolidation, conditionality and communication. In order to reach its strategic goals, Macedonia adopted several documents: the national plan for the implementation of European law, an economic program for the pre-accession period and a national plan for a balanced regional development.

Furthermore, the Ambassador stated that Macedonia had carried out reforms in the sectors of justice, police and administration. An innovation is the introduction of biometric passports which give “visa liberation” hopes to Macedonian nationals who travel into the European Union. Besides foreign policy, Macedonia also has major messages for the audience. He added, in this context, the inter-ethnic relations are of crucial importance, as well as the dialogue between the political parties in Macedonia.

“A united Europe without the Balkans as an integral part of its construction is not possible”, was one of the Ambassador’s major messages for the audience and added: “Macedonia offers culture, nature, and stability at the southern borders of the European Union.”

Mrs. Rühle welcomed these Macedonian achievements. While she confirmed her support for the integration of the Republic of Macedonia into the European Union, she also argued that violent incidents during parliamentary elections in Macedonia had left a negative image with some. The Union is seeking answers about how this came to happen, and has expressed the hope that such incidents will not happen again. Ambassador Filipov stated that the police had taken action against those who provoked the incidents, and described the newly recruited officers as inexperienced and insufficiently prepared for their responsibilities.

The audience raised the question of the name



Photo courtesy of: Goce Peroski

dispute between Macedonia and Greece. Mrs. Rühle admitted that without a solution in the negotiations with Greece, Macedonia’s chances for a membership in the European Union were slim. Nevertheless, she stated she could not understand Greece’s position and the demands from Athens that Macedonia should change its constitutional name. “If Greece prevents Macedonia from becoming a member of the European Union because of the name dispute, there will be consequences for her in the European Parliament”, said Mrs. Rühle, though these consequences were not described in detail.

The Green Party has officially announced open support for the Republic of Macedonia on the web page of the European parliament. Mrs. Rühle suggested a forum for Macedonian and Greek organizations in order to talk with each other about the name dispute. Mrs. Rühle believed that both parties had to find a way to communicate with each other so that first steps could be made for a solution.

The audience expressed its disapproval of Greece’s policy towards Macedonia and argued that Macedonia had already made concessions. The country’s official flag and constitution were changed in the 90s to appease Greek protests, with very little conceded in return. This has created an atmosphere where Greece is no longer perceived as negotiating in good faith, but rather stalling the inevitable, while systematically oppressing its Macedonian minority in the north.

Mr. Aleksoski gave details to the audience about the human rights abuses that Macedonians had to suffer in Northern Greece. He demanded minority rights for Macedonians in Greece, and submitted a relevant resolution concerning the rights of the Macedonian minority in Greece, as well as documents from the Human Rights Watch Organization.

At the end of the public discussion, the audience had the chance to chat with Mrs. Rühle and Dr. Filipov personally, and the speeches were broadcast by Deutsch Welle Television. ✨

Cooperating partners:

Europe Centre Baden-Württemberg, Department of Culture - Stuttgart, Institute and Academy For European Issues

The German-Macedonian Cultural Forum Korzo was founded in April 2002 and is a registered non-profit organisation in Stuttgart (Germany), addressing the interests and needs of the Macedonian community in the German public at local and federal level.

UMD Board Visits the United Nations in New York City

By Stojan Nikolov

On February 2, 2009, the UMD Board of Directors held back-to-back meetings in New York City with the United Nations Missions of Macedonia, Mexico, Austria, the United Kingdom, Turkey and Russia; all countries which recognize Macedonia by its constitutional name. UMD also had a meeting with the UN Special Envoy Ambassador Matthew Nimetz.

The day began with a meeting with Ambassador Nimitz, the UN envoy mediating talks between Greece and Macedonia. UMD Board Members discussed Greece's ongoing issue with the name of the Republic of Macedonia. During the meeting, UMD reiterated its position that the Macedonian Diaspora objects to any changes to Macedonia's name, and, given the bilateral nature of this issue, UMD expressed its concern to Ambassador Nimetz over Greece's continued efforts to remove the term "Macedonian," in reference to the Macedonian people and language at the UN and within the European Union. UMD also stressed that it is inappropriate to permit a bilateral issue to impede Macedonia's membership into NATO and the European Union; Macedonia's membership, should instead be judged on the merits of its governance and reforms.

Later on, in a meeting with the Ambassador from Mexico to the UN, Claude Heller, UMD President Metodija A. Koloski, and Board Members Aleksandra Trpkovska and Stojan Nikolov thanked him for Mexico's recognition of Macedonia by its constitutional name. The status and concerns of Macedonian ethnic groups in neighboring countries pursuing full human rights was also a key point of discussion



UMD with Mexican Ambassador



UMD with Simon Hosking, British Mission



UMD with Russian Ambassador



UMD with Ambassador Nimetz

at this meeting. In addition, UMD encouraged furthering of Macedonian-Mexican economic relations.

UMD Treasurer Denis Manevski and Board Members Boban Jovanovski met with the First Secretary of the Austrian Mission Mr. Jürgen Heissel and thanked him for Austria's continued recognition of Macedonia's constitutional name and the support Austria has given towards Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic integration. UMD also expressed hope that Austrian companies will continue to invest in Macedonia. Subsequent to this meeting, Jovanovski, Koloski, and Manevski met with the First Secretary at the UK Mission, Mr. Simon Hosking and thanked him for the UK's strong friendship and support for Macedonia's entry into Europe and NATO.

Following a meeting with the Second Secretary at the Macedonian Mission, Mr. Vladimir Nikuljski, during which UMD Board Members briefed him on UMD's projects for 2009, Jovanovski, Koloski, Manevski, and Trpkoska visited the Turkish Mission and Cultural Center and met with the Counsellor Guln Dinc.

Before the end of this long and important day, Jovanovski, Koloski, Manevski, and Trpkovska had one last meeting to attend; they completed the day with a meeting with the Ambassador from Russia to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, who was personally involved in 1993 Russian decision to recognize Macedonia under its constitutional name. During the meeting, UMD thanked Ambassador Churkin for the strong Russian support Macedonia has enjoyed so far, and expressed hope that this support will continue. ✨

UMD Congratulates Australian-Macedonian Robert Bozinovski

By Mark Branov



Photo courtesy of: Robert Bozinovski

It is with great pleasure that we at UMD congratulate Mr. Robert Bozinovski on his election to public office. Bozinovski was elected to represent Taylors Ward, Brimbank, Australia in on November 29th, 2008. He joins Troy Atanasovski as the second political representative of Macedonian ancestry for this important district of greater Melbourne.

26-year-old Bozinovski was born in Australia to Macedonian migrant parents. A PhD in Australian Political History, Robert is active in the Australian Labor Party. For the past three years, he has worked in the office of Honorable Brendan O'Connor, the federal Member of Parliament for Gorton. Proud of his Macedonian heritage, Bozinovski is also a very proud Australian, and grateful for the opportunities that his family has been granted by their adopted home.

Bozinovski ran a strong campaign on a broad platform of reforms. Some of the key issues he stressed included the need to improve transportation in Melbourne's west end, boost public safety with more police officers on the streets, and invest in the recreational facilities, amenities and streetscapes of Brimbank. ✨

UMD Reaps Benefits Of Strong Canadian Support

By Mark Branov

On the weekend of November 29-30, hundreds of Macedonian Canadians congregated for a variety of activist events at the banquet halls of St. Clement's Orthodox Cathedral, in Toronto, Canada.

On Saturday night, there was a well-attended gala banquet in honor of the 25th anniversary of the iconic Makedonija newspaper, and 20th anniversary of the well-known TV program Macedonian Heritage Hour. On Sunday afternoon, there was also a memorable UMD fundraiser event with a keynote speech from UMD President Meto Koloski. A large number of prominent community leaders such as Jim Daikos, Bill Yancoff and Risto Stefov attended the Sunday speech, and numerous private citizens stood up at the microphone to declare their support for the work of UMD. UMD is very grateful for the substantial amount that was raised from donation in just an hour.

"Whenever I come to Toronto, I always feel at home. Nowhere in North America is there such a concentration of Macedonians in one place," Koloski said.

He continued: "A century ago, it was Goce Delcev, father of the modern Macedonian nation, who declared that Macedonia has its own interests and its own politics, which belong to all Macedonians, not to Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania or Greece... The enemies of Macedonia did not succeed in destroying us in the past, when our situation was so much worse, and we will not allow them to succeed now. On the contrary, we will work harder to prevail. In the words of Jane Sandanski, let the enemies of Macedonia be alive and

well, so they may witness our ultimate triumph..." he said.

"Starting back in 2006, Prime Minister Gruevski began promising to bring the issue of the Deca Begalci and Aegean Macedonians to the table, and did this on the world stage in 2008. It was an important event for all Macedonians across the world, and highly symbolic as well, because it came exactly 60 years after 44,000 Macedonian children were exiled from their homes by Greece, separated from their mothers and family forever," said Koloski.

"We call on the Prime Minister to continue on the path of seeking and defending the rights of Macedonians wherever they may live... We will always be Macedonians, and no one is able to change our name," Koloski said, to loud applause. "In April 2008, when Greece delayed NATO membership to Macedonia, that only increased the intensity of our work for the Macedonian cause," he said.

In parting, Koloski added: "We must continue down the path of Delcev and Sandanski, because there is much work to be done. I want to emphasize the need for all of us, like one unified Macedonian nation, to help one another, as this is how we will help ourselves, and attain the liberty our people have sought for centuries... We also need to invest in Macedonia, and in our younger generation, for they will continue our work."

UMD would like to offer our warmest thanks for the generosity of our Macedonian-Canadian brothers and sisters, and we look forward to expanding our work in Canada in the future. ✨

An Interview with Toni Maticevski: Fashion Designer and Entrepreneur From Down Under

By Elizabetta Papuckoska

According to Vogue magazine, Toni Maticevski is “one of the most talked about names in Australian fashion.” Though based in Australia, the 32-year-old has built an international name for himself within the fashion world.

From his upbringing in a western suburb of Melbourne with a large Macedonian community, Maticevski quickly rose through the ranks. He studied fashion in university, with grades at the top of his class. He then won the Fashion Group International Award, and worked for Donna Karan in New York, followed by two years in Paris with Cerruti. He launched his own label in 1999, and won the Best New Designer Award at the L’Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival in 2002. Maticevski’s work regularly graces the runways of New York.

Elizabetta and UMD President Metodija A. Koloski attended Maticevski’s Fashion Show at the Hotel Roger Williams during the NY Fashion Week on September 6th.

UMD: What first got you interested in the world of international fashion?

Toni: I think I saw pictures of Valentino and Cristobal Balenciaga as a kid and then I realized there was a career in what I had thought was just a hobby.



Elizabetta with Toni at the NY Fashion Week

UMD: What can you tell us about how you started out in the fashion business?

Toni: I have been designing under my own label for about ten years, but I have been drawing since I was about four years old, I am told. I worked for Donna Karan in New York and Cerruti in Paris, and also worked in Melbourne for many fashion designers such as Thomaiy, Myer, and Jane Lamerton. Working for yourself is better than working for someone else because it’s your baby, your ideas, your vision. I don’t miss much about the past, and I’m happy to be living in the now, not thinking too far ahead, just going with the flow for the moment.

UMD: What type of woman do you have in mind when you design?

Toni: I never think about it unless I am designing something for a specific woman. To be honest, I don’t analyze what I do. I think if I started to do that, I wouldn’t be doing it. When I’m working one-on-one with clients, it’s all about their personality, their likes, their life, their world, their everything.

UMD: Why do you prefer to present your work in New York, rather than Paris, Milan or other places?

Toni: New York feels right for what I’m doing. It’s a natural progression to leave home at some point. We all do this with our families, so I guess I do it with my work, instead. I love Paris, I love New York, and I love Australia...but its just that Americans are much more open to the “new guy,” I think!



UMD: As a brand owner, you are part businessman / part designer. How is do you manage the double role? Would you ever consider a business partner?

Toni: I have considered business partners, but I always decline it. I have to know everything that goes in and out of my business. If it wasn't my name, maybe it would be different.

UMD: Do you collaborate with other designers?

Toni: Not so much. I do a little with Denim Company Nobody Jeans. I work with my accessories manufacturers to get the designs underway. I have done collaborations with the Australian ballet and with Elemis for their in-store Spa Pods and I have also worked with Collette Dinnigan on her 10th anniversary show in Paris.

UMD: Would you ever consider a second collection at a lower price point, as other designers have done, to widen your distribution?

Toni: I do a line for Myer department stores throughout Australia that runs separate to the main collection and is exclusive to Myer, with prices in the \$250 to \$950 range.

UMD: Where is your line produced? Would you consider production in Macedonia while being based elsewhere?

Toni: Everything is produced in Australia at this point. I would definitely consider production in Macedonia. I guess I need to do my homework a little better.

UMD: Do you derive any inspiration from Macedonia, its folklore or traditional clothes?

Toni: I am familiar with it, as I lived in Macedonia as a kid for nearly two years. It was one of the best times in my life. I have this imagined reality about it now... a bit romanticized and ghostly. So I guess I do include that same feeling in my work.

UMD: I understand your mother is from Mogila, near Bitola. Do you still keep in touch with relatives there?

Toni: Yes all the time. I haven't seen them in a while but we communicate very often. I still have a lot of family over there; the last time I visited was 2000. I'm overdue for a visit.

UMD: What is your message to aspiring young Macedonian fashion designers?

Toni: I guess it would be: just do what you like doing most, and be open to everything. ✨

Fund for Macedonian Children Provides Blankets To Orphanage, Hospitals

By Aleksandra Trpkovska

Shortly after the New Year and Christmas Holidays, the Fund for Macedonian Children delivered 240 blankets to Bitola, Delcevo, and Stip. The recipients were the Pediatric Departments at the Hospitals in Bitola, Delcevo, and Stip, and the Orphanage for Babies in Bitola.

The blankets were a much needed and greatly appreciated necessity at each location. They brought smiles to children and assurance to nurses and doctors that they will be able to adequately accommodate each child in their care. The Fund for Macedonian Children was particularly proud of investing in the Macedonian economy by buying all blankets from the Macedonian Textile Factory "Tetek's."

The project, perfectly titled "Cold Winter, Warm Kids," was coordinated by the Fund for Macedonian Children of which UMD is the founding member, along with Splash of Hope from California and Macedonian Mission for Humanity (MMH) from Colorado.

Funds for this project were mainly raised online through Facebook and UMD's website and through collection boxes and donations at St. Kiril and Metodij Macedonian Orthodox Church in Hinsdale, Illinois and St. Nikola Macedonian Orthodox Church in Totowa, New Jersey. Every dollar donated for this cause was used in the purchase of the blankets; there were no administrative costs, as the project was undertaken solely by volunteers. ✨



*On February 9, 2009, the Vergina Restaurant in Naples, Florida unveiled a masterpiece painting for its dining room entitled *The Battle of Alexander the Great Against The King of Persia Darius III* by artist Professor Nedayborshch Volodymyr from the Academy of Art & Architecture in Kiev, Ukraine. Honorary Consul of the Republic of Macedonia, Lou Vlasho gave remarks. Prominent Macedonian businessman Risto Gusterov was also present.*

Canadian PM: Republic of Macedonia “Important Member of European Family”

Photos courtesy of: Dragi Stojkovski

By Mark Branov

February 7, 2009, Toronto, Canada - As the 137th birthday of Goce Delcev, and the 50th Anniversary of the United Macedonians, this evening was a historic event for the Macedonian-Canadian community in more ways than one. Hundreds of Macedonians and friends of Macedonia gathered for a gala banquet, but one extraordinary guest stood out from the rest: the current Prime Minister of Canada, Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper.

Prime Minister Harper is currently enjoying a wave of broad support and gratitude from Macedonian Canadians, as it was his government that finally recognized the Republic of Macedonia by its rightful name in 2007.

“Since the early 19th century, Canada has been home to a vibrant Macedonian Diaspora. Early immigrants left all they knew... and found both opportunity and

prosperity on our shores,” Prime Minister Harper said.

He continued: “Canada, in turn, has been enriched by the contributions of Macedonian Canadians... The same values that guide community members here in Canada are also inspiring your friends and loved ones living in Macedonia. Since Macedonia declared its independence in 1991, the country has made great strides in democratic and economic progress... proving itself an important member of the European family.”

The Prime Minister went on to laud the accomplishments of Macedonian Canadians: “As devoted family- and community-conscious neighbours, as enthusiastic participants in the democratic process, as hard working entrepreneurs, dedicated and accomplished professionals, each and every day, Macedonian Canadians are helping to build a stronger, better country for all of us... Not to mention padding out the front lines of a few NHL teams in process!”

This last comment was a joking reference

to various Canadian hockey stars of Macedonian heritage, such as Ed Jovanovski and Steve Stamkos. Prime Minister Harper is a noted hockey enthusiast, and is currently working on a historical book about the origins of professional hockey in Canada.

Other keynote speakers on the evening included United Macedonians President Dragi Stojkovski, and Hon. Jason Kenney, Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism. Due to prior commitments related to NATO negotiations, Macedonian Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski could not attend as planned, but he sent his warmest regards and congratulations to United Macedonians in an official letter. ✨



Macedonian folklorists with Canadian PM



Dragi Stojkovski with Prime Minister Steven Harper

U.S. University Offers MBA Program in Bitola

By Mark Branov

For the first time, an American MBA program will be offered in the Republic of Macedonia.

Franklin University in Columbus, Ohio has teamed up with St. Kliment Ohridski-Bitola (UKLO) to offer the degree, in which all instruction will be in English. In a recent visit to Macedonia, Franklin President Dr. David R. Decker met with UKLO Rector Dr. Zlatko Zoglev to participate in a formal signing ceremony, held in conjunction with the university’s celebration of its patron saint St. Kliment Ohridski.

Klaus Haberich, Franklin’s Senior Vice President for Planning and Global Programs, emphasized the role Franklin’s presence plays in assisting U.S.-based entities abroad: “American companies doing business abroad require well-trained, business-focused personnel to assist in their international expansion efforts. By providing Franklin’s MBA to students in Macedonia, these U.S. companies have greater opportunity for successful international growth strategies of their own,” he said.

The University St. Kliment Ohridski in Bitola (UKLO) is the second-largest state university in the Republic of Macedonia, offering more than 40 undergraduate study programs, more than 30 postgraduate study programs and three research institutes. The university serves more than 13,000 students each year. ✨

UMD's Letter to the President

The United Macedonian Diaspora extended congratulations to President Barack Obama on his historic inauguration on January 20, 2009, which several UMD Board Directors and members attended.

The full text of the letter from UMD follows:

Dear President Obama:

It is with great pleasure that we at the United Macedonian Diaspora congratulate you on your inspirational and historic inauguration as the 44th President of the United States of America. The entire world has been captivated by your uplifting message of hope at this time of global uncertainty.

Macedonian-Americans hope that the great bond of friendship between the United States and the Republic of Macedonia will flourish during your presidency and that our nation will continue its staunch support for the Republic of Macedonia in its efforts to pursue a policy of integration into the Euro-Atlantic Community.

The Republic of Macedonia has surmounted enormous challenges since joining the community of nations in 1991. Macedonia has implemented vital social and economic reforms and has been a devoted partner with the U.S. on a variety of U.S. policy initiatives, ranging from accepting large numbers of Kosovar refugees in 1999 to unstinting military support for the U.S.-led operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The United States acknowledged Macedonia's commitment to these common goals and values, along with its development of an impressive and stable democracy, when it officially recognized the Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name in 2004.

Macedonian-Americans are eager for leadership in the Euro-Atlantic Community that evaluates the candidacy of aspiring nations on merit. UMD looks forward to the day when, under your

leadership, the Republic of Macedonia is granted the membership in NATO that it richly deserves.

We join the rest of the nation in wishing you every success as our new President and we look forward to your initiatives to strengthen the U.S. role as peace-maker in Southeast Europe and honest broker in the ever deepening relationship between the United States of America and the Republic of Macedonia.

Sincerely,

United Macedonian Diaspora ✨



A Letter from Hillary Clinton



December 8, 2008

Metodija A. Koloski
President
United Macedonian Diaspora
6th Floor
1101 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Metodija:

Thank you for your letter of congratulations on my nomination as Secretary of State. I appreciate your insight on the important relationship between the United States and Macedonia and the challenges and opportunities ahead.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Hillary
Hillary Rodham Clinton



Resen

"The big apple"

Town Square

Above: In traditional dress, a group of youths from a folklore society in Resen lead a traditional dance through the town square to celebrate the beginning of the apple harvest. The annual apple harvest is region's biggest economic activity, and almost every family owns a crop. From October to November the town of Resen and the villages of Lake Prespa are quiet as residents disappear into the orchards.

Right: At the center of Resen's town square sits the 'big apple' atop a towering pedestal. The statue and the importance of the fruit have earned Resen the nickname "the big apple" among townspeople.





Resen Cultural Center

Far left: The Resen Cultural Center is housed in a historical building known as "Saraj" which was constructed during the Ottoman empire. The building's architectural style was inspired by the French Chateau de Versailles. Inside, galleries display local archaeological finds and several art exhibitions. The building is also a local hub for archaeologists working in the Prespa Valley. **Right (inset):** The Cultural Center houses the office and gallery of the Resen Ceramics Colony. Summer workshops conducted by the Ceramics Colony attract a crowd of artists from around Europe—many of whom donate a piece of their work for permanent display in Saraj.

The Bazaar

Bottom: Resen's outdoor marketplace is the center of trade for farmers, merchants, and craftsmen throughout the Prespa Valley. In addition to the apple, common produce in the region includes grapes, walnuts, peppers, and the wild blackberry.



The Macedonian Presidential Election: An interview with Gjorge Ivanov

By Stojan Nikolov, Edited by Mark Branov

Photos courtesy of: Ivanov Campaign

UMD: What are your domestic priorities for Macedonia? In foreign affairs, how will you restore momentum to Macedonia's efforts to join NATO and the European Union?

Ivanov: The function of president is an important one in Macedonia, and it has to be used to its full capacity. First, the new president needs to promote good relations with all its partners and friends in the international community. Second, he must unite and represent the needs of all ethnic, religious, cultural and local groups. The future president will be a cultural bridge for dialogue and understanding, reminding the country about the importance of representing all minority groups, and third, the president has to be a unifying figure, that will provide a forum for debate. The new president should create an atmosphere for constructiveness, where political visions will be in competition and not in conflict.

UMD: Some have said that Macedonia needs to improve its image around the world. What would you do to project a correct image consistent with Macedonia's national values and policy objectives?

Ivanov: Macedonia, in my eyes, is a respected partner and ally in the international community. It is a small country, which has invested vast resources into regional stability, and has shown a serious, long-term commitment towards it, as well as promotion of the principles of human rights.

Of course, there are people, in the country and abroad, that claim that the Macedonian image is not strong enough, or not clear enough or too fragile. But Macedonian society is modern and it bases its strength in its vibrant and democratic nature.



One of the things that will strengthen our image in the world is the overcoming of the obstacles on the road to integration in NATO and EU. Macedonia has to search for creative solutions to all problems, and stay on the road of regional security and cooperation. It has to continue to play an active role as reliable partner in the global quest for democracy, peace and security.

Finally, we have to explore all the aspects of strengthening our cooperation with our strategic partners and friends, and all relevant stakeholders in international relations. For example, we have to explore the wide ranging areas of cooperation affirmed in the strategic co-operation agreement signed between the United States and Macedonia. And, of course, the Macedonian Diaspora has to be at the

center of such effort.

UMD: Recently at Bucharest, Macedonia was denied entry into NATO and its progress toward entry into the EU has been halted, pending a resolution of the dispute with Greece over the use of the name "Macedonia." How, in your view, can momentum toward both objectives be restored in a way that is consistent with Macedonia's national integrity and vital interests?

Ivanov: There is always a chance for success! But success comes from optimism, positive energy, and an honest approach. Macedonia and Greece are and will always be neighbors. As neighbors they have to decide if they want to commit to active and serious cooperation toward common interest and progress.

I believe that the starting point is the shared interests of Greece and Macedonia for stability, economic prosperity and a European future in the Balkan region. But such a positive and shared vision can be realized only through friendship and dedicated cooperation.

As long as either side imposes its ideas and interests through pressure or coercion, we will not be in a position to make feasible progress on these complex issues.

UMD: Macedonia's domestic reforms are part of the metric that will be applied when its request for entry into NATO and the European community is considered. How do you assess the country's progress in such areas as corruption, judicial reform, and greater transparency under the law? In your presidency, what would you do specifically to increase the pace of these reforms?

Ivanov: The entire Macedonian society, the government, the local authorities, the judicial and civil sector, and the citizens themselves are strongly dedicated towards the Euro-Atlantic integration. The Europeanization and the democratization of our society is a constant and vital process. I am more than happy to see that the leaders of the process are the young people. Macedonia has a new generation of political leaders and successful young people in the business and civil sectors. In fact, many of them were my students. They are young people that I have educated in the spirit and values of the Western democracy, and they have continued their education and training in the U.S. and Western European universities. These leaders are the future of a strong, democratic, prosperous and European Macedonia. Many of these talented young Macedonians have already taken various responsible positions in the Macedonian administration, and many others have joined my presidential team. Surrounded with such competence, enthusiasm, professionalism and dedication, I cannot have any doubt in the success of my presidency.

UMD: When viewed through the lens of the current global financial crisis, what do you consider the key obstacles facing Macedonia's economy? Which comparative economic advantages does Macedonia enjoy at this time and how might they be enhanced? What specifically would you propose to reduce Macedonia's high unemployment rates?

Ivanov: The global economic crisis will have implications around the globe, and of course, in Macedonia. Yet, we were fortunate to encounter such

crises with a competent and prepared economic team in the government, and a strong dedication towards attracting foreign investments and creating a positive business environment in the country.

Though many think that the president has limited or no power to affect the economy, the new President has to address this issue, which is a great priority for most of our citizens. In my presidency, I will follow the legacy of the late President Trajkovski, who worked closely with the Macedonian business community to insure their interests in the country and around the world.

UMD: How will you optimally utilize the talents of young people in Macedonia?



Ivanov: Macedonia has already taken a fast pace in reforms and development. The young people have taken the lead and the first signs of success are before us. But we have to do much more.

The new President of the country has to promote the leadership of young people, their personal and professional development and their participation in social change and decision making. Therefore, I

have dedicated many important aspects of my program to the role of the young people.

First, we must consider education. As a person who has made his main professional accomplishments in the fields of education and science, I am strongly convinced that these are powerful social forces that are constantly and rapidly transforming today's world. Therefore, keeping the pace on contemporary trends in education and science is the main challenge for the Macedonian young people and our society, as a whole. I have promised in my program to work creatively on initiatives for promotion of the knowledge-based society. This is a guarantee for the personal and professional development of the young, but also the prosperity and happiness of all citizens.

Additionally, I have dedicated important parts of my program towards the development of positive values and leadership for our youth. As an important aspect of such policies, I have informed the Macedonian public about the project "School of Leaders," supported

and promoted under the authority of the Office of the President. This project is vital. Because, as we invest in the education of our youngsters to expand their knowledge, as we invest in our young businessmen and entrepreneurs, as we invest in our young sportsmen, and we are happy together in their victories, it is equally or more important to invest in young political leaders that will lead Macedonia toward success.

UMD: As you know many thousands in the Diaspora stand ready to help Macedonia. Please outline your policy to reach out to those Macedonians living overseas who wish to make contributions and help the government implement some of its policy reforms

Ivanov: The Macedonian Diaspora is a crucial element, which strengthens the position of Macedonia in international relations and supports our society. The Diaspora played the role of a major lobby for Macedonia in many states, and they are in communication with important stakeholders in international relations.

Therefore, I believe that the Diaspora needs to be given greater space within the domestic political arena. Especially, American citizens of Macedonian origin are in a position to bring information, know-how, and

political and business culture from the most developed society in the world.

Additionally, economic aid to Macedonia is an important kind of support, and the potential investors from the Diaspora remain crucial in improving the economic and political position of the country. However, as all investors, our countrymen from abroad have to be given strong guarantees of a stable and secure socio-economic and political climate. I will do everything in my power to make sure that these preconditions are fully met.

In this context, and in all my visits abroad, I will meet with Macedonian Diaspora leaders and major organizations bringing direct feedback. But this is not enough. As president, I would work with dedication, in coordination with the government, to ensure the active participation and representation of the Macedonian Diaspora in all aspects of political, social and economical development in our society.

For more information on the Ivanov campaign, visit their website at <http://www.ivanov.com.mk/> . ✨



The Macedonian Presidential Election: An interview with Ljubomir Frckoski

By Stojan Nikolov, Edited by Mark Branov

UMD: What are your domestic priorities for Macedonia? In foreign affairs, what issues will you focus on to restore momentum to Macedonia's efforts to join NATO and the European Union?

Frckoski: The domestic priorities are derived from the generally confirmed stand-still of democratic processes (as reports from all international NGOs point out). This stand-still is felt strongest at home. First, pressure is being exerted over the freedom of speech and the position of the media, and then there is the judicial reform and the partisanship of the public administration. More than ever, judicial reform is administered under party rules and pressure, thus turning this independent pillar into a vehicle of the system.

The fact that the country is unattractive for foreign investment, which is due to its status of an outsider

in the collective security system, is unsuccessfully compensated for by offering exceptionally servile and colonial conditions to all foreign investors in the country, so again there are no investments! The economic and social conditions of the country and its citizens are worsening rapidly and poverty and unemployment are at a record high. Today we are a nation under pressure and economic destitution; nation whose government gets richer while the people get poorer. The Macedonian deficit and foreign debt is the highest in our history; all the investments that the incumbent government promised have fallen through. Today we are witnesses to a fierce and uncompromising pressure on all the freedoms we thought we had gained: a ban on abortion is being prepared, movements promoting different lifestyles are being pressured and discriminated against, journalists are being charged for publishing critical commentaries in the media, and media are being



corrupted and controlled by the government. This has never happened before in Macedonia. Our citizens don't deserve this. And we have to stop this.

It is becoming clearer that our endeavor to join the EU and NATO – the integrative processes – are no longer the main priority of this government, but only an act. The current position of our country on an international and domestic plan is a “frozen status” for our integration into NATO. This situation is a result of the populist concept that by immersing ourselves in stories about our ancient roots we will solve the international

problems this country has today. On the contrary, this will only isolate us further. The government cannot and does not want to take responsibility for real negotiations in the dispute with Greece that is blocking our NATO integration. Outside of NATO, the foreign investments are more costly and less frequent. They bankrupt factories and turn our citizens into welfare cases. Today Macedonia has very few international friends who understand its position. Several years ago, we had many such friends. My priority would be the return of our former international position, opening the process of NATO integration and the process of negotiations with the EU. This, in short, is our ID on a domestic and international plan. The reason why I am running for president can be found in what I said above: winning the presidential elections as a major precondition for restoration of suppressed democratic values, restoration of productive and constructive co-habitation, return of the public debate in defining national priorities, especially NATO and EU integration, and preventing party manipulation of these values in the future. This will be the beginning of real success.

UMD: Some have said that Macedonia needs to improve its image around the world. What, in your view, has

affected the country's image and what would you do to project a correct image consistent with Macedonia's national values and policy objectives?

Frckoski: Yes, this statement is absolutely true. From a country that several years ago had the highest salaries in the region (only Croatia might have been ahead of us), now, after two and a half years of this government, we are on the very bottom, with the lowest salaries in the region. Additionally, we have never had a bigger foreign debt, and this process of accumulating debt continues. Our country suddenly

became a 'negative miracle' in the eyes of the international community. Due to partisan and amateurish foreign policy, we are seen as a country with insufficient potential for negotiating and building good relations with the countries in the region and a country that puts its own strategic priorities at risk. In this context, the manipulated euphoria and national focus on the heritage and descent from 'Ancient Macedonia' is additionally shaking the foundations of our nationhood, weakening our identity and making it susceptible to

being claimed by others. Our friends in the world think that now, after 15 years, we are no longer what we were. We made those friendships then, but we are now something different! This is the basis for Macedonia's lost international position, followed by the loss of many opportunities for foreign investment in the domestic economy. This political course of the incumbent government is just fuel for keeping Macedonia isolated.

In order to change this situation, it is necessary to reaffirm national priorities in the direction of integrating Macedonia into NATO and EU. In this sense, the solution to the problem with Greece regarding the name of our country depends on us. We have to fight for a firm international guarantee for



the Macedonian language and Macedonian identity. We need a 'gentleman's agreement' with Greece and in this sense I think that the term Northern or Upper Macedonia (as a substitute for FYROM) is not an unfamiliar and/or unacceptable option even for the firm believers in the idea of Ancient Macedonia.

The Republic of Macedonia needs a president who will conscientiously and responsibly uphold the Constitution and the laws and will protect the sovereignty, the territorial integrity, and independence of the Republic of Macedonia. As a future president of the Republic, I will invest all my strength and knowledge to return Macedonia's international position that was squandered by policies of stubbornness and isolation, ignoring the Euro-Atlantic integration and conflicts with our neighbors. Within my governance, I will provide for the implementation of the Constitution, the Framework Agreement, but also the spirit of that agreement manifested in the concept of a state and democracy in a multicultural society.

UMD: Recently at Bucharest, Macedonia was denied entry into NATO and its progress towards entry into EU has been slowed, pending a resolution of the dispute with Greece over the use of the name "Macedonia". How, in your view, can momentum toward both objectives be restored in a way that is consistent with Macedonia's national integrity and vital interests?

Frckoski: With all you mentioned in your question it is more than clear that the "Alexander of Macedon" atmosphere in the Republic of Macedonia does not lead us anywhere. Leaving this situation has to be our imperative for the sake of a NATO and EU future for our country. Only our integration into NATO can yield the real and urgently needed investment turning point. Only the integration of our country into NATO and the EU can secure a money flow into small, midrange and large business, which will lead to real development and employment. Only our integration into the structures of NATO and the EU can secure quality education, open borders and creative freedom, thus a European perspective for all of our citizens.

For this aim we urgently need a change of policy which has lead the Republic of Macedonia to the very bottom, into isolation and marginalization and which soon could put security issues on the agenda again. We need a change of policy which again leads Macedonia appallingly close to instability, ethnic tensions and economic decline. Stubbornness leads to nowhere, and the Republic of Macedonia needs a president who will manage to bring back our demolished international reputation and be a protector of all citizens.

UMD: Macedonia's domestic reforms are part of the metric that will be applied when its request for entry

into NATO and the European community are considered. How do you assess the country's progress in such areas as corruption, judicial reform, and greater transparency under the law? In your presidency, what would you do specifically to increase the pace of these reforms?

Frckoski: Macedonia today isn't just an isolated country, Macedonia today is a country in which, in the 21st century, democracy and the rule of law are in danger. In the line of fire are the judiciary and highly partisan public administration: the public administration, instead of being streamlined and professional, turns into a huge partisan reservoir for employment. The judiciary is being transformed into an instrument of the government rather than an independent "government", which would secure the rule of law for all in Macedonia. This authoritarian government threatens even the civil society of Macedonia. Without this sector, we can't hope for the development of a political culture, stable democratic institutions and traditions. Today, in Macedonia, an enormous and unprecedented pressure is used to suppress some liberties which we considered established: an abortion ban is being prepared, the freedom of various lifestyles is being constrained, journalists are being sued for their critical comments in the media, and the media is being corrupted and controlled by the government. I repeat: Nothing like this had ever been seen before in Macedonia!

My appraisal with regards to all these questions coincides and is reflected in the last regular "Report on the Progress of the Republic of Macedonia in Integration into the EU," in which a detailed "progress diagnosis" can be found, rather a stasis in all these closely related areas, which are of the highest relevance for the development of democracy and the rule of law in our country.

In this context, as president of the country, I will be qualified to define my position to the citizens on these urgent issues and offer solutions in the field of law and domestic affairs, which are in direct correlation with issues on human rights and liberties, the freedom of speech, including pluralism of the media, the rights of the socially disadvantaged and handicapped people, and above all, non-discrimination, gender equality, women's rights, and rights for people with "different lifestyles". The Republic of Macedonia has ratified a number of international instruments for implementing these reforms, but signing international conventions to improve the image of our country without practical implementation undermines not only domestic efforts in these areas, but also international ones. Thus, ratification of all relevant conventions, especially in justice, home affairs and human rights-related fields, as well as further promotion of the regional cooperation in these areas, will form the key framework for action.

UMD: When viewed through the lens of the current global financial crisis, what do you consider the key obstacles facing Macedonia's economy? Which comparative economic advantages are enjoyed by Macedonia at this time and how might they be enhanced, in your view? How would you reduce Macedonia's high unemployment rates?

Frckoski: The current financial crisis will, of course, affect the countries in transition and those with weak economies such as Macedonia. There are signs that these economies will be hit even harder due to limited resources. A big problem for Macedonia is its high level of debt, and thus, the lack of access to various international funds for financial help, above all due to its status as a country outside of NATO and the EU, which additionally labels the country as being a risk for foreign investment.

Although the presidential functions, unlike the government, do not have special powers with regard to economic politics, I still would be obligated to suggest solutions according to the recommendations of the international community. Thus, one of the main suggestions would be implementation of urgent measures to restrict public expenditure, as opposed to the record-breaking spending of the current government. This, not to forget, was one of the IMF's recommendations. In addition to that, I would consider it helpful to establish a tax reduction for companies to encourage higher economic profit and export. Special stimulation would be provided to those whose production depends on exports, with the qualification of the company having secured sales. These would be temporary and limited measures in order not to threaten the principles of competition. I would use presidential powers to strengthen the international position of Macedonia in the context of its promotion as a competitive place to invest, with qualified human resources, flexibility, tax shelters, and other benefits.

Concerning the rate of unemployment, I suggest tax shelters for new employment and entrepreneurship, as well as "voucher systems" for the exchange of services and compensation. In this context, every possible fiscal and monetary measure would be considered, as well as funds and credits for the creation of new jobs. Special attention should be paid on strengthening bilateral and regional treaties, protection of investments, and projects for the domestic construction industry.

UMD: How will you utilize the talents of young people in Macedonia?

Frckoski: We have a bad economic situation, without prospects for the young. Together with the visa restrictions each of us has to face, it makes them plan their future abroad. This leads to a constant brain

drain, with more and more young people wanting to live abroad. We simply have to stop this trend in order not to lose qualified human resources. My policy would focus on eliminating all possible barriers in the education process and transfer of know-how, easing visa restrictions, and enhancement of state scholarships and benefits. In this context, I would suggest a revision of the education process regarding its compatibility and a reallocation of resources. It is more than clear to me that there is no way to open up new perspectives to our young generations by simply emitting government commercials and inventing a rosy false reality.

And again, as for me, our Euro-Atlantic integration is the only way out of this situation. By this, the so-called EU labor market would be accessible to our young fellow citizens, and in further consequence, this would have positive implications on life standards in our country.

UMD: As you know, thousands in the Diaspora stand ready to help Macedonia. How will you reach out to those Macedonians living overseas who wish to make contribution, and help the government with important reforms?

Frckoski: Integration of Macedonia into the EU and NATO structures represents the highest national goal for the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia. All of the everyday problems like unemployment, poverty and the feeling of having no prospects... these are things that Macedonians inside the country experience much harder than Macedonians of the Diaspora. The policy has to be consistent and lead to integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures, the sooner the better. We were witnesses of the previous practice of using the Macedonian diaspora, even manipulating it, for the sake of various partisan strategies. This has to change. The national strategic interests of the Republic have to be explained so we can establish regular dialogue with the diaspora. Contacts with their clubs and associations should be put into the regular agenda of the diplomatic missions of the Republic of Macedonia abroad. A protocol for exchange of information and opinions in both directions would lead to better cooperation. The Diaspora can contribute to many important projects in the country which are in the interest of all Macedonians, regardless of their place of residence.

For more information on the Frckoski campaign, visit their website at <http://www.frckozapretsedatel.mk/> . ✨

UMD Global Conference Tentative Program

Thursday, June 11, 2009

Breakfast: Advocacy the UMD Way: The Leadership Voice 8:30 AM-10:00 AM
 Meetings on Capitol Hill..... 10:15 AM-4:00 PM
 U.S.-Macedonia Friendship Awards Congressional Lunch..... 12:30 PM-2:00 PM
 Welcome Orientation..... 5:00 PM-6:00 PM
 Reception Hosted by Ambassador Zoran Jolevski at Embassy of Macedonia 6:30 PM-8:30 PM

Friday, June 12, 2009

Breakfast..... 8:00 AM
 Macedonia's Economic Environment - Its Attraction to U.S. and Foreign Investors 8:30 AM-11:00 AM
 Strategic Perspective on Macedonia within the EU - How it Currently Fits within the European Family..... 11:15 AM-12:45 PM
 Lunch: U.S.-Macedonian Relations and NATO's Future Opportunities and Challenges
 (*Keynote: High-Profile Macedonian Government Official*)..... 1:00 PM-2:30 PM
 Success Stories: Macedonians Making a Difference in the World 2:45 PM-4:15 PM
 Networking Reception Boat Cruise on the Potomac River..... 5:30 PM-8:00 PM
 Igranka featuring Merak Band from Syracuse, New York..... 9:00 PM-12:30 AM

Saturday, June 13, 2009

Breakfast: UMD Board of Director's Policy Briefings
 "Global Macedonian Challenges Today" 9:00 AM-10:30 AM
 Fun Activities for Children including Monument Tours..... 9:00 AM-4:30 PM
 Marketing: Best Practices for the Positive Branding of Macedonia..... 10:45 AM-12:15 AM
 Lunch: Macedonian Minorities in Southeast Europe and Awards Ceremony..... 12:30 PM-2:00 PM
 Women, Beyond the Bake Sale 2:15 PM-3:15 PM
 How Did We Get Here? Macedonian History and Identity for Macedonian Advocates 3:30 PM-4:30 PM
 Philanthropy and Macedonian Children..... 3:30 PM-4:30 PM
 Building Young Leadership - A New Generation..... 4:45 PM-5:45 PM
 Preserving and Advancing the Macedonian Language 4:45 PM-5:45 PM
 Macedonians in the Professional Field 6:00 PM-7:00 PM
 Macedonian Heritage Silent Auction..... 7:30 PM-10:30 PM
 UMD President's Reception Celebrating UMD's 5th Anniversary 7:30 PM-8:30 PM
 Gala Banquet and Awards Ceremony
 (*Special Performance by the Gocce Delchev Macedonian Folk Dance Ensemble
 and concert by the renowned St. Zlata Meglenska Women's Choir*) 8:30 PM-10:30 PM
 Igranka featuring Merak Band from Syracuse, New York..... 10:00 PM-12:30 AM



UMD Global CONFERENCE 2009

Washington, D.C.
June 11-13, 2009



For more information, please visit www.UMDGlobalConference.org
 United Macedonian Diaspora · tel (202) 756-2244 · fax (202) 756-7323
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THE GLOBAL MACEDONIAN
UNITED, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

THE WAY AHEAD

Honorary Chairman

Dr. Zoran Jolevski, Macedonian Ambassador to the United States

Special Guests:

- Ivica Bocevski, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Macedonia
- Dr. Srijan Kerim, President, 62nd United Nations General Assembly
- His Eminence, Bishop Metodij, Metropolitan of the American-Canadian Macedonian Orthodox Diocese
- Philip T. Reeker, United States Ambassador to Macedonia
- Congressman Bill Pascrell
- Congressman Earl Pomeroy
- Congressman Mark E. Souder

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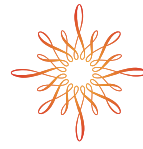
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Dear Friend,

It is our pleasure to invite you to participate in our first premier conference!

The United Macedonian Diaspora's First Global Conference is scheduled to take place in Washington, D.C. from June 11-13, 2009. This three-day conference will put you in touch with hundreds of prominent Macedonian leaders as well as friends of Macedonia from the United States, Canada, and around the world. These are people whose experience, intellect, and commitment to excellence will inspire us all. *Please join us as we celebrate our collective successes and educate ourselves on issues affecting our community!*

The conference theme "The Way Ahead" highlights the underlying topic, "The Global Macedonian – United, We Can Make a Difference." We created opportunities for you to participate in hands-on sessions, each designed to help in the development of key skills for becoming effective advocates for Macedonia.

Don't miss this great opportunity!

Now is a time, when the need for informed, energetic advocacy has never been greater. We look forward to you joining us at this inaugural UMD Global Conference and to your future help furthering the Macedonian cause. *United, We Can!*

Sincerely yours,

Metodija A. Koloski
President

Aleksandra Trpkovska
Chair, UMD Global Conference Planning Committee



UMD Global
CONFERENCE 2009



Congressman Mark E. Souder



Radmila Sekerinska



Deputy PM Ivica Bocevski



Congressman Bill Pascrell



Ambassador Philip T. Reeker



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- Lunch with High-Profile Macedonian Government Official
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United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) is a 501 (c) (3) international non-governmental charitable organization addressing the interests and needs of Macedonians and Macedonian communities throughout the world. UMD's main goals are to foster unity among Macedonian people, and advance their cause. We work to promote our historical, spiritual and cultural heritage while advancing the Macedonian tradition within the framework of various advocacy, educational, and charitable programs.

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*In most cases.