



# REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

## President

*Courtesy translation!*

Skopje, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me great pleasure to greet all of you gathered together this evening in Sydney at this Gala Dinner, organized by the United Macedonian Diaspora in honor of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia, Senator Bob Carr.

I am particularly pleased that this year's meeting is in the spirit of our joint efforts to promote the Macedonian-Australian relations. Therefore, I would like to use this opportunity to commend the decision of the UMD, the Macedonia Friendship Award to be presented to the Australian-Macedonian Parliamentary Friendship Group Co-chairmen, Stephen Jones and Luke Simpkins, for their contribution to the development and strengthening of the relations between Australia and Macedonia.

As President of the Republic of Macedonia, meeting with the Diaspora around the world, I had the opportunity to see personally that Macedonia has friends, partners and supporters everywhere. That support is extremely important and contributes to the strengthening of our position in one imposed dispute, namely in correcting the injustice done to Macedonia.

However, there are other important promoters of our historic mission - to build Macedonia as developed, advanced, prosperous and democratic country. The Republic of Macedonia is proud of its emigrants who directly contribute to the strengthening of the relations with the countries where they continue their destiny, not forgetting their homeland. The strong links established by numerous prominent expatriates, who are proud to wear and cherish national characteristics, have turned into stable bridges of cooperation, understanding and respect. I would like to extend my special thankfulness to you, the members of the Macedonian Diaspora, for your entire commitment, dedication and efforts invested for international affirmation of the traditional symbols and values of the Macedonian people - the Macedonian identity, language, history and tradition. In this context, I extend my most sincere congratulations to Mr. Mick Veloski for this year's UMD Lifetime Achievement Award, as recognition of his significant role in advancing the Macedonian cause.

Despite the challenges, we persist resolutely to the achievement of our ultimate strategic goal - membership in the European Union and NATO. Bearing in mind the obligation we have towards the predecessors and towards the future generations, I would like to assure the entire Macedonian Diaspora that we will not accept a solution that hinders our Macedonian identity and violates the Macedonian language. The name of our country has always been, is and will be Macedonia.

