

**Secretariat of the  
Conference on Security and  
Co-operation in Europe  
PRAGUE**

CSCE Communication No. 305  
Prague, 29 November 1993

RELEASE OF DOCUMENT

HCNM recommendations concerning inter-ethnic relations in FYR of Macedonia

Upon the decision of the 24th Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials on 28 November 1993, the above mentioned recommendations, dated 1 November 1993(CSCE Communication No. 305) has been released.

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**C S C E**  
High Commissioner  
on National Minorities

His Excellency  
Mr. Stevo Crvenkovski  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the FYROM

Reference:  
No: 1299/93/L

The Hague  
1 November 1993

Your Excellency,

May I first of all express my appreciation to you and the members of the Government I met during my visit on 11-14 October for the help provided to me in finding answers to various questions I have raised. Even though it is my specific task to concentrate on questions regarding inter-ethnic relations, I did not fail to register the deep concern expressed by President Gligorov and various Ministers about the deteriorating economic situation of the country, and their fear that, if this trend will not be reversed, destabilizing effects might manifest themselves. I have not failed to bring this to the attention of the representatives of the CSCE states to whom I reported in Vienna on 21 October. I also have registered the growing impatience felt by your Government because so far no consensus could be reached within the CSCE concerning the admission of your country.

As I indicated to you during our conversation on 13 October, I should like to present some recommendations concerning inter-ethnic relations in your country to your Government for consideration. I hope you will consider them in the way I intended them to be: as an effort to contribute to the thought process in your Government regarding the ways and methods to be followed in order to cope with the complicated questions which a multi-ethnic country has to face. Before doing so, please permit me to say that I do share the regrets which have been expressed about the fact that so far no decisive progress has been made in the Parliamentary discussions concerning the law on local selfgovernment notwithstanding the fact that clarity about the role and competencies of local government units is clearly needed.

My first recommendation concerns the census which is being planned. I was pleased to note the repeated assurances I received during my visit that your Government has definitely committed itself to April 1994 as the month during which this important event will take place. I wholeheartedly support the proposal of Ambassador G.Ahrens of the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia that the council of Europe shall monitor the preparations of the census through an international Group of Experts with the participation of the United Nations, the European Community and ICFY, and that the Council of Europe will be asked to supervise the execution of the census itself. Equally, I support his other proposals on this subject. I do feel, however, that the timely preparation of the census requires that a draft law on this subject will be submitted to Parliament without delay.

My second recommendation concerns the question of the pedagogical faculty in the Albanian language at the University of Skopje. In my opinion there is an urgent need to settle this question soon. I have been assured that your Government is aware of the need to promote greater access of Albanians to secondary schools and I do hope that

their number will increase considerably during the years to come. But it is equally important that an adequate number of Albanian teachers will receive a proper training at the required level. As the various aspects of this problem have apparently already been studied for a considerable time, I do hope that your Government will give priority to the solution of this urgent problem.

I considered it a privilege to be invited to address the Council for Inter-Ethnic Relations which has been created in accordance with Article 78 of your Constitution. This organ in which the various population groups of your country are represented could play a vital role in promoting dialogue and remove possible misunderstandings provided its potential is used to the full. In this respect I consider it especially important that the Council, apart from advising on legislation relevant for the various population groups, would also have the competence both to analyze ways to promote inter-ethnic harmony and, when necessary, to initiate an investigation of events which have led to inter-ethnic tensions. Article 78, paragraph 5, of the Constitution, which states that "the Council considers issues related to inter-ethnic relations in the Republic and submits ideas and suggestions for their resolution", clearly permits such an interpretation of its role. I also fully agree with the suggestion of Ambassador G. Ahrens of the ICFY that the efforts to ensure, through a progressive process already underway, that the staffing of the military and the police at all levels adequately reflect the recognized nationalities, will be the subject of annual progress reports reviewed by the Council for Inter-Ethnic Relations. A similar procedure could also be followed for all Government departments. In order to be able to cope with these tasks the Council, apart from meeting regularly in plenary sessions, would also have to do a considerable part of its work in various commissions. In addition, it is essential that the Council will be provided with an adequate staff.

In drafting these recommendations, I have tried to concentrate on those which relate to the most urgent questions in the sphere of inter-ethnic relations. New developments might require the formulation of additional ones. I am fully aware that I am addressing these recommendations to a Government which has to cope with many other urgent and important problems. Still, I take the liberty to request your special attention for the questions I have raised. I am doing this because I do feel that their satisfactory solution would greatly contribute to the inter-ethnic harmony which is of such vital importance for the future of your country.

I look forward with great interest to your comments on the proposals I have submitted to your Government.

Yours sincerely,

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Max van der Stoep  
CSCE High Commissioner  
on National Minorities

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**REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**  
**Ministry of Foreign Relations**

## MINISTER

Dear High Commissioner,

I was very pleased to meet you again during your visit to Skopje on 15 November 1993 on which occasion you handed over your letter of 1 November 1993 containing your recommendation on the improvement of inter-ethnic relations in the Republic of Macedonia. I should like to thank you for your sincere efforts aimed at contributing to the further stabilization of the overall situation in our country. I am particularly pleased with the fact that you took note of the deteriorating economic situation in our country, as well as of our concern that, "if this trend will not be reversed, destabilizing effects might manifest themselves". I would also like to thank you for your efforts that such a situation of ours, which is a result of known external political and economic causes, is presented to the CSCE participating states and institutions, in order to accelerate the solution of these problems of ours and that the admission of the Republic of Macedonia to this European organization is accelerated as well.

In respect of your recommendations, I would like to inform you that my Government basically accepts them and consider that they will only strengthen activities of the Government in the field they concern. During our last meeting I informed you that a part of your recommendations have been already put into effect or are on the way to be carried out. This means that you have selected the problems that truly represent the main activity of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in promoting inter-ethnic relations.

Concerning your first recommendation relating to the forthcoming population census, I would like to assure you again that since last year when the Government decided to conduct a new census, the Government's organs have been undertaking all necessary expert preparations for the census to be held in April next year. The Government have already considered the Census Law and it will be submitted to the Parliament these days. In other words, all the obligations on the part of the Government will be finished in due time. on the other hand, as you may know, the issue of financing the census by the European Union has not been settled yet. We expect that you will do everything in your power in order that a satisfactory solution to this problem is found.

His Excellency  
Mr. Max van der Stoel  
CSCE High Commissioner  
on National Minorities

THE HAGUE

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Regarding your second recommendation relating to the training of Albanian teaching staff for elementary schools (1 to 8 grade), the Government fully supports it. you have already

pointed out that the Government "is aware of the need to promote greater access of Albanians to secondary schools". After studying this problem for a considerable time and in that process permanently contacting Albanian ministers in the Government, as well as representative of the Albanian parties and associations, the Government finally came to an appropriate solution to this issue. Namely, as I informed you during your last meeting, on 1 November 1993 the Government brought a decision on establishing courses in the languages of nationalities, including Albanian, at the Pedagogical Academy of Skopje in the course of this school year. In this regard, the Ministry of Education was requested, in cooperation with the Pedagogical Academy and University of Skopje, to undertake all necessary measures and activities to resolve this problem. (In your letter, probably due to technical misunderstanding, instead of the Pedagogical Academy the Pedagogical Faculty was mentioned).

With regard to your third recommendation concerning the recently established Council for Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Parliament, I think that it contains very useful ideas that could only promote the work of this extremely important body. The Government will forward these proposals of yours to the Council and I believe that they will be paid special attention and further elaborated. Since you have already directly contacted members of the Council I am convinced that they, appreciating your rich experience and genuine commitment to these issues, will be interested in continuing direct contacts with you.

At the end, I would like to thank you once again for the efforts and endeavours you have made so far in order to contribute to further promotion of inter-ethnic relations in our country. I hope that we will continue to cooperate on these matters in the future.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

[signature]  
Stevo Crvenkovski  
Minister of Foreign Relations  
of the Republic of Macedonia