
RADAN KANEV HEADS BULGARIA'S NEW REPUBLIC ALLIANCE

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Democrats for Strong Bulgaria (DSB) Chairman Radan Kanev on Tuesday became the chair of New Republic, which describes itself as a right-wing, non-partisan alliance.

At New Republic's founding assembly, three parties and three non-profit organizations declared themselves participants in the alliance.

Political organizations include DSB, a Plovdiv-based party called Union for Plovdiv, and the Bulgarian Democratic Community of Gospodin Tonev, the latter having been a candidate in last year's presidential election.

Among the non-profits are the Civil Bloc (a civic movement sharing the principles of the Reformist Bloc and founded in 2014), the Radko Association (an organization of Macedonian citizens with a Bulgarian national consciousness), and the National Women's Club - an organization set up as part of DSB.

More parties, organizations and individuals will be joining soon, the news website Dnevnik.bg quotes Kanev as saying.

Traycho Traykov, the candidate of the Reformist Bloc (the alliance DSB was part of between 2013 and the end of 2015) in last year's presidential vote, will be New Republic's political spokesperson. The alliance will work toward boosting the income of Bulgarians and rebuilding key institutions, its leadership has said.

Center-right GERB party of former Prime Minister Boyko Borisov will be its main opponent, according to Kanev.

New Republic is the second organization with political ambitions to emerge in the past weeks.

In January, former Justice Minister Hristo Ivanov set up his Yes, Bulgaria party on an anti-corruption platform.

The two enter in direct competition to the Reformist Bloc, a loose coalition of centrist and right-wing parties which was the junior coalition partner in Borisov's government - but which made it to Parliament with DSB on board.

Now polls are suggesting Ivanov's party will not get more than 1.5-2% in the forthcoming snap vote, while the RB may or may not pass the electoral barrier of 4%.

New Republic earlier invited Yes, Bulgaria to join forces in the coming vote on March 26, but the offer was declined.

Kanev, whose DSB party left the RB in December 2015 and switched to opposition, accuses the RB of being docile supporters of GERB and Borisov and failing to stand up for their own principles.

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