
US VOICES DISAPPOINTMENT IN MACEDONIA'S OPPOSITION

- 17.10.2018

Balkan Insight (16 October 2018)

The US' Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Wess Mitchell, pointed blame at the leadership of Macedonia's opposition party VMRO DPMNE for stalling the implementation of the historic name agreement with Greece, which is intended to clear the path for Macedonia's EU and NATO accession bids.

We have been disappointed with the positions of VMRO DPMNE's leadership regarding both the referendum and steps in parliament to amend the constitution, Mitchell wrote in the letter to Hristijan Mickoski, published on the State Department's website.

The letter comes against a backdrop of the opposition's unwillingness to support in parliament the procedure for constitutional amendments that would change the country's name to the Republic of North Macedonia, as stipulated under the name agreement.

Despite claims [by VMRO DPMNE] that there is some better deal to be had, we do not believe that to be the case, he added. This agreement required compromises on both sides. It is an opportunity that is not likely to come again for years, if not decades.

Mitchell also addressed growing concerns that the opposition leadership is putting pressure on its own MPs who might want to support the deal at the ongoing parliament session.

We urge you to create space, publically and privately, for members of parliament from your coalition to decide how they will vote on constitutional changes, free from threats of violence, retribution, or other forms of coercion.

Mitchell demanded courageous leadership and maturity from Mickoski in what he described as a "historically important moment" for Macedonia.

As a true friend and supporter of Macedonia, we urge you to set aside partisan interests to advance our shared strategic interests and secure a brighter future for your citizens among the European family of nations, Mitchell concluded.

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/us-voices-disappointment-by-macedonian-opposition-10-16-2018>