

## **POVERTY, ORGANIZED CRIME, VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS OBSTACLES FOR BUILDING UP A STRONG CIVIL SOCIETY IN MACEDONIA**

*Aleksandar KITANOVSKI*  
*Marija Veljovska – KONDOVSKA*

**Abstract:** *Absence of strong democratic state based on popular support, transparent institutions, responsible elites that promote cooperation and strive towards achieving consensus, results in the inability of the government to launch economic growth, such as crime gangs, and organized crime structures. Position of women, is also described partially by statistics and partially by the personal remarks of author. General conclusion over the situation of women in Macedonia in particular to that with Albanian ones is that radical transformation of their position, role and a function is required. In other words, position of women have to be altered from the role passive and non active member of society who only exists through a function of wife and a mother within confines of the traditional patriarchal family into the working asset, economically independent of a man.*

**Keywords:** *civil society, organized crime, poverty, post conflict, democracy*

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this article is to show that absence of strong democratic state based on popular support, transparent institutions, responsible elites that promote cooperation and strive towards achieving consensus, results in the inability of the government to launch economic growth, such as crime gangs, and organized crime structures.

This article is structured in a sense of displaying situation in 5 different arenas through presenting the figures and facts in regards to position of women, problems of poverty, so that in the end done could make a claim of lack of protective democracy's<sup>1</sup> institutions in the Republic of Macedonia.

By presenting the situation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> arena, including judiciary and police, as well as pointing out the cases of violation of human rights by the state authorities, and displaying the figures of how serious problem of poverty in the Republic of Macedonia is, this article argues that these phenomena are serious obstacle for stronger interaction among the people and as a consequence emergence of notion of solidarity as a first step towards building up a strong civil society.

---

<sup>1</sup> Held, David. "Models of Democracy". 108 Cowley Road Oxford, IJF UK: Polity press Black Well Publishers, 1996,pp 15.

Position of women, is also described partially by statistics and partially by the personal remarks of author. General conclusion over the situation of women in Macedonia in particular to that with Albanian ones is that radical transformation of their position, role and a function is required. In other words, position of women have to be altered from the role passive and non active member of society who only exists through a function of wife and a mother within confines of the traditional patriarchal family into the working asset, economically independent of a man.

### **Position of women in Macedonia 1<sup>st</sup> ARENA civil society**

If there is no democracy in the family, it is very unlikely that there can be democracy in the society as such. Therefore, the reform of the family would in the Republic of Macedonia. The birth delivery rate of Albanian woman in is almost two times higher than that of Macedonian women, so that in the end of fertility period of 49 years the Albanian women in average gives birth to 4,10 children as opposed to Macedonian of 2,07ones.<sup>2</sup> This is very much connected with the position of the women in the Albanian society where almost 70% of the total population of the rural character as well as to living in Albanian traditional way.

Generally speaking the situation of women in the whole Balkan is not very favorable. Women are underrepresented, have less education opportunities and less employed in relation to man.<sup>3</sup> Out of the total number of illiterate people in the Republic of Macedonia, 75% are women. 27% of the total female population gat married between 15 and 19 years old. 82% of the total drop out from elementary schools consists of Albanian girls.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, the author has spotted the great deal of similarity in dressing up of the Albanian women when walking the streets of Skopje, as well as nonappearance of the Albanian women in the streets after the sun set unless accompanied by the man. On the other hand, in the part of Skopje where mostly Macedonians live<sup>5</sup> one could spot that the women are dressed entirely differently and that they enjoy much greater freedom. One interpretation of this could be that within the society structure of the accommodating diversities, since they tolerate much greater freedom for women.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Dragovic, Anica. "Differentials of Fertility in the Republic of Macedonia" New Balkan Politics. Volume 2/3, 2002, pp 21.

<sup>3</sup> Nowicka, Wanda "**The position of women and demographic processes in the countries in transition**" Paper presented at the Seminar "Female empowerment and Demographic Process: Moving Beyond Cairo" Lund, Sweden, April 21-24 1997; retrieved from <http://www.waw.pdi.net/~polfedwo/english/lundpaper.htm>, October 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Report of Helsinki Committee with the situation of HR the Republic of Macedonia, year 2000, retrieved from [www.mhc.org.mk](http://www.mhc.org.mk). August 2003.

<sup>5</sup> There is no strict division line in a sense of Albanian part and Macedonian part of the city. However, on the right bank of the river Vardar, Albanians mostly live mixed of with Turks, Macedonians and other nationalities. On the left side great majority of over 90% are Macedonians, but they are also mixed up with to a lesser extent wint Albanians.

<sup>6</sup> The impression based on survey conducted by the author during his stay in Skopje, Tetovo, Strumica, Ohrid, Bitola and Prilep in June and July of 2003.

On the other hand, most of the Albanian women are even dressed similarly to theirs grandmothers were. In addition, Albanian women are not autonomous and independent and they often vote as their husbands told them to.<sup>7</sup> In that context, if great deal of women which make up over 50% of population vote as their husbands told them to, how could any of the liberal concepts be realized, when the non-liberalism exists in the very core of the most of most of the Albanian families?

Therefore, in order to liberalize society, one has to radically change the position of the women in the Albanian segment of the Republic of Macedonia society. In that context, in July of 2002, 39 Albanian women of age between 13 and 49 have completed the four grade course organized by the Albanian women NGO from Skopje “Perspektiva” Some of these women never went into school, while most of their husbands are unemployed. Finally, officials from NGO refuse to provide the figures on illiteracy of Albanian women but they stated that those figures are immense.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, within ethnic Macedonian society one could find several women on leading positions such as vice premier of the Republic of Macedonia Radmila Sekerinska, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ilinka Mitreva.<sup>9</sup>

Lank of education and public appearance of the Albanian women could be interpreted that they did not start to think differently, or they have no means to articulate their differences. In other words, the prevailing identity off most of the Albanian women at this moment is the breeding mother who due to economic dependence of a man did not develop any other identities or desires towards other concepts of life that might include carrier, professional promotion, leading roles in society, etc.

In the same way, if no separation process between women as individual person and women as a “the members of family only” is taking place through an impact of education and increase in living standard, then the creation of democratic environment through spill over from family into other spheres of society is very unlikely.<sup>10</sup> In other words, for democracy to start function women must stop exist as a mothers and wives only, and through an education process and adequate social policy they have to be turned into a working asset which creates value added making them economically independent from man, In the end, women would possess a leverage to articulate its demands independently from man, and by so doing acquire all kinds of preferences for different concepts and different ideas. Finally, educated and provided with employment, women would be able to

---

<sup>7</sup> Trajanovski, Zarko, Interview with employee of Macedonian Helsinki Committee, “Current state of human rights in the RM” Skopje, Republic of Macedonian, June 2003.

<sup>8</sup> “NGO organizes basic education for women” retrieved from [www.realitymacedonia.org](http://www.realitymacedonia.org) July 2002.

<sup>9</sup> However, there is a one women Teuta Arifi, who is the vice president of DUI and who is also representative in the parliament but this does not mitigate the overall position of the Albanian women in the RM.

<sup>10</sup> This part is inspired by the article of the Pierre Manent “Modern Democracy as a System of Separations”.

articulate their demands more actively, from the position of economic independence, which would in turn democratize the Albanian segment of society.

### **Major points of confrontation of the political parties 2<sup>nd</sup> ARENA political society**

After the election in 2002, a new government under the coalition made of SDSM as Macedonian counterpart and DUI as an Albanian one came at the power. In spite of certain improvements in the area of industrial production and increase of exports, the major area of dispute is still the implementation of the framework agreement.

In June of 2003, SDSM as their greatest achievement pointed out the framework agreement and secret political party, to transparent and open for cooperation one after they joined coalition with SDSM.<sup>11</sup> However, SDSM is very much better in relation to the period when VMRO was in power.

Leading Albanian party, DUI leader of Ali Ahmeti is also more or less of the same opinion. He is stating that after the Ohrid framework agreement Macedonia has become a multiethnic state and that the only disputed issues are the ones of decentralization and the identification documents.<sup>12</sup> The DUI is suggesting that the ethnic principle should be used to draw the borders of new municipalities, since their number has to be reduced from 123 to 40 municipalities. Conversely, VMRO is insisting that other than ethnic has to be upheld when drawing borders such as economical ones, historical ones, etc.<sup>13</sup>

However, there is a one issue, which neither of the parties are addressing. Some 90 villages, a tiny area close to the Kosovo border is not under the control of the government of the Republic of Macedonia. They are controlled by the warlords, although no parallel institutions exist in those areas. Therefore, none of the politicians does not want to go to for example into Lipkovo village in order not to embarrass himself and demonstrate that he has no any authority or power over those people or territory.<sup>14</sup>

The fact of existence of armed groups in certain parts of country which do not recognize the democratically elected government, that do not want to be integrated in the democratic order and prefer to defend their interests by using weapons rather than through a democratic dialogue in the parliament is serious challenge for democracy in the Republic of Macedonia. Finally, this represents a clear sign that in sense of behavioral feature,<sup>15</sup> the Republic of Macedonia is not

---

<sup>11</sup> "Ministrice na SDSM sami se isporofalile" an article from daily news paper Utrinski Vernik, Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

<sup>12</sup> Statement made by Ali Ahmeti for the Macedonian radio and Television in the emission "Dnevnik" on 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2003.

<sup>13</sup> Statement made by the VMRO portparol for the Macedonian radio and Television in the emission "Dnevnik" on 4 of July 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Trajanovski, Zarko. Interview with employee of Macedonian Helsinki Committee, "Current state of human rights in the RM" Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, June 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Linz, J and Stephan, A. "Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation" , Baltimore Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, pp 6.

consolidated democracy and that the process of democratic transition is not over yet.

### **Independent judiciary 3<sup>rd</sup> ARENA rule of law**

There could not be a democratic state without independent judiciary. It is an institution of the key importance for successful functioning of democracy. Judiciary is the framework through which rule of law is exercised and by which respect of human rights is assured. Unfortunately, there are several cases, which show that judiciary was serving more to the interest of the ruling elites rather than to that of citizens.

In the perception of elites, judiciary is still not considered independent but rather as a part of the state administration. It is part of the ministry of justice and still financially dependent from it in the sense of budget adoption.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, all the elected governments dislike the idea of being called upon the court or being sued by anybody. Finally, they are also reluctant to implement decisions of the constitutional court.<sup>17</sup>

In the same way, courts are under the constant pressure of the ruling elites. In 1999, two judges of municipal court in Gevgelija were called upon informative talk in the police station by the inspectors of special services because they withdrew charges in two cases.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, there is on going struggle over the members of the republican judicial council who are in charge of appointing and dismissing judges. Members of that body were elected during the VMRO rule and when SDSM came at power in 2002, it immediately tried to replace them with their own people although their mandate did not expire. For that purpose, SDSM passed the law, by which these people could be withdrawn since they satisfy the conditions for retirement, but the constitutional court declared this law as unconstitutional one.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, in the case of judges of constitutional court, political parties are doing everything they can to elect their own people no matter how incompetent they are and what would be the repercussions for society. As an example, a party soldier was elected for the judge, although he did not have any qualifications other than being loyal party soldier. The elites were also using the “article 217 which deals with judges who demonstrated incompetence and therefore are eligible to be dismissed” to get rid of the judges who had integrity and honesty and did not want to follow party instruction.<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, judges are afraid to take initiative because of their own safety. Example of the judge in Bitola who sentenced Dilaver Bojku a king of

---

<sup>16</sup> Report of Helsinki Committee with the situation of HR in the Republic of Macedonia, year 2000. Retrieved from [www.mhc.org.mk](http://www.mhc.org.mk). August 2003.

<sup>17</sup> *IBID.*

<sup>18</sup> Report of Helsinki Committee with the situation of HR in the Republic of Macedonia, year 1999. Retrieved from [www.mhc.org.mk](http://www.mhc.org.mk). August 2003.

<sup>19</sup> Trajanovski, Zarko. Interview with employee of Macedonian Helsinki Committee, “Current state of human rights in the RM” Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, June 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Macedonian Helsinki Committee Report for the year 2000.

prostitution to 6 months is clear example of such a fact.<sup>21</sup> By the same token, judges are also reluctant to run the process against the government and these processes are either delayed or stacked because of some legal procedure. The same case is the course of years 2001 and 2002. 3 cases where the people were beaten up by the police were dropped.<sup>22</sup>

Economic crime is not adequately processed as well. As an example, big state owned as well as big private companies are changing the location of their headquarters so they could move from jurisdiction of one court to that of another.<sup>23</sup> In other words, they are searching for friendly judges, who would withhold all the legal actions against them.

Even the public prosecutor does not care too much about unlawful arrest, not following legal procedures, or whether the law was respected when the people were arrested, etc.<sup>24</sup> Such a conduct turns the office of public prosecutor into a violator of the human rights, rather than its supporter.

All these evidences support the fact that expertise, knowledge, skills, credibility should be the main criteria when electing judges as well as any other position in judiciary. Such a people would play a role of the promoters of democracy since they would clearly demonstrate to everybody that nobody is above the law, that the rule of law is indiscriminately applied to everybody, which in turn would make the people to place more confidence in the state institutions. In the end, upholding the rule of law by the state institutions makes the democratic goals easier to achieve.

#### **Violations of HR by the state authority 4<sup>th</sup> ARENA state bureaucracy**

The aim of democratic transition is to reduce the state control over the society, to keep the state out of the sphere of private life,<sup>25</sup> as well as to monitor its performance through democratic procedures and respect for human rights. Unfortunately, there are many examples, which show that the state conduct in the Republic of Macedonia is far below the democratic criteria and that ruling parties do not want to give up its control over the society.

In that regard, the most serious example of such a behavior is the police conduct. In many cases, police prevented access to the lawyer, did not inform the arrested people about their rights, arrested people were kept in detention for a long time, etc.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, members of paramilitary units known as “lions” who are officially part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on several occasions were beating up innocent citizens, prevented rallies of opposition political parties, etc. In spite of

---

<sup>21</sup> Trajanovski, Zarko. Interview June 2003.

<sup>22</sup> Macedonian Helsinki Committee Report for the years 2001 and 2002.

<sup>23</sup> Macedonian Helsinki Committee Report for the year 2002.

<sup>24</sup> Macedonian Helsinki Committee Report for the year 2001.

<sup>25</sup> Ivanov, Djordje. Interview with Professor, “Obstacles to democracy functioning in the Republic of Macedonia” Skopje, RM 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2003.

<sup>26</sup> Macedonian Helsinki Committee Report for the year 1999.

all these events, no body was held responsible for the conduct of Lions, nor any charges were raised against their superiors.

Finally, on several occasions police prevented journalists from making reports on certain events by taking away their tapes, and it arrested high ranking officer of DUI accusing him for high treason, although he was granted immunity by the provisions of the frame work agreement.<sup>27</sup>

Likewise, other state institutions also violated human rights on several occasions. By declaring that two buildings where the headquarters of the local TV stations were located were built illegally, the government attempted to prevent disseminating information, which were not likeable to it. In terms of privatization process, adequate social programs were not prepared for the people who were released as an obsolete labor force from privatized companies. Likewise, the government was not concerned with polluting source of water by the MHK Zletovo big zinc processor from Veles, although this water source is the main supplier of Skopje with running water. Government justified its inactivity in that regard, with lack of funds.<sup>28</sup>

Due to all these reasons, people do not have much confidence in state institutions. Furthermore, state institutions have to start taking care more about the people and less about the party interest. On the other hand, as long as civil society is weak due to poverty, fear, insecurity, the state would go on with serving their own interest rather than that of public and by so doing continue to violate human rights. In that context, centralized government is preventing emergence of democratic mentality since even the budget cannot be adopted at the municipal level but it has to be approved by the central authority. In that regard, how could people from rural areas acquire a democratic mentality if they cannot participate in the adoption of their own municipal budget?

Thus, the primary task of the democratic state is to become promoter of human rights, reformator in the economic sphere, upholder of the rule of law and enforcer of the democratic procedures. As a result of such a state activity, concept of active citizenry could be affirmed. However, it is not only government itself who is violating human rights by the lack of concern for its citizens or through excessive use of state force. The armed groups who are under the control of the crime lords, as well as its local bosses are also huge violators of human rights, as well as obstacle for establishing efficient democratic system.

#### **Presence of armed groups and the everyday Violence 4<sup>th</sup> ARENA state bureaucracy**

In the first six months of 2003, there were there explosions in the city of Kumanovo. Fortunately, nobody was killed but these bombs were connected with arrival of the certain Commander Chackala in the Kumanovo region.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Macedonian Helsinki Committee Report for the year 2001.

<sup>28</sup> Macedonian Helsinki Committee Report for the year 2001.

<sup>29</sup> “Bombe srede Kumanovo” an article from Daily news paper Utrinski Vesnik, Wednesday June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

In the Tetovo region on the same day, there was a clash of the Republic of Macedonia police with the gang of Sait Rusiti who is a well known criminal wanted by Interpol for several kidnappings as well as for the attack on the police station.<sup>30</sup> The gang was terrorizing local population, since people could not go into fields due to mines and the gang did not allow the mines to be removed by the official authority.

The crime lords and the members of the armed gangs are mainly located in the border area with Kosovo. They want to be left alone so they could peacefully conduct their activities such as prostitutions, drugs, kidnappings etc. For that reason, they do not allow presence of government authorities on its territory. In the areas under control of those gangs, Macedonians cannot set their feet, journalists get beaten if they came to make a report, and local people are the prisoners of the war lords which are extracting money from them for the protection.<sup>31</sup>

Attempts of the government to establish mixed police stations in some of the areas did not produce much of the result since the Macedonian policemen were imprisoned while Albanian ones were ordered to leave the area by the members of those crime groups.<sup>32</sup> Thus, no Albanian policeman want to conduct his job in that area again. In addition, there are also some, 1,000 people from villages of Lipkovo and Lipljan of Macedonian nationality who cannot come back in those territories, since nobody can guarantee their safety. On the other hand, the government does not want to continue providing funds for them saying that they must return to their houses.

However, in the western Macedonia where majority of population are ethnic Albanians, there were 451 case of hurting by the firearms. On 10 July of 2003, in part of Skopje “Cair” four people were killed when two persons opened fire from the red Opel vehicle at the group who was sitting in the restaurant near by. Again, one of the diseased was involved in the previous killing of the previous killing of the policeman.<sup>33</sup>

These terrorists acts against the local people, robberies, proliferation of fire arms, require rapid response from the government. On the other hand, people also have to organize themselves and they also have to aid the government in their effort to establish the law and order in these areas. Government has launched several campaigns to collect the weapons but they were not very successful. Similarly, the people still believe that it is up to the government exclusively to solve issues of public order and security, while their involvement is not so relevant. Finally, people do not have confidence in the state institutions including the police, but one gets impression that judiciary is the problem not the police.<sup>34</sup>

However, this sense of insecurity and the lack of trust into institutions obstruct people from pushing the things forward through citizens initiatives,

---

<sup>30</sup> “Otkrivena kriminalna banda vo Strusko” an article from daily newspaper Utrinski Vesnik, Wednesday June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

<sup>31</sup> Trajanovski, Zarko, Interview, June 2003.

<sup>32</sup> Trajanovski, Zarko, Interview, June 2003.

<sup>33</sup> Report from Macedonian TV emission “dnevnik” 14<sup>th</sup> July 2003.

<sup>34</sup> Statement made by one of the interviewed on security during visit to Strumica as a part of the Research conducted by the Institute for democracy, Solidarity, and Civil Society from Skopje, Strumica, 23/06/03.

protests and public rallies, that would make the government to deal more actively with lack of security and terrorism. In other words, people want to see that the government is taking care about them, and the government cannot do that unless they push it.

Similarly, situation in Tetovo, which author witnessed was that people believed that they are too small to solve the problems of the city,<sup>35</sup> but it did not occur to them that united they could accomplish many things. Organized citizens that approach government with clear set of demands at national level could move the things forward.

#### **Organized crime 4<sup>th</sup> ARENA state bureaucracy**

Democratic state is pulling its strength from the support of the people, from the ability to respond quickly through its institutions to the demands signals of its citizens. If it can rapidly address their issues, it would create the loyalty of the people to democratic procedures, so that they would pursue their interests only through institutional framework. If state does not possess such an ability, it is very likely that some one else would replace the state authority and create the loyalty of citizens for its own goals.<sup>36</sup> This is what happened in case of Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia.

In the Republic of Macedonia, where unemployment rate is close to 40%, and where Albanians amount to the 80% of prison population, and where majority of the Albanians live in the villages, with the social internal mechanism obstructing the process of modernization through drop outs from schools, submission of women, people were desperately seeking means to make an everyday living.<sup>37</sup>

In addition, an effective regional policy with aim to change the position of Albanian rural population was not introduced by the Macedonian government, so that people from very backward rural areas had no choice but to turn themselves to only choice they had and that was smuggling. They also had tradition living outside a system while the concept of the rule of law was apprehended as an effort of the Macedonian state to suppress their demands for national equality.<sup>38</sup>

Using the tribal connections, huge diaspora community, very strong commitments to family values, and powerful sense of community they managed to build up very powerful criminal network. On these foundations, great deal of guns, drugs, and people were smuggled from the main land Asia into Western Europe using the channel devised by Albanian mafia. When the conflict broke up, Albanian

---

<sup>35</sup> Statement acquired as a result of Research conducted by the Institute for Democracy, Solidarity, and Civil Society from Skopje among the random sample of the population in Tetovo on 24/06/03

<sup>36</sup> Putnam, Robert D. "Making Democracy Work- Civic Traditions in Modern Italy". Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 1993, pp 113.

<sup>37</sup> Hislope. Robert "the calm before the storm? The Influence of Cross-Border Networks, Corruption and Contraband on Macedonia Stability and Regional Security" Paper prepared for presentation at the 2001 Annual meeting Of the American Political Science Association San Francisco, California, pp 10.

<sup>38</sup> IBID., pp 20

rebels and the crime bosses had similar interest, former to assure uninterrupted supply of weapons, later to keep the lines of supply of drugs, arms and people open at any costs. As an example, village of Aracinovo, some 10 KM from Skopje was the place where harsh fighting took place, and was the largest checkpoint for distribution of smuggled cigarettes.<sup>39</sup>

In the same way, financing of Albanian rebels came in a great deal by the organized crime donations. NLA, leaders such as Ahmeti, and Velju were struggling for a long time for the Kosovo independence and had a good connection with the KLA people who were the main recipients of the donations from the organized crime.<sup>40</sup> However, when the conflict ended the established sources of financing and the criminal networks continued to function, so that even the elected Albanian politicians could not make those war lords persuade to give up their criminal activities and start doing legitimate business. In the same way, territories where the organized armed groups of the NLA were located were turned into a strong holds of organized crime, where no one but the local warlords could enforce its power.

Unfortunately, situation of the local population in these areas did not change, and these areas become the nests of organized crime out of reach of any law or organized state authority. The news reports are claiming that there is some 300 objects with 3000 women from Ukraine, Moldova, who are forced to prostitute themselves located between Tetovo and Gostivar. All these objects belong to crime lord Leka Dilaver, Bojko, who was recently captured in Montenegro after he escaped from Bitola prison.<sup>41</sup> Veon Latifi is also claiming that many of the Albanian politicians are connected with organized crime and that many of them made a career of it.

In order to change that, a process of deepening of democracy using internal forces of Albanian society must take place. In other words, Albanians have to create elites through a process of social selection and political competition, who would depart from making any kind of deals with crime lords. Presence of organized crime is unrelated to creation of the modern Albanian society with transparent and accountable bureaucracy, economically prosperous, based on the of law and high respect for human rights.

Moreover, this task requires building up the democratic institutions where clientelistic networks are abolished, and society based on confidence, trust and pursuance of common goals is established as an end result of activities of those institutions. To sum up, Albanian elites within the democratic framework have to build strong institutional framework for the democratic society, where people would advance them selves by their qualities and contribution to common good, not according to connection with crime lords. Ohrid framework agreement provides a good starting position to do that.

---

<sup>39</sup> Statement made for the Macedonian radio Television by the Minster of Foreign Affairs Ilinka Mitreva on 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2003.

<sup>40</sup> Hislope, Robert. "Organized Crime in Disorganized state", Problems of Post Communism Vol 49, May June 2002, pp 39.

<sup>41</sup> Statement made during the TV emission " Dnevnik" on 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2003.

On the other hand, provisions of the framework agreement are not sufficient to create a democratic prone environment if the people remain imprisoned by the lack of opportunities and surrounded by the overwhelming sense of despair as a result of unfavorable economic situation.

### **Widespread poverty 5<sup>th</sup> ARENA economic society**

In spite of increase in the GDP and the industrial production, the purchasing power of the average citizen is going down, job security and unemployment are worsening. Unemployment is estimated around 300,000, while over 500,000 people are living on less than 150 MKD denars per day; (2,5 EURO).<sup>42</sup> Likewise, there are 80,000 families who are eligible to social aid, which makes every 7<sup>th</sup> person in Macedonia a recipient of the social aid. On the other hand, government is trying to reduce that number to 60,000 families although social assistance equals 3,600 MKD denars: 60 EURO for five-member family.<sup>43</sup>

In contrast to this sad picture, it is estimated that some 150,000 are employed illegally without paying any contributions to the state.<sup>44</sup> In other words, gray economy is participating in the national income by 32%, and that part of revenue is entirely tax-free. The government is not capable to tax the income off these illegal business activities while on the other hand, it has to tolerate them in order to maintain a social peace and provide people with some means of living.

This sad social situation makes people having less confidence in the capability of institutions to handle these issues. Therefore, there is a certain risk, that they might pursue its goals outside the institutional framework, which is detrimental for stability of the country. On the other hand, government institutions have to fight crime, improve interethnic relations, and implement economic policy in order to improve the wellbeing of its citizens. In some areas, it made some improvements in other ones it is helpless.

Electricity bills from the people who live in areas that are not under the government control could hardly be collected since nobody dares to come in their villages and measure how much electricity they have spent.<sup>45</sup> Situation with RTV is more or less the same. It suffered loss of 24,000,000 EURO's due to inability to collect its bills, while Nova Makedonija publishing house is in the process of liquidation.<sup>46</sup>

Al these facts are demonstrating that the state bureaucracy of the Republic of Macedonia cannot uphold the rule of the law and tax income to fill in the budget. The non-filling of budget results among other things in lying off the people from the Klinicki centar, (Medical center) because ministry cannot make necessary

---

<sup>42</sup> Poverty and Unemployment” United Nations Early Warning Report FYR Macedonia, No.1 2003, pp 24.

<sup>43</sup> Trajanovski, Zarko, Interview, June 2003.

<sup>44</sup> “there are 150,000 illegally employed in the Republic of Macedonia” an article from Daily news paper Utrinski Vesnik, Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup>. 2003.

<sup>45</sup> Trajanovski, Zarko, Interview, June 2003.

<sup>46</sup> Data presented at the TV during the TV emission “Dnevnik” on 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2003.

investments in advanced technology, which would produce additional employment for medical staff. Similarly, Electro energy state owned company has to lay off another 1,000 people because it cannot collect its past due receivables.<sup>47</sup>

In the situation of uncollected receivables and inability to tax income, the Republic of Macedonia is facing with the people who do not possess any notion of civic duty or public obligations other than to them to themselves, while the warlords which are in the control of the territories are refusing to become part of the warlords which are in the control of the territories are refusing to become part of the democratic game. Therefore, every democracy has to possess means to defend itself from its enemies. At this moment, the Republic of Macedonia does not possess those mechanisms and has to tolerate such a brutal violations of law.

Conversely, one could hope that civic education and development over the long run would change the perceptions of those people and develop in them sense for public duties. To make the things worse, the widespread sense of poverty is also preventing emergence of active citizenry, since people are constantly under the stress of economic insecurity, and due to this constant struggle for survival they could not develop a sense of solidarity through exchange of ideas that would lead to establishment of civil society.

### **Concluding remarks**

A state that is corrupt, that does not care about its own people, and where the rule of law is discriminately applied, is a serious threat to democracy. Consequently, people do not have confidence in the state institutions, which has serious implications for the stability of the state.

Republic of Macedonia in sense of state authority to a certain extent resembles the previous picture. State institutions are really strong in the areas where they have to defend its power, which gives them an upper hand over the society, while in domains where they have to act in capacity of a service to citizens need, they are far from being efficient. On the other hand, the new SDSM-DUI government is attempting to launch an economic growth as a key ingredient for establishing a prosperous society, which would also make the emergence of democratic processes more likely.<sup>48</sup>

In order to create such a development prone environment, the democratic government based on consensus and public support has to confront parallel sources of power that decline to achieve its goals through institutions mechanisms such as organized crime, armed groups located in Albanian villages, etc. It also has to improve position of rural population particularly the Albanian one, by devising sound regional policy, improving the sector of what used to be a state owned enterprises as well as privatized ones and finally reform the public sector.

Judiciary has to become really independent, as well as to stop being service for achieving the interests of ruling parties. Furthermore, electing judges, evaluating

---

<sup>47</sup> Data presented at the TV during the TV emission “Dnevnik” on 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2003

<sup>48</sup> “Interview with Nikola Gruevski president of “VMRO-DPMNE” an article from daily news paper Utrinski Vesnik, Tuesday July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

its performance and their dismissing have to be transparent and done in accordance with legal procedure. The competence, credibility, following procedures as well as respect of rule of law has to be key criteria when electing judges, not loyalty to party politics. At individual level, the judges themselves have to take initiative, and start running the process against the prominent state officials as well as against police officers without using legal excuses, or delaying them infinitely.

These kind of processes are vital in the sense of creating preferences for democratic conduct and democratic values, since they would convey a strong message among ordinary people, that anyone who does not respect the rule of law, and who violates human rights would be held accountable as well as that there are no untouchables that are beyond the law. Finally, political parties must stop trying to exercise its control over the judiciary, and begin to respect its independence since this is the key institution through which the will of demos is articulated, and whose decisions are basically shaping the character of society. Less dependent judiciary, higher the chances for democratic transition. Such a performance of the judiciary would create trust in public institutions in sense of creating joint and coherent identity that would encourage loyalty to the Macedonian state that would go beyond the ethnic boundaries and consequently become a social fabric that provides multiple identities for the people of Macedonia.

At the local level, one needs people to upheld democracy by following its procedures and promoting its values. In other words, they have to be willing to change things for better but in democratic manner. Unfortunately, there are not much of these people at local level. Therefore, one has to manufacture specific type of “Macedonian-style-democratic-leaders”, which is long –term process of education and upgrading skills.

Position of women also has to be changed which requires reform in the education, increase in employment opportunities and the change of manner of how the patriarchal family functions. Therefore, the emphasis should be on education, reform of public sector, restructuring of economy, and support for rural sector, which ought to result in creating common denominator for all the Macedonian citizens as a precondition for forming a notion of Macedonian “ethnic-blind citizenship” and the smooth functioning of democracy.

## **REFERENCES :**

- “A threat to stability, Human rights violations in the Republic of Macedonia”  
Human Rights Watch, 485 Fifth Avenue NY New York, June 1996.
- “Albanians of Macedonia” Report on Minorities in South East Europe prepared by  
the Center for Documentation and Information on Minorities in Europe –  
South East (CEDIME – SE), April 2002.
- Beetham, David (Editor). “Defining and Measuring Democracy”. London –  
Thousand Oaks – New Delhi: SAGA Publications; SAGA Modern Political  
Series Volume 36, 1994.
- Beetham, David. “Democracy and Human Rights”. Polity Press, 1999.

- Bibo, Istvan. "Beda Malih Istocno Evropskih Drzava". Izdavacka Knjizarnica Zorana Stojanovica, Novi Sad: (1996).
- "Bombe srede Kumanovo" an article from daily newspaper Utrinski Vesnik, Wednesday June 5, 2003.
- Brunnbauer, Ulf "The Implementation of the Ohrid Frame work agreement: Ethnic Macedonian Resentments" Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe, Center for the Study of Balkan Societies and Cultures (CSBSC), University of Graz, Austria Issues I/2002.
- Chinkin, Christine. "The United Nations Decade for the Elimination of Poverty: What Role for International law", pp 576 in Steiner and Alston "International Human Rights in Context: Law, Politics, Moral" Oxford University Press, (1999)
- Daskalovski, Zhidas "Language and Identity: The Ohrid Frame Work Agreement and Liberal Notions of Citizenship and nationality in Macedonia". Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary, Issues I/2002.
- Drgaovic, Anica. "Differentials of Fertility in the Republic of Macedonia" New Balkan Politics. Volume 2/3, 2002.
- Engstrom, Jenny. "Multi-ethnicity or Bi-nationalism? The framework agreement and the feature of the Macedonian state". Journal on Ethno Politics and Minority Issues in Europe London School of Economic and Political Science, UK: Issue I/2002.
- Ethno barometer. "Crisis in Macedonia", Progress Report Rome Italy, VIA Brescia 16 retrieved from [ethno barometer @tiscamet.it](http://ethno_barometer@tiscamet.it), June 2003.
- Fukuyama, Francis. "Social Capital and Development: The Coming Agenda". SAIS Review; A journal of International Affairs vol. XXII no.1 (Winter-Spring 2002). The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
- Geertz, Clifford. "Primordial and Civil Ties" in Hutchinson and Smith "Nationalism" Oxford university Press, Oxford, New York: 1994
- Gill, Graeme. "The Dynamics of Democratization: Elites, Civil Society and the Transition Process". Hound mills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, London: Macmillan Press LTD, 2000.
- Group of Authors. "Encyclopedia of political culture" Nolit, Beograd: 1990. "Guide to the Republic of Macedonia", Macedonia Ministry of Information, Skopje: 1995.
- Held, David. "Democracy and the global order". 108 Cowley Road Oxford, IJF UK: Polity Press Black Well Publishers, 1995.
- Held, David. "Models of Democracy". 108 Cowley Road Oxford, IJF UK: Polity Press Black Well Publishers, 1995.
- Hislope, Robert. "The calm before the storm? The Influence of Cross –Border Networks, Corruption and Contraband on Macedonia Stability and Regional Security" Paper prepared for presentation at the 2001 Annual meeting of the American Political Science Association San Francisco, California.
- Hislope, Robert. "Organized Crime in Disorganized state", Problems od Post Communism Vol 49, May June 2002.
- Hobbes, Thomas. "Leviathan". London, UK: Penguin Books, reprint, 1985.

- INESCR, International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Retrieved from [www.unhcr.ch/menu3/b/a/cesr.htm](http://www.unhcr.ch/menu3/b/a/cesr.htm), April 2003.
- Muellerson, R. "Humans Rights Diplomacy." London, New York: Routledge, 1997.
- NGO organizes basic education for women retrieved from [www.realtymacedonia.org](http://www.realtymacedonia.org) July 2002.
- Nowicka, Wanda "The position of women and demographic processes in the countries in transition", Paper presented at the Seminar "Female empowerment and Demographic Processes: Moving Beyond Cairo" Lund, Sweden, April 21-24 1997; retrived from <http://www.waw.pdi.net/~polfedwo/English/lundpaper.htm>, October 2003.
- "Otkrijena kriminalna banda vo Strusko" an article from daily news paper Utrinski Vesnik, Wednesday June 6, 2003.
- Podunavac, Milan. "Fear and Politics" New Balkan Politics. Volume 2/3, 2002.
- Ortakovski T. Vladimir "Interethnic Relations and Minorities in the Republic of Macedonia" Southeast European Politics Vol.2, No.1 pp 24-45. May 2001.
- Polution, Hugh. "Who are the Macedonians", London, Hurst & Company, (1995), Second Edition (2002).
- "Poverty and Unemployment" United Nations Early Warning Report FYR Macedonia, No.1 2003.
- Putnam, Robert D. "Making Democracy Work – Civic Traditions in Modern Italy". Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Report of Helsinki Committee with the situation of HR in the Republic of Macedonia, year 1999, retrieved from [www.mhc.org.mk](http://www.mhc.org.mk) . August 2003.
- Report of Helsinki Committee with the situation of HR in the Republic of Macedonia, year 2000, retrieved from [www.mhc.org.mk](http://www.mhc.org.mk) . August 2003.
- Report of Helsinki Committee with the situation of HR in the Republic of Macedonia, year 2001, retrieved from [www.mhc.org.mk](http://www.mhc.org.mk) . August 2003.
- Report of Helsinki Committee with the situation of HR in the Republic of Macedonia, year 2002, retrieved from [www.mhc.org.mk](http://www.mhc.org.mk) . August 2003.
- "The Other Macedonian Conflict" (ESI Discussion Paper) European Stability Initiative supported by the German Foreign Ministry, 20 February 2002.
- Todosijevic, Bojan, "Macro Political Means of Ethnic Conflict Management in South East Europe. A critical Examination. "South East European Politics Vol. II No.2 pp 77-93. October 2001.
- Tokvil, Aleksis. "Stari Rezim I Revolucija" Izdavacka Knjizarnica Zoran Stojanovica, Novi Sad: 1994.
- Trajanovski, Zarko, Interview with employee of Macedonian Helsinki Committee, "Current state od human rights in the RM" Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, June 2003.
- Van Den Berghe, Pierre L. "Multicultural Democracy: can it work"? Nations and Nationalism 8 (4), 2002, 433-449. C ASEN 2002.