

104TH CONGRESS
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H. CON. RES. 103

Expressing support for equal and fair access to higher education in the Albanian language in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 21, 1995

Mr. GILMAN submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing support for equal and fair access to higher education in the Albanian language in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Whereas failure to achieve fair and cooperative inter-ethnic relations often leads to governmental repression and conflict between peoples of different ethnic backgrounds;

Whereas the achievement of fair and cooperative treatment of all citizens, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds, is a serious challenge for all of the states of the Balkans region, including those states that gained their independence after the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;

Whereas, as is seen in the ongoing conflicts in the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, attempts by any one ethnic group to engage in so-called

“ethnic cleansing” or to divide states along ethnic lines can lead to vicious conflict and tremendous suffering;

Whereas, as is seen in the repression of ethnic minorities in the regions of Kosovo and Vojvodina in the state of Serbia and Montenegro, failure to properly incorporate citizens of different ethnic backgrounds within political, social and governmental spheres can lead to violent repression of those ethnic minorities and merely promote the use of violence by such repressed minorities to gain their proper political and social rights;

Whereas the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as a successor state to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, faces important issues involving the fair and equitable treatment of all of its citizens, regardless of their ethnic background;

Whereas the extraordinary census conducted by the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in June 1994 determined that those citizens of Albanian descent constitute at least 23 percent of the total population;

Whereas Macedonia’s citizens of Albanian descent are increasingly concerned to ensure fair and equitable treatment as citizens of the state of Macedonia, including appropriate opportunities for education at all levels of instruction;

Whereas the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is an applicant for membership in the Council of Europe, an organization that encourages its member states to provide the opportunity for educational instruction in the languages of minority groups that constitute the citizenry of those states;

Whereas the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is an applicant for membership in the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, an organization that, in the “Copenhagen Document” of its 1990 Conference on the Human Dimension, noted the need for adequate opportunities for educational instruction in the native languages of citizens from minority groups;

Whereas international documents and conventions recognize the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish their own educational institutions within the framework of and in conformity with the legislation of the state within which they live;

Whereas admissions of ethnic Albanian citizens of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the Universities at Skopje and Bitola extend only up to 10 percent of total new enrollments, a figure far below the 23 percent of Macedonia’s population that is composed of ethnic Albanians;

Whereas higher education for ethnic Albanian citizens of Macedonia is made more difficult by the lack of general usage of the Albanian language at that level of instruction;

Whereas ethnic Albanian citizens of Macedonia had benefited from the creation of an Albanian-language University in Prishtina in the neighboring region of Kosovo after 1974;

Whereas the Albanian-language University at Prishtina was closed by the government of Serbia in 1990, preventing ethnic Albanians from Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia from receiving university-level instruction in their native language;

Whereas there are increasing reports that the ethnic Albanian citizens of Macedonia are concerned that efforts to ensure access to higher education in the Albanian language have met with little success;

Whereas an application was filed with the Ministry of Education of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in October 1994 seeking permission to open an Albanian-language university as part of the established system of education;

Whereas ethnic Albanian students at the Pedagogical Academy of the University at Skopje conducted a strike in November 1994 in support of instruction in the Albanian language to better ensure their ability to properly instruct students at the primary and secondary levels employing the Albanian language;

Whereas, in the absence of a response to the application filed with the Ministry of Education of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in October 1994, attempts were made in December 1994 to begin university classes in the Albanian language at Tetovo, Macedonia and were prevented by the intervention of police forces;

Whereas several ethnic Albanian Members of Parliament from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Dr. Fadil Sulejmani, former professor and rector at the Albanian Language University in Prishtina, Kosovo, now residing in Tetovo, Macedonia, visited the United States in February 1995 and informed United States Members of Congress of their concern for the lack of higher education in the Albanian language;

Whereas in February 1995 a private delegation of United States citizens led by former Member of Congress Joseph

DioGuardi visited Tetovo, Macedonia to observe renewed attempts to establish university classes offered in the Albanian language;

Whereas in February 1995 such renewed attempts to open an Albanian-language university at Tetovo, Macedonia were again prevented by police forces, with the death of one ethnic Albanian citizen of Macedonia and the wounding of 28 other persons occurring as a result of the related violence;

Whereas in June 1995 the ethnic Albanian party of Democratic Prosperity in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia expressed its concerns to the Council of Europe regarding the lack of adequate opportunity for higher education in the Albanian language;

Whereas the High Commissioner for National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has stated that it is time for a dialogue between the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and representatives of the ethnic Albanian minority in Macedonia on issues such as access to higher education in the language of national minorities; and

Whereas the Government and Parliament of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are considering the adoption of a new law on higher education: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that—*
- 3 (1) the Government of the Former Yugoslav
- 4 Republic of Macedonia should take all appropriate

1 measures to ensure the fair and equitable treatment
2 of all of its citizens, regardless of ethnic background;

3 (2) while steps taken by the Government of the
4 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to ensure
5 instruction in the Albanian language and the lan-
6 guage of other national minorities in Macedonia at
7 the primary and secondary levels of education are
8 commendable, the ethnic Albanian citizens of Mac-
9 edonia continue to suffer from the lack of oppor-
10 tunity for higher education in their native language;

11 (3) the Government and Parliament of the
12 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia should
13 therefore consider, within the framework of the
14 adoption of a new law on higher education, all
15 means by which higher education conducted in the
16 Albanian language can be provided, including the es-
17 tablishment of an Albanian-language university;

18 (4) the Government of the Former Yugoslav
19 Republic of Macedonia should also undertake steps
20 to ensure the establishment of Albanian-language
21 pedagogical faculties at established universities in
22 Macedonia;

23 (5) the efforts by the High Commissioner for
24 National Minorities of the Organization on Security
25 and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe,

1 and the Working Group on Ethnic Minorities of the
2 International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia,
3 to offer guidance and mediation to the Government
4 of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and
5 representatives of the Albanian minority in resolving
6 the issue of higher education in the Albanian lan-
7 guage, are commendable;

8 (6) the President should express to the Govern-
9 ment of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
10 the strong support of the Government of the United
11 States for measures that will contribute to democ-
12 racy and stability in the Former Yugoslav Republic
13 of Macedonia, including efforts to ensure access to
14 higher education in the Albanian language;

15 (7) the President should offer appropriate sup-
16 port for the efforts to the High Commissioner on
17 National Minorities of the Organization on Security
18 and Cooperation in Europe to resolve the issue of
19 access to higher education in the Albanian language;

20 (8) the President should offer appropriate sup-
21 port for efforts by the Government of the Former
22 Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to ensure access to
23 higher education in the Albanian language, including
24 assistance for the establishment of necessary curric-

1 ula and the provision of textbooks and related course
2 materials; and

3 (9) in the interest of improved inter-ethnic rela-
4 tions within Macedonia, the President of the Former
5 Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia should employ ap-
6 propriate authority under the Constitution of Mac-
7 edonia to provide pardons to those convicted of
8 charges relating to the events that accompanied at-
9 tempts to open university-level classes in the Alba-
10 nian language at Tetovo, Macedonia in February
11 1995.

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