

## MARTENS: BULGARIA NEEDS A CHANGE AND THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE IS GERB

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The President of the European People's Party (EPP), **Wilfried Martens**, said today that "Bulgaria needs a change and the only alternative is GERB", adding that the next elections in Bulgaria will be the most difficult in the last 18 years.

*"I don't believe that Bulgaria can be excluded from the European Union, as some say. But Bulgaria needs change, and I believe that Boyko Borissov and his party are capable of doing this change",*

Martens stated during the second day of an official visit to Bulgaria.

Martens visited today Plovdiv and Rakovski accompanied by **Boyko Borissov**, leader of GERB; **Tsvetan Tsvetanov**, Chairman of GERB; **Rumiana Jeleva**, Head of the Bulgarian delegation in the EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament; and **Ivan Totev**, coordinator of GERB for Plovdiv region.

President Martens participated in a meeting with more than 800 members of GERB in Plovdiv, where he presented membership cards to 200 new members of the party.

He also met the Bishop of Plovdiv Nikolay. Martens underlined that in the EU there is a tolerance between different churches, and the society respects Christian faith: *"We are a European political party, which respects all religions and beliefs, but the Orthodox Churches accepted to engage with us in direct dialogue."*

He told the Bishop that *"the fact that you invited me here is a signal that strong bonds will be built between us. Our dialogue is extremely important."*

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