

PM Boyko Borisov: "GERB attaches great importance to its work and partnership with the European People's Party"

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The Prime Minister of Bulgaria and President of GERB, **Boyko Borisov**, emphasised yesterday in Sofia the great support that he and his government receives by the European People's Party (EPP). In a conference on "The Bulgarian example in the fight against corruption and organised crime in Europe," jointly organized by the EPP and its member-party GERB, PM Borisov, joined by EPP President **Wilfried Martens** and EPP Secretary General **Antonio Lopez-Isturiz**, underlined the important reforms that the Bulgarian government is now implementing.

"The government of GERB attaches great importance to its work and partnership with the European People's Party. Since we have no coalition partner in Bulgaria, EPP is the coalition partner of GERB. We don't have a strong lobby in Europe and the only thing what we can count on is the friendship and support of the EPP. Fortunately this is the largest party in Europe," Borisov stated.

"The EP President Jerzy Buzek was chosen by the EPP, EPP nominated the President of the Commission - Jose Manuel Barroso, and President of the Council - Herman Van Rompuy. All of them know Bulgaria very well - the poor image that the country has and all the changes that have been undertaken in recent months. We count on them to support our reforms with the necessary funding, as the Bulgarian budget is made up so that it is financed by VAT, customs and by indirect taxes, which fall in the conditions of the current crisis. The only source of funding is the use of European funds and solidarity," the Bulgarian Prime Minister explained.

In response to the expectations of GERB, the President of the EPP Wilfried Martens said:

"I am proud that a year ago I strongly supported the leader of GERB during my visit to Bulgaria. I must say that the change which occurred is very positive thanks to your work and that of your team, Mr. Prime Minister. After the electoral victory of GERB, the party achieved impressive results in their attempts to meet the expectations of the Bulgarian people for a large and meaningful reform. As a result, during half a year in which the other states have been struggling with the crisis, your country has achieved very positive level of financial stability. Both the state and society as a whole joined the government's efforts against organized crime and corruption. This is a real war being fought by the Bulgarian government. I am glad that the government began prosecution of corruption at the high levels. Here we must mention two reports of the Department of the United States from March 11, which mention that the fight against corruption in Bulgaria is led by the government and also praise the government for its efforts," said the EPP President.

EPP Secretary General Antonio Lopez-Isturiz said, in turn, that Bulgaria should take the lead in a region which is very specific and important for Europe:

"I was confident that Boyko Borisov and his team will take the right actions for Bulgaria. You must take responsibility and participate in the project, which will bring Bulgaria forward, not only in the region but also in Europe. 25 years ago Spain was seen as backward and economically poor. 20 years later we are among the leaders of the EU. In my country it was a success story and why should not Bulgaria become also one of the leaders of the EU in future. We will work for this together with the EPP President Martens and we believe this can happen. You are not alone. The party, which governs Bulgaria belongs to the biggest party in Europe. So members of GERB must remember that you are not alone in this struggle," added the Secretary General.

Note to editors

The EPP is the largest and most influential European-level political party of the centre-right, which currently includes 72 member-parties from 39 countries, the Presidents of the Commission, Council, and Parliament, 13 6 non-EU heads of state and government, 13 members of the European Commission and the largest Group in the European Parliament.

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