

# SIMEON II - ELECTION COMMISSION RULES TODAY

Sofia, 30 April 2001



Bulgaria's former King Simeon II said at the weekend that he plans to be a candidate in the June 17 elections, despite a court ruling preventing his movement from registering.

As expected, Simeon has cut a deal with two small Bulgarian parties allowing him to stand - the Party of Bulgarian Women and Movement for National Revival Oborishte. (Oborishte in central Bulgaria is closely linked with a 19<sup>th</sup> century uprising against the Ottomans.)

The Central Electoral Commission is expected to issue a ruling today on whether the move is legally valid.

"The court's decision is not in a position to stop the continuing growth of the movement backed by thousands of Bulgarians," said the former king, who has lived in exile since he was nine years old. "The National Movement for Simeon II is an irreversible process."

According to the MBMD polling agency, he has the highest personal rating - 63% - of any politician in the country. Announcing his new movement three weeks ago, he promised to fight corruption and raise living standards.