



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union

Skopje, 8 June 2011

**Speech by Ambassador Sorensen at the European  
Movement Solemn Academy on the occasion of Europe  
Day**

**Wednesday, 8 June 2011**

**EU InfoCentre**

Speaking points

Ambassador Mr. Peter SØRENSEN

Head of the European Union Delegation

Dear President Ivanov,

Dear Deputy Prime Minister Naumovski,

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

It gives me great pleasure to address you at this Solemn Academy organised by the European Movement.

European affairs are too important to be left only to politicians!

For the European Union to be a continued success European citizens need to be involved and feel part of this very dynamic process of development and change. The reforms and changes that come with being a candidate country are not just a paper exercise but will have a real impact on all aspects of everyday life.

I warmly congratulate the European Movement on their sustained efforts in promoting European values in the country. Together with all other civil society organisations, they contribute to the strengthening of the strong European spirit which exists here. We will continue to work with you and the authorities in partnership to maintain Europe at the top of our agendas.

The Delegation of the European Union celebrates Europe Day in close collaboration with the European Movement. I am personally delighted that we are able to work with you to organise public debates and various other events that stimulate discussion of EU topics.

But, Europe is more than just serious discussion and legislative changes. The Europe Day programme reflects many dimensions: symbolic events with European Flag Day; fitness and wellbeing: running the marathon, exploring musical and cultural events around the city and involving young people.

Turning to the young people who took part in the inter-university debate on gender equality, I have great hopes for you and the country. Based on what my Deputy heard I can say I would vote for you! You are the future. You are the future decision makers. I would like to congratulate all those who will receive awards this evening, and for their individual efforts in promoting their country and its aspirations to join the European Union. I too share your aspirations that your country joins the EU.

You have confirmed our belief that Macedonia could organise a "good" election even if there are still things to work on. I know also that you can carry out the necessary reforms and changes required from a Candidate country. Now is the time to make real progress, to address the difficult issues facing the country, to step up the reforms and live up to and implement all of the recent manifesto pledges. We will be standing with you and you can count on our support along this challenging journey.