



## **A CHARTER OF PARTNERSHIP AMONG MACEDONIA AND ALBANIA, CROATIA AND THE UNITED STATES**

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### **Preamble**

1. The United States, Albania, Croatia and Macedonia, hereinafter referred to as Partners,
2. Joined by a common civilization and common belief in the moral and political values of liberal democracy;
3. Recognizing the special responsibility of democracies to rebuild a region gravely affected by wars of aggression on a new foundation of democratic, multi-ethnic and multi-confessional societies;
4. Sharing a common vision of a peaceful Southeast Europe fully integrated within the Euro-Atlantic community, dedicated to democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
5. Recognizing that the historic achievements at the NATO Summit in Prague and European Union Summit in Copenhagen offer us the opportunity to complete a new Europe, in which each nation, each ethnicity, each citizen and each faith is safe, secure and respected;
6. Affirming our commitment to the full development of democratic institutions and civil society, and the acceleration of democratic reform;
7. Underscoring the principle that progress towards NATO membership should be assessed on an individual basis, in accordance with performances and achievements of each candidate state;
8. Avowing a common interest in developing cooperative relations with all states of Southeast Europe from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, from Istria to Lake Ohrid; and in developing joint approaches to the new threats to our region and the Euro-Atlantic community to which we belong;
9. Affirm as a political commitment declared at the highest level, the following principles and procedures to guide their individual and joint efforts to achieve the goals of this Charter.

## **Principles of Partnership**

10. The United States has an enduring interest in the independence, territorial integrity and security of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia, and a profound dedication to their goal of full integration in the community of democratic Euro-Atlantic states.
11. The Partners affirm their commitment to the rule of law as a foundation for a transatlantic community of free and democratic nations, and to the responsibility of all just societies to protect and respect the human rights and civil liberties of all individuals.
12. The Partners underscore their shared commitment to the principles and obligations contained in the United Nations Charter and Helsinki Final Act.
13. The Partners recognize that their common efforts and the security of the Euro-Atlantic community as a whole will be enhanced by the participation of all neighbors in regional and multilateral institutions. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia reaffirm their determination to further enhance bilateral, regional and multilateral relations between themselves and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Serbia and Montenegro and with other neighbors.
14. The United States of America commends the measures taken by Albania, Croatia and Macedonia to advance the integration of Europe by establishing close cooperative relations among themselves and with their neighbors, as well as their promotion of regional cooperation.
15. The Partners intend to intensify their efforts to accelerate democratic reforms and enhance the security, prosperity, and stability of the region, guided by the following objectives in focusing their efforts to integrate Albania, Croatia and Macedonia into transatlantic and European institutions and assisting other states of the region to pursue these objectives.

## **The Common Objective of Full Euro-Atlantic Integration**

16. As part of a common vision of a Europe whole and free, the Partners declare that their shared goal is the full integration of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia into European and transatlantic political, economic, security and defense institutions. Europe will not be truly free until all of Southeast Europe is secure, and Europe cannot be whole while there are countries of the region, which are not yet included in Euro-Atlantic institutions.
17. The Partners reaffirm their dedication to the principle of Euro-Atlantic integration, expressed by Europe's new democracies among the Visegrad States of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic and in May 2000 at the formation of the Vilnius Group: "Our desire to integrate into the institutions of

- the Euro-Atlantic community emanates from our readiness to assume our fair share of responsibility for the common defense and to add our voice to the debate on our common future ... we reaffirm our commitment to the completion of the historic project of a Europe whole and free.”
18. The Partners reaffirm that their vision of a Europe whole and free complements and coincides with the vision of a Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea expressed by President George W. Bush at Warsaw in June 20 2001 and confirmed by President Kwasniewski in his address to the Vilnius Group Summit at Riga and by President Vaclav Havel in his opening address to the Prague Summit. The Partners acknowledge that their common goal is the further development of this community of shared values.
  19. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia each reaffirm their goal to become full members of all European and transatlantic institutions, including the European Union and NATO.
  20. The United States of America welcomes the aspirations and supports the efforts of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia to join NATO at the earliest opportunity. It affirms its consistent view that these democracies should have the opportunity to become full members as soon as they demonstrate the ability to assume the responsibilities of membership and a willingness to defend the democratic values protected by the Alliance.
  21. The Partners welcome the historic decisions of the Prague and Copenhagen Summits. They support the NATO Alliance's commitment to an open door policy and welcome the Alliance's recognition that aspiring members should join the Alliance as soon as they meet its' membership criteria. The Partners support the European Union's commitment to the integration of Southeast Europe in the 2000 Zagreb Declaration and reaffirmed in Copenhagen in 2002.

## **Democratic Reform and Human Rights**

22. The Partners affirm their support for the acceleration of democratic reform and the further transformation of government, civil society and civil institutions in Albania, Croatia and Macedonia as the best means to prepare a common European future for their people.
23. The United States commends the substantial progress Albania, Croatia and Macedonia have made in the establishment of democratic institutions and civilian control of government, their steps taken toward free market economy, and their contribution to the common defense of the Euro-Atlantic community.
24. The United States, building on the common commitments of this Charter, intends to work to facilitate the integration of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia in NATO and the European Union through sustained engagement in the

region and continued financial and material assistance for implementing democratic, economic and military reforms.

25. The Partners share a commitment to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in particular with respect to the rights of women, children, religious and ethnic minorities in all aspects of national life.

### **Economic Reform and Cooperation**

26. The United States commends the substantial progress its Partners have made to implement economic reform and development and their transition to free market economies.
27. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia will continue to implement domestic fiscal, monetary and trade policies, in conjunction with international financial institutions, to promote the development of a free market and sustainable economic growth.
28. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia will work individually and together to develop legal and financial conditions in their countries conducive to international investment, including the enactment of relevant legislation, facilitating the flow of information to international investors and the implementation of transparent privatization, procurement and other governmental processes. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia welcome U.S. investment in their economies.
29. The Partners reaffirm the necessity of achieving greater regional economic cooperation.

### **Regional Security**

30. The Partners intend to consult together, as well as with other countries, in the event that a Partner perceives that its territorial integrity, independence, or security is threatened or at risk, using bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for such consultations.
31. The United States welcomes and appreciates the contributions that Albania, Croatia and Macedonia have already made to European security and to the peace and security of Southeast Europe through the resolution of conflicts in the region, their contributions to NATO operations in the region, and through their regional security cooperation in the Southeast Europe Defense Ministerial.
32. Building on the existing cooperation among their respective ministries of defense and armed forces, the United States of America supports the efforts of the partners to be producers rather than consumers of Trans-Atlantic security. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia commit to undertake specific steps to strengthen the security of borders, to interdict transnational threats, to provide sufficient resources for defense requirements, and to implement

- military reforms that would maintain civilian control and enable the countries to operate with NATO forces, as well as to provide for the protection of all their citizens.
33. Recognizing that corruption and organized crime are grave threats to their democracies and a threat to all nations of the region, the Partners intend to continue coordinating their efforts to counter these threats to the political stability of the region and the future of their countries. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia are committed to national and multilateral measures to combat arms trafficking, narcotics trafficking, trafficking in persons, illicit trade and other forms of transnational crime. Such measures would include strengthening regional cooperation and, at the national level, the enactment of anti-corruption legislation and its effective implementation, and the strengthening of an effective and independent judicial system dedicated to upholding the rule of law.

### **The U.S.-Adriatic Relationship**

34. In all of these spheres of common endeavor, the Partners, building on their shared history of friendship and cooperation, solemnly reaffirm their dedication to a rich and dynamic Adriatic-American partnership for the 21st century.
35. The Partners view their partnership in the areas of political, economic, security, defense, cultural, and environmental affairs as contributing to closer ties between their people and facilitating the full integration of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia into European and transatlantic structures.
36. In order to further strengthen these ties, the Partners plan establish a Partnership Commission chaired at an appropriately high level to evaluate common efforts. The Partners contemplate that this Commission would meet twice a year or more often as necessary to assess results of bilateral consultations on democratic reform, human rights, economic reform, crime and corruption, regional security and other areas, and to review progress achieved toward meeting the objectives of this Charter. The Partners may also establish other appropriate mechanisms for cooperation.