

ТЕОРИЯ И ИСТОРИЯ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ И ВНЕШНЕЙ ПОЛИТИКИ

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ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬСТВО МАКЕДОНИИ В ОБСЕ 2023: ТУМАННЫЕ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ

В статье рассматриваются вызовы и перспективы предстоящего в 2023 году председательства Македонии в ОБСЕ, которое сочетает в себе серьезные проблемы как в ОБСЕ, так и слабости македонской дипломатии. Данное сочетание не дает особых оснований для надежды в контексте ситуации на Украине, которая, по всей видимости, будет доминировать в повестке дня. С одной стороны, ОБСЕ переживает экзистенциальный кризис как организация, которая явно не смогла сохранить мир и сотрудничество на европейском континенте. С другой стороны, во время самого серьезного глобального кризиса безопасности за последние десятилетия председателем Организации должно стать одно из ее малых и самых слабых государств. Ключевые вопросы выглядят следующим образом: имеет ли значение, кто председательствует в ОБСЕ в ситуации, когда государства-члены уже заняли чью-то сторону, а процесс принятия решений зашел в тупик? Насколько актуальна сегодня ОБСЕ и каковы ее перспективы?

***Ключевые слова:** ОБСЕ, председительство, Македония, дипломатия, архитектура европейской безопасности.*

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THE MACEDONIAN CHAIRMENSHIP WITH OSCE 2023: DARK CLOUDS LOOMING ON THE HORIZON

The article deals with the challenges and prospects of the forthcoming 2023 OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office of Macedonia, which combines the serious problems of both OSCE and the Macedonian weak diplomacy. The combination

of the two does not give many reasons for hope in the context of the Ukraine situation, which with all likelihood will dominate the agenda. On one hand, OSCE is facing an existential crisis as an organization that has obviously failed to preserve peace and cooperation on the European continent but still badly seeks out its new raison d'être. On the other hand, during the worst global security crisis in the recent decades, the Organization is to be chaired by one of its minor and weakest states. The key questions read: does it matter who chairs the OSCE in a situation where the member states have already taken sides and the decision-making process is in impasse? How relevant is OSCE today and what are its prospects?

Key words: OSCE, Chairmanship, Macedonia, diplomacy, European security architecture.

Introduction. The year 2020 was quite a unique one for the Macedonian government on the international scene. Amidst the fears and uncertainties raised by the Covid-19 pandemic, the small and poor South Eastern European nation seemed to accomplish two significant foreign policy achievements. First, it became NATO member state in March 2020; at the end of the same year it was unanimously selected to exercise the function of the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2023 at the OSCE Ministerial Council's meeting in Tirana [13]. It was a ray of pride for the Government that had suffered a long lasting impasse on its way to EU.

For the sake of NATO and EU accession, the government sacrificed the constitutional sovereignty and national identity in 2018 by signing an asymmetrical agreement with Greece over the name change [17]. French President Macron torpedoed the hopes for the start of the negotiation process in October 2019 [4]; since the autumn of 2020 it has been neighbouring Bulgaria that halts Macedonia's accession process. On the internal front, the Government has been struggling with a range of economic, social, political and other problems. The looming crisis culminated with the significant defeat in the 2021 municipal elections. Following the then Prime Minister's resignation, it took some time for the new government coalition to get things into control again.

The dominant public opinion has had its say in the last few years: the country has been moving in a wrong direction. Also the EU's credibility continues to decline. According to the head of the Institute for Democracy – Societas Civilis (i.e. the think tank that carries out regular public opinion polls), "European dream still shines, but the European reality for North Macedonia is becoming a bad dream" [3]. The occurrence of 24 February 2022 coincided with the new (and internally and internationally anonymous) Prime Minister (Dimitar Kovačevski) attempt to revive the dialogue with his Bulgarian counterpart, Kiril Petkov. The deadlock between the two countries is still in place, taking all attention and diplomatic energy from the

already enfeebled Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). In sum, the Macedonian elites are self-centered and autistic with regard to the world affairs.

This brief overview of the state of affairs that trouble the forthcoming OSCE chairmanship-in-office is to serve only to a limited aim of contextualizing the research problem – i.e. the (in)capacities of the Macedonian state and diplomacy to lead an international organization at least in a limited period of time. The main premise of the following analysis is the fact that there is undeniable link between a country's domestic and foreign policy. In this very case, the country in question is both an internally weak state and internationally dependent on the same Western factors that have been engaged in Macedonia's state-building for a couple of decades, including a regime change through a colored revolution in 2015/2016. On the other side of the equation, there is an international organization that has been in deep crisis for years. The combination of two does not leave many reasons for optimism.

Bearing in mind the widely defined OSCE's 'core mission', apparently there are a vast number of issues that should be addressed simultaneously by the next Chairmanship-in-Office. However, the Ukraine crisis (that has in the meantime escalated into a proxy war between the Collective West and Russia) is going to be a dominant one. The significance of this geopolitical drama casts a shadow not only on the other priorities but also on the OSCE's existence. According to many short-sighted OSCE analysts and experts, the Ukrainian events came as a shock. The most predictable event in the last several years had obviously been overlooked and/or intentionally bypassed by many. Indicatively, the OSCE network of think tanks and academic institutions [14] almost instantly organized a webinar entitled "The war in Ukraine and its consequences for the OSCE". Consequently, the co-coordinators announced a call for short papers (the so-called two pagers) for a joint OSCE Network publication to be published in mid-2022. The paper we are presenting here was originally written for that publication upon a direct request from the coordinators, expecting a sterile overview of the Macedonian preparations for the Chairmanship. However, the author did not meet their expectations and the paper was rejected under the pretext that it was written in a 'polemical style'. The reviewers were particularly upset to read that the Ukrainian war was one of the most predictable events especially since 2014, but also that the ongoing developments have turned into a proxy war of NATO/West vs Russia. It did not take long for them to publish a position paper of their own and to share it with the Network's members: their key problem (as they defined it) was not the role of OSCE in the new geopolitical landscape but "how should OSCE deal with Russia" [7]. In an implicit way, the authors pointed out that OSCE is not a problem by itself, but the problem is in one of its member-states: Russia. In other words, they lay out some options ahead for the Organization and the leading Troika.

For the sake of the limited length, here we try to give concise answers to the following critical questions (as the author was originally asked by the OSCE

Network's coordinators): a) in what condition and shape is the Macedonian diplomacy in general? b) How much knowledge and experience does the Macedonian state possess with respect of chairing an international organization and particularly how much knowledge is there with respect to Russia-Ukraine relations in a longer period of time? c) Is it likely for a small and weak state to make any difference as a Chairman-in-Office in a complex situation like the current one?

On the Macedonian foreign policy and diplomacy – if any. Talking about a meaningful Macedonian foreign policy and its diplomatic capacities has been a difficult issue even for the domestic researchers [21]. For years, the two most important foreign policy goals were NATO and EU membership, which could be summed up into the TINA principle (There Is No Alternative). At first NATO was seen only as a way station to the ultimate goal: EU membership, i.e. escape from poverty and gaining social wellbeing. The obsession with just two international organizations has set aside all other international and multilateral arrangements and communications. The OSCE has been one of them despite the fact that the Organization used to have a very significant role during the first years of Macedonia's independence. Namely, while the country was struggling for international recognition, the OSCE mission set a foot in the small "oasis of peace" on the territory of former Yugoslavia. It was the first international organization to deploy a mission, which was valued as a *de facto* international recognition. Later on it was the High Commissionaire on National Minorities who got involved into the interethnic conflict and especially in the field of higher education in Albanian language. Nowadays, OSCE's mention (or more precisely, ODIHR) refers mostly to the (legality and legitimacy of) electoral processes. The overview of the OSCE mission in Skopje displays a list of activities and initiatives that speak of the host country's deep internal problems. The inter-ethnic relations, promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination, fight against corruption, institution-building and the rule of law (especially in the judiciary and electoral processes) are just a few of them [15] (1). According to *Freedom House* [1], North Macedonia is still a hybrid regime, while *The Economist* classifies it as "flawed democracy" [5]. Whatever is the right evaluation, Macedonia remains a country with deep and unresolved internal issues that impact peace and stability in the region.

In an article from 2014 entitled "The Echo of the Ukrainian crisis in Macedonia", the author described the Macedonian foreign policy in the following way: "Any discussion over the foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia is determined by the fact that one deals with a rather autistic state: since its independence it has been manifesting difficulties to react to and communicate with others. Having been a successor-state of an influential non-aligned state (as Yugoslavia was), alike the other counterparts in the region, Macedonia did not inherit anything from the past. Instead it has grown into a self-centred state, exclusively focused (if not obsessed) on NATO and EU integration and almost unaware of any developments on global scale. The accession to NATO and the EU has strongly de-

terminated its foreign policy goals and activities for more than 20 years” [22]. Ten years later, nothing much has changed – except that the country became a part of NATO for a very high price [19; 20].

According to Koneska [10], the Macedonian foreign policy since 1991 has been focused onto two sets of objectives – one relating to the country’s sovereignty and security, the other concerning its belonging to various international and regional organizations, in particular NATO and EU. One could also argue that it is hard to distinguish one objective from another. The two international organizations have been generally perceived in a non-dialectical way, as something static and ideal in spite of the crisis and dramatic changes of the constellations of the international relations. Up to 2006 when the country was governed by the VMRO-DPMNE government official visits paid to any non-Western country was a rarity. Nikola Gruevski’s government slightly changed the direction mostly due to economic reasons, while the Macedonian diplomats and political representatives launched an “offensive” all around the globe. The main goal was an increase of direct foreign investments and other economic enterprises that should have had a positive impact on economic growth. A part of the quest was also building closer ties with Russia in the energy sector hoping for an inclusion in the so-called South Stream gas pipeline to transport natural gas to Macedonia. Gruevski’s government was overthrown in 2016 through a colored revolution. Some analysts believe that he had to be removed from office because of geopolitical reasons. The successor government of Zoran Zaev made a detour and brought the country back on the Western course, which was crowned by NATO membership in 2020.

The predominantly one-sided, pro-Western policy (even if the price paid was at expense of the national interests and identity) has resulted into a lack of any creative and authentic foreign policy and diplomatic thinking. A legitimate question arises: is a semi-protectorate (due to the excessive state-building building process run by the Western actors) able to create and run a foreign policy according to its national interests? Or more precisely: does such a state need a foreign policy at all? So far, the political elites faced a tough choice between the Western allies only twice, and both times the decision was in favour of the US rather than the EU.

Since the end of the internal conflict between the Albanian paramilitary (UCK) and the Macedonian security forces in 2001, crowned by the so-called Ohrid Framework Agreement, the political system has become hybrid of parliamentarism and ethnic power-sharing. This change has produced shifts in the foreign policy field, where a parallel system of leadership has been installed and tolerated. In short, the State stopped talking in one voice with the world but in two ethnically defined ones. Accordingly, the selection of the diplomatic staff has become a field for inter-party and inter-ethnic bargaining. The meritocracy and professionalism were forgotten altogether. The key foreign policy goals have usually been defined in the power centres such as Brussels and Washington, while

UN, Council of Europe and particularly OSCE have been out of the radar. For instance, in the early days of the Ukraine crisis, the Defence Minister Slavjanka Petrovska rushed to publicly declare full loyalty to the North-Atlantic Alliance by expressing willingness to send troops on the ground in Ukraine if needed. It provoked waves of mocking but also concerns as it seemed that the inexperienced minister failed to see both that Ukraine is not a NATO member state and that Brussels had not even think of such a military option.

The OSCE Chairmanship with incapacitated diplomacy? The internal political crisis and a sort of political autism have led to devastation of the Macedonian diplomatic service. In addition to the career mismanagement in the MFA, the key ambassadorial positions have been vacant – some of them in the major capitals in the world (such as Washington and Moscow). At the time being, for instance, the new UN ambassador has just taken his seat in New York. The political parties still negotiate over their protégés as candidates for ambassadors, in bargaining that does not take into account their diplomatic career path, experience and performance. The union of the Macedonian diplomats has been warning for years about the negative trends within the MFA. Some of them include downtime in career management, discrimination, degradation of some career diplomats and even repression [2]. The MFA has been marred by a few scandals too, one of which related to a position (of deputy ambassador) in OSCE itself. Namely, the Serbian authorities arrested the newly appointed deputy to the chief of the OSCE mission in Vienna under charges of involvement in a ‘rescue mission’ of the Armenian president’s brother who had been involved in financial scandals. The scandal echoed strongly in Vienna, but the Macedonian ambassador kept silent. Hence his credibility has already been damaged.

For the sake of this analysis the author has carried out several interviews with diplomats and ex-ambassadors. The inquiry sent to the MFA remained ignored. When it comes to the competency and professionalism, the pundits emphasize a few points. First, as it seems the current ambassador’s term in office in Vienna will be extended for the sake of the Chairmanship, which is a good news. However, when it comes to the rest of the staff (between 19-25 people allotted), the vast majority is inexperienced when it comes to OSCE affairs and functioning – with exception of only one professional diplomat with know-how at the OSCE desk. On the contrary, the most eminent and most experienced diplomats in the OSCE matters are completely bypassed. For seven years, the seconded Macedonian police officers served as a part of the OSCE Mission in eastern Ukraine but it is questionable if anyone is going to consult them on anything now that they have returned home.

In general, the multilateral sector in the MFA is the weakest one in years, as the multilateral diplomatic activity has never been seen as very important. The mismanagement of the human resources is unfortunately the constant feature of Macedonian political management. Instead of making a pool of diplomats (which

is a long time mantra in the MFA) who used to work with/in OSCE and other multilateral organizations, the MFA has decided on the team based on other criteria. Also, it could have gathered together with other experts from the universities, think-tanks and research centres and think tanks with knowledge of OSCE mission, and now particularly the Russia-Ukraine war conflict.

It's no wonder that the small country does not have much experience in terms of chairing and managing international fora. When it comes to the 2023 OSCE Chairmanship, in the last couple of years, the general public has heard bits and pieces about this diplomatic challenge. Some well-informed retired diplomats go as far as to argue that the candidacy of N. Macedonia for this seat did not pass any prior wider consultation within and between the Government and Parliament – at least, with respect to some crucial questions, such as: was it a good timing for taking over this position, but also the assessment and agreement on financial burden, the human resources, the political agenda, etc. [12]. In the interviews, some of the most experienced diplomats argued that the former MFA Nikola Dimitrov (the one who had signed the name deal with Greece just a year before) rushed to gain one more achievement for his ministerial portfolio at the OSCE meeting in Tirana. Hence the news appeared as a surprise. However, Dimitrov's successor Bujar Osmani announced it in a pompous way as a great achievement. What has been emphasised as a 'diplomatic success' *per se* is now dramatically turning into a huge challenge for the Macedonian foreign policy. It is easy to declare a political will for "authentic contributions to the work of OSCE" (*inter alia*), but the reality check shows something completely opposite.

The government is still expected to come up with the priorities for the 2023 OSCE Chairmanship. So far the entire political discourse is full of buzz-words and repetitions, as if this position is some sort of medal rather than an unprecedented challenge at the time when the entire European security architecture is stumbling down under the waves of the developments that go far beyond Ukraine. The latest NATO member state is parroting anything that is being said in the power circles of Washington and Brussels with no position of its own even when it comes to the self-hurting sanctions imposed on Russia.

At a glance, the Macedonian MFA's website indicates that it has not been updated regularly (except for the part of the ongoing news and activities of the minister/ministry). The Strategic Plan 2021-2023 (last updated in March 2021) describes the OSCE Chairmanship in the following way [18]:

"Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2023 is a great diplomatic success, which offers an opportunity for a new, better international positioning of the Republic of Northern Macedonia. In addition to the OSCE, the country will undertake the commitment and ambition to raise the level of our participation in the Council of Europe, in the bodies of the United Nations, as well as in all other multilateral forums that share common values with our international friends and partners."

“A special diplomatic success in 2020 is the acceptance of our candidacy for the Presidency of the RSM with the OSCE in 2023, which was confirmed by the unanimous decision of 56 member states at the OSCE Ministerial Meeting held on 3 and 4 December in Tirana. The chairmanship of the OSCE offers an opportunity for a new, better international positioning of R. N. M. as a constructive international actor, which in turn is a space for the realization of its own international political priorities. Above all, it means an opportunity for increased support of public opinion in the EU for the accession process of RN Macedonia; but also an opportunity to contribute to building the reputation of the country or the political brand – Republic of Northern Macedonia, as a stable international partner.”

Officially, the MFA argues that it will focus on “finding and implementing effective ways to contribute authentically to the work of the UN, Council of Europe, OSCE and other international organizations”. The financial support for OSCE Chairmanship is 615.000.000 MKD denars (approx. 10 million EUR), mostly for the human resources, new premises in Vienna, events organization, etc.). The internal analyses of the MFA openly stresses the lack of financial basis for all diplomatic activities, and particularly for the ones in the multilateral fora.

Amidst a global drama, for the Macedonian Chairmanship (and for the country), the technical side of the process will have a priority. The decisions will be made by the most powerful participants, so Skopje would be expected to manage the activities and make the process go smoothly. The main show will be run by the powerful members as always.

There is an impression that the country has rushed into the process with no previous knowledge, strategic thinking and analytical skills and intelligence for a complex situation – and most importantly, it is not a secret for the other member states, especially the powerful ones. The Macedonian diplomacy is too slow and probably late with regard to the many preparatory aspects of the work.

Does it really matter? Chairmanship exercised by a small, internationally irrelevant and internally weak state may have just a symbolic meaning in international relations even in less dramatic times. Understandably, one can hardly expect a country that is still struggling to preserve its vital and national interests vis-à-vis its neighbours and is subservient to great power centres to take a lead or to come up with major ideas in the most critical moment for OSCE, if not the entire world. In other words, the problem is not about the successfulness of the Chairmanship but about the Organization that has been in deep crisis for decades. The old saying applies both to N. Macedonia and OSCE: “You made your bed, now you have to lie in it.”

To put it differently, the Republic of N. Macedonia has no capacity for chairing OSCE, especially in this situation. Also, OSCE has much bigger problems to resolve than the potentially ineffective and incompetent chairmanship. Many believe that the German diplomacy (i.e. the country that is to follow the Macedo-

nian Chairmanship) is going to run the show. The Macedonian hopes to use the position for promotion of its own national interests are a pipe-dream: the same happened during Macedonian presidency of Council of Europe when the MFA did not dare even mention the name issue with Greece and the violation of minority rights of ethnic Macedonians in the neighboring countries. At this point, the similar dispute with Bulgaria is likely to remain in the shadows of the dramatic events elsewhere. The off-record testimonies indicate that the MFA has no intention whatsoever to promote or even mention the Macedonian national interests during the presidency (something that is a usual diplomatic practice). Allegedly, the Macedonian leadership would intentionally keep the problems with Bulgaria out of OSCE arena, even though they are very relevant and compatible for the OSCE philosophy, comprehensive security and particularly the human rights matters. In short, the idea of the Macedonian diplomacy is not to use OSCE as an arena for settling a very important dispute with another member state.

The faults on the Macedonian side are not negligible but even the most perfect chairing with the OSCE in the coming years would not change anything on the ground. The OSCE itself suffers from many problems too. Currently the mission in Ukraine is at a halt, and furthermore Russia puts a lot of blame on its performance and bias. Recently the Organization called for a ceasefire and negotiations, but its most powerful members turn their deaf ears to such proposals, pumping more weapons in Ukraine.

New OSCE and/or New Europe. To put it bluntly, OSCE has never been a real pro/pan European organization. The conventional wisdom goes that OSCE was born out of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), which had served as a multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between East and West during the Cold War. Just a year after the fall of the Berlin wall, in 1990, the Charter of Paris for a New Europe was adopted with an obvious cause: to transform and prepare the CSCE for taking its role in the historic change on the European continent. In its almost thirty-year long history, the OSCE has had its ups and downs, but also some specific traits and shortcomings it failed to overcome. Probably the most indicative trait of that allegedly 'new Europe' was the secured place for the USA even within this regional organization. In addition to NATO that continued its existence even after its key rival (i.e. Warsaw Pact) was disbanded, the US politics in Europe and beyond (in Euroasia) have been institutionalized through OSCE. The message was clear: there could be no security in Europe without the US presence.

Unlike some other international organizations, OSCE is unique in terms of the formal equality of its 57 member states in the decision-making process. Furthermore, OSCE has been proud of its comprehensive approach to security, i.e. a range of concerns that cover issues starting from arms control up to human security issues. Such a wide span of geographical, political and economic areas brought together under one umbrella plus the wide-range missions may look

splendid but only theoretically. In practice, there has been a lot of overlapping (national and collective) interests, which ended up in a paralysis to act accordingly or even misuse of the OSCE brand. The best example for the latter was the controversial Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), established in 1998, led by the notorious American diplomat, William Walker. The KVM greatest 'achievement' was the discovery of the alleged massacre of Albanian civilians in the village of Račak in January 1999. An independent commission confirmed that the deceased were fighters and not civilians, and also that their bodies were moved to set the scene of alleged atrocity against civilians. At the end of the day, it seemed as if the KVM was deployed to incite the NATO intervention instead of violence prevention in the Serbian province of Kosovo.

Some authors have rightly stressed its 'east of Vienna' bias. David J. Galbreath is right in arguing that OSCE has gone through a path from "a collective and common security organization during the Cold War to a security, democracy and human rights proselytiser after the Cold War." [8. P. 161]. The experts and insiders have been aware of the deep institutional crisis of OSCE as well as its legitimacy basis. The former Secretary General Greminger noted that „the OSCE is operating in a challenging political environment: trust in multilateral institutions and mechanisms for solving global problems is low, and unilateral and transactional approaches are prevailing. The polarization of key state actors in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security area is deepening, violent conflicts are once again a reality in the OSCE area, arms control regimes are dissolving, and the risk of military incidents is rising.” [9] Another experts posed a rather naïve question: “Despite the deteriorating security situation in the OSCE area, governments are not making full use of the OSCE. Why is this so?” [6] The answer is simple: the real-politik has never left the international arena. In his seminal article, Mearsheimer foresaw that “institutions have minimal influence on state behavior, and thus hold little promise for promoting stability in the post-Cold War world” [11]. The international organizations and institutions brought false promises after the end of the bipolar system. They were meant to be mechanisms for peace and cooperation but turned down into instruments of great powers' politics.

Within its apparently wide membership, the OSCE member states have already taken sides with respect to the Ukrainian crisis. It is impossible to even imagine the diplomats from the Western countries (that are simultaneously members in the international organizations that either imposed harsh and illegal sanctions on Russia or tended to strip it down of membership) to behave in one way in, let's say, NATO or Council of Europe, and in a different way within OSCE bodies. At a recent panel, Timothy Garton Ash spelled out two scenarios for the world: a new Yalta or a new Helsinki [16]. However, in his preferred (second) option there was no place for “Putin's Russia”. OSCE without Russia has no meaning whatsoever, but in the vision of 'new Yalta', not only OSCE but even “global

NATO” would become obsolete and a smoke-screen for an alleged “international community”. It seems it is a matter of time when the Organization will internally split on two blocks as if a replica of the Cold war international structure: the collective West vs Russia (and their allies).

This internal division is nothing new, of course. The demonization of Russia started since long ago and OSCE has never even tried to deal with it. As an example, I may point out a personal experience. At a scholarly/expert debate on arms race and militarization in the Balkans, which was organized within the OSCE Network in late 2019, the issue of (inimical) Russia eventually popped up as the most significant one. As there was no Russian participant, and almost all the speakers agreed on this posture, I was the only one to publicly pose a direct question if it was an event organized by NATO or OSCE (Network). In short, even the academic circles have internalized the power politics rhetoric of the political elites.

Conclusion. Even though the events in Ukraine had been one of the most predictable events (since the early 90s, and again since 2014), and OSCE had stationed monitoring mission on the ground in eastern Ukraine, obviously the most relevant actors in the European security architecture failed to do what was expected from them – namely, early warning, violence prevention, creative peace thinking and promotion of nonviolent ways of conflict mitigation. The Macedonian Chairmanship could easily be remembered as one of the last in the Organization’s historical existence. The Second Cold War (or maybe we should say, hot war) does not give much space for improvisations and acting as European security architecture’s pillar. OSCE is either going to find its *differentia specifica* or it will drown in its irrelevance in the new multipolar order. The chances for the former are nil, bearing in mind the lost and failed promises of the Organization in many prior occasions when it could have acted differently.

NOTES:

(1) It’s interesting that all other OSCE missions are nominally refer to the respective countries (such as OSCE Mission to Albania, OSCE Mission to Serbia, Moldova, etc.) – the only exception is the mission to the Macedonian capital. It may look like insignificant fault or omission, but for the country and people that had to exchange their constitutional name under Western pressure, this fact gets a completely new dimension.

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