



# Dotting the 'i's and Crossing the 't's. Securing Fundamentals for a Future Democratic Macedonia

February 29, 2016 / Skopje, Macedonia

**10.00-10.30 Registration**

**10.30-11:00 Welcoming remarks**

Saso Dodovski, President, Progres Institute for Social Democracy

Jonas Andersson, Project Manager, Olof Palme International Center

Giacomo Filibeck, Deputy Secretary General, Party of European Socialists

**Keynote Speaker**

Zoran Zaev, President, Social Democratic Union of Macedonia

**11.00-13.00 Breaking the Chains. Conditions for free, fair and credible elections**

*"The role of checks and balances in establishing and maintaining a democratic society and the rule of law. The experiences in Hungary"*, Laszlo Kovacs, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary

*"Perspectives from an elections observer"*, Evin Sarac, election expert (Sweden)

*"Overcoming the repetitive structural violence and electoral fraud in the Republic of Macedonia"*, Xhabir Deralla, Civil NGO

*"The importance of Macedonia living up to democratic standards"*, Marianne Aasen, Member of Parliament, Labour Party (Norway)

*"SDSM Positions"*, Radmila Sekerinska, SDSM Deputy President

Moderator: Kalinka Gaber, Program Director, Progres Institute for Social Democracy

## **Concluding Remarks**

Sergei Stanishev, President, Party of European Socialist

**13.00-14.00 Lunch**

**14.00-16.00 Reinstating pluralism in media space**

*“EU perspective on the necessity of media freedom and freedom of speech”*, Jens Nilsson, MEP, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

*“Does and why does the EU tolerate deterioration of the freedom of speech in the Western Balkans”*, Vladimir Todoric, International Secretary, Democratic Party (Serbia)

*“SDSM Positions”*, Robert Popovski, member of SDSM Negotiating Team

*“Pluralism and Media Freedom is a prerequisite for democracy”*, Josef Weidenholzer, MEP, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

*“The state of media pluralism in Macedonia”*, Petrit Saracini, media expert and human rights activist

*“Protection of public interest in the media and pluralism of thought”*, Biljana Bejkova, NGO Infocenter

Moderator: Aleksandar Spasov, Program Manager, Progres Institute for Social Democracy

**16.00-16.30 Concluding remarks and closure**