

# **AMHRC/MHRMI Condemn European Betrayal of OMO "ILINDEN" PIRIN**

Melbourne, Australia and Toronto, Canada – 6/12/09 - The **Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee** and **Macedonian Human Rights Movement International**, have written in protest to the Council of Europe after an appalling decision was taken by the Committee of Ministers (COM - 1/12/09) in Strasbourg, to end the monitoring of the execution of the 2005 judgement of the European Court of Human Rights involving Bulgaria and the de-registration of OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN.

The COM decided to close the case without requiring the re-registration of the party. This was done without proper justification and it is astounding, when coupled with the fact that the **Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights**, Thomas Hammarberg, as recently as last November, criticised Bulgaria in regard to this very issue (see the report on the **AMHRC** website).

It is outrageous that this body of the Council of Europe has in effect colluded with the Bulgarian authorities to further suppress the already marginalised. Foucault's dictum, on the permanent presence of power in the governance of all interactions, whether micro or macro, is proved once more. However, we find it shocking that it has been here exhibited so blatantly and crudely.

The spirit of modern Europe is supposed to be about enabling the excluded to frame their marginality in a manner that increases their liberty. The decision taken in Strasbourg by the Committee of Ministers charged with overseeing the full execution of judgements of the European Court of Human Rights, has in practice enabled Bulgarian discrimination to utilise the registration process for the purpose of accurately identifying its 'target' in order to further bully it. **Co-President of OMO, Stojko Stojkov**, has informed **AMHRC/MHRMI**, that this, among other things, was made clear to the COM in an official communication from **OMO** just days (27/11/09) prior to the COM's unjust decision. **Stojkov** pointed out that **OMO** has demonstrated on many occasions to the COM, "*...irregularities in court proceedings, police pressure and intimidation of the members of the party*" in Bulgaria. The **OMO** communication to the COM, also prophetically explained that it would be discriminatory on the part of COM to decide to end **OMO's** registration process, as this would contradict earlier actions on the part of the COM, "*...which has supervised the outcome of the*

*proceedings initiated by the applicants [of other stifled minority parties] following the judgements of the court to have their parties registered anew.” Embarrassingly for Europe, it was to no avail.*

**OMO** has affirmed that it will not permit this setback to halt its work. **OMO** currently has two new applications pending before the European Court of Human Rights. Depending on the results of these cases, **OMO** may be able to avoid the tedious process of beginning registration once more. We, the representatives of the **AMHRC/MHRMI**, demand that European institutions cease this discriminatory ‘raising of the bar’ for Macedonians and take immediate action to reverse the inequity of the COM decision.

For those interested in making a contribution to support the courageous human rights struggles of **OMO** **“ILINDEN” Pirin**, please visit the websites of the **AMHRC** and **MHRMI**. These are *the* Macedonian NGO’s that have provided (and still provide) technical, logistical and financial aid for **OMO** **“ILINDEN” Pirin**, since the party’s foundation in 1999.

Established in 1984 the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) is a non governmental organisation that informs and advocates to governments, international institutions and broader communities about combating discrimination and promoting basic human rights. Our aspiration is to ensure that Macedonian communities and other excluded groups throughout the world are recognised, respected and afforded equitable treatment. For more information please visit [www.macedonianhr.org.au](http://www.macedonianhr.org.au), or contact AMHRC at macedonian\_rights@hotmail.com or via +61 3 93298960.

Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) has been active on human and national rights issues for Macedonians and other oppressed peoples since 1986. For more information, please visit [www.mhrmi.org](http://www.mhrmi.org), or contact MHRMI at 416-850-7125, or [info@mhrmi.org](mailto:info@mhrmi.org).