Excerpts from President Gjorge Ivanov’s Press Conference

announcing general pardons for 56 individuals

*April 12, 2016*

1. It is natural that in assisting and resolving [Macedonian domestic issues] they [members of the international community] are primarily guided by their own interests.
2. Developments in Macedonia are not our making. This is someone else’s ballgame. It is illegal to put under surveillance the entire leadership of the country, journalists, media, diplomats and then hand over this fabricated material in the hands of one man, give him strong support to use it. Subsequent events unambiguously showed that someone else is seriously involved in creating this crisis. Macedonia is neither the first nor the last country in the world to experience such a scenario.
3. This crisis is in someone else’s interest. Other goals and interests are at stake. There is someone trying to attain something out of it by abusing the embattled politicians, political leaders and their supporters.
4. Judges have come under immense pressure from all sides. Representatives of the international community walk in our courts while judges try to decide whether someone should be detained or not. A few days ago a judge had to be rushed to hospital because he fainted during a hearing. It has become an unbearable situation for many, increasingly resembling a war of extermination. I fear the Republic of Macedonia might turn into the geographical Macedonia of the 1920s when antagonism amongst Macedonians peaked to a level of mutual extermination through physical assassinations. Just to remind you, foreign powers incited these events even then.
5. There are days and times when politicians, independently of whether in power or in opposition, will have to tackle serious and strategically important decisions for the country, the nation and the identity. I will not allow a situation where both those in power and in opposition are compelled to make decisions burdened and pressured by the possibility of being unjustly racketeered, faced by threats to their freedom, honor, reputation and future. Threats by both domestic and foreign factors. It is perhaps precisely with this in mind that the situation was caused – so to make them susceptible, easily manipulated and controlled. All in the interest of these factors.
6. Metaphorically speaking, the knot needs to be cut. In line with my constitutional and legal authority, I have decided to declare a general cessation of all procedures against politicians, their collaborators or supporters of the opposing sides.
7. Instead of being professional, some institutions have recently taken measures that seem to have been driven by a political agenda. Consequently, should I feel they persist with that line of action, I pledge to act in the same manner in the future.