**Honorary Chairman of the MRF,**

**Chairman of the Parliamentary Group of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms,**

**Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria,**

**Regional Chairpersons of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms,**

**Members of Parliament,**

**Honorable Members of the European Parliament,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen Mayors, Municipal Councilors, Municipal and Local Chairpersons of the Organizations of the MRF,**

**Guests, Your Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Delegates of the XI National Conference of the MRF,**

**Friends,**

The XI National Conference of the MRF is being held at a critical moment in the development of modern society and the familiar forms of democracy and economic development, as well as at a critical moment in the development of Bulgaria.

At the VIII National Conference of the MRF, held on January 19, 2013, in his report, the honorary chairman of the party, Dr. Ahmed Dogan, outlined the challenges facing the world, Europe and Bulgaria, all of which were broadly misunderstood by many politicians both then and now. They consist of:

- the trend towards the development of a multipolar world and redistribution of spheres of influence globally;

- the search for a solution to the economic crisis and its consequences;

- role of the EU, the need and opportunities for reform;

- competitiveness of the European economy, the potential for innovation and a new model of development in the era of the hydrogen economy;

- a call for a EU governmental system built on the principles of post-modernism, corresponding to the hydrogen economy;

- the role of civil society in restoring democracy in Bulgaria;

- the need for a vision and strategy for the accelerated development of our country.

Today, on the 24th February, 2024 , we can say clearly:

More than 11 years ago, Dr. Dogan painted a realistic picture of the problems and trends facing the modern world which is relevant and still developing today. This picture places extremely high demands on political parties, their positioning, responsibility and development.

Dr. Dogan emphasized the extremely important role of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms as a leading Bulgarian political party with national responsibility. The MRF is a party which can truly interpret the signs manifest in the turbulent development of the modern world. The MRF has the capacity to offer a nationally responsible policy and strategy for growth and development of Bulgaria. It has the confidence to present the vision of this policy in its programs and declarations and implement them in its actions at European, national and local level.

Today, the whole of Bulgarian society, our political partners, our opponents, our neighboring countries, the Liberal International, the Party of European Liberals ALDE and the Renew Europe Group in the EP are awaiting the analysis, messages and decisions of the National Conference of the MRF.

This is a responsibility which the MRF assumes in the clear awareness of its role in the development of Bulgaria and its contribution to the development of the liberal idea in Europe and the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In today’s **multipolar world**, any political formation is duty bound to analyze and understand the dynamics and trends in its development, if it wants to build suitable environmental policies with a view on political longevity, sustainability and flexible solutions.

The **new world order** is being created on the basis of new technological and resource restructuring, political positioning and a modern understanding of the role and place of man with human rights and values.

**Created in response to people’s expectations for justice and the protection of their rights, developed in a visionary and future-oriented manner by guaranteeing prosperity, rights and freedoms, the MRF is a natural participant in this transition and assumes its rightful place in this new order.**

**For us in the MRF, the most important factor in this transition are people – citizens of the world, of Europe, of Bulgaria.**

**People with their needs, expectations, desires and fears.**

The new opposition between **globalism and nationalism** puts each of us before a choice: everyone we know, whether they live in New York, Brussels, Sofia or a mountain village. Will the US be overwhelmed by domestic problems and place “America above all”, will the EU be able to build a model for its new future, will our homeland Bulgaria find a worthy place in these common processes? These are questions which are yet to be answered, but you and I have ready answers to the most pressing questions posed by the transformation of the modern world.

**Our response to both nationalism and globalism is to put people’s problems at the heart of modern politics.** The MRF places people at the center of its politics and it is from this point of view that we consider and participate in the processes in the world, Europe and Bulgaria. We are convinced that only by looking after people’s problems and resolving them, is there a future for a liberalism which will stand up for its values against aggressive populism, nationalism and intolerance of different identities.

**The MRF placed technology, clean energy and the hydrogen industry at the heart of its politics even before the EU defined its own goals of green transition**. They are also at the heart of our vision for the accelerated development of Bulgaria. **Technological advances and control over key resources** are increasingly having an influence on politics. We are in the process of changing the raw material base of the modern economy. The idea of green energy is resolutely changing the map of fossil fuel dependencies. The development of the hydrogen economy is increasingly changing the face of entire economic sectors. **Innovation, research and applied scientific solutions** are becoming a field of fierce competition, but also of global cooperation.

**Access to energy and energy security** combined with ambitious goals to prevent climate change, renewable energy opportunities and energy efficiency are becoming key issues for modern society.

**For the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, Peace is a value of the highest order, but also a responsibility that the Party has assumed** since its establishment. Preserving ethnic peace has always been a challenge and a success for the MRF, but today in 2024, the challenges are global and **the threat of military conflicts** is becoming more and more real. Nearly 80 years after the end of World War II, the world is living in conditions of war: the war in Ukraine, Israel’s war against Hamas, smoldering conflicts in many parts of the earth, directly related to the redistribution of spheres of influence or resources. The threat of war has become a tool for policy-making and manipulation of public attitudes. **It is the MRF’s purpose on to uphold peace, the good of humanity, justice and responsibility.**

**The lack of security** is becoming a major problem in the world. Modern man lives in fear of military conflicts, health pandemics, terrorist attacks, economic crises, unemployment, inflation, fuel and electricity prices, loss of cultural identity or traditional values, destruction of rights, and restriction of freedoms. This insecurity, fueled by nationalist and populist disinformation, is leading to growing support for populist parties which offer quick and simple, and in most cases unworkable, solutions which appeal to frightened societies. **The MRF understands its responsibility to ensure the security of people in two key areas: security such as ensuring conditions for peace, functioning security systems, supporting an economic and social environment; and countering manipulative disinformation and stoking fears.**

**The aging population in the** Western world, clearly manifested within the EU and the United States, as well as the rapid increase in the total population of our planet and the rejuvenation of the demographic structure in Asia, the Middle East, South America and Africa is a key feature of our time and an important demographic trend that has not passed Bulgaria by. **We, the MRF, are already emphatically raising our voice for an effective, complex, and consistent national demographic policy**.

**The digital and real** world have reached a stage of fear of the impact and consequences of artificial intelligence. **For us, digitalization is a tool for achieving development and prosperity**. We recall that the mayors elected from the lists of MRF were the first to provide small and remote municipalities with free access to the Internet. Part of this new beginning for us is the use of increasingly effective digital techniques for the organization and party work. However, the MRF strongly opposes digital manipulations, whether they are used for disinformation, manipulation or undermining the voting rights of Bulgarian citizens.

**Climate change and the subsequent natural cataclysms** are an indisputable fact. **Civil movements** of free and active citizens concerned about protecting the environment and the future of the planet are extremely strong. Civil society often compensates for the clumsy political class and exhibits a high level of public sensitivity on topics related to human rights, climate change or clear tendencies towards disinformation or the imposition of hate speech.

Dear Delegates,

**The Republic of Bulgaria made its strategic and historical choice with its membership in the European Union and NATO. We bear joint responsibility for this!**

For the MRF, the question of **whether the EU finds its worthy place in the new world order** is a matter of national development, sovereignty and the sense of belonging to a Union of Values and Prosperity.

The biggest challenge facing the EU lies in addressing **the problems of its citizens**, their expectations, concerns, fears, quality of life, and prospects for prosperity. The European Union is a union of free citizens with common values, not a bureaucratic structure.

**Changes in the EU are needed: changes in leadership, organization, and EU instruments.**  However, at the same time, there is also a need for a revival and affirmation of the values of a United Europe in the process of bringing European citizens closer together.

Whether the EU will find a worthy place in the new world order of a multipolar world **depends entirely on its competitiveness and its internal mechanisms for rapid and effective transformation.**

Does the EU need to abandon its growth strategy based on green technologies and digital transformation in order to respond to far-right and populist parties and movements?

Can the EU give up basic democratic values such as identity rights, self-determination and freedom of expression to respond to conservatives and authoritarian tendencies?

Is it possible for the EU to renounce its “unity in diversity” in the name of unification fueled by disinformation?

Should the EU ignore the demands of farmers?

Or halt its natural expansion?

Can the EU abdicate its responsibilities in geopolitics?

We can ask many similar questions.

The answer of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, which is actively working through its representatives in the EP for the effective functioning and development of the EU, is

**NO!**

**The transition to a green economy and digital transformation is the future of the EU,** but it cannot be at the expense of the competitiveness of the European economy. A balance needs to be found between ambition and the real world, constant dialogue with manufacturers in Europe and realistic consistent efforts to make the green transformation not only acceptable, but also profitable for the European economy and the European citizens. There must be dialogue with manufacturers, industry and citizens. European industry demands that the prism of competitiveness be used in the implementation of the green transition, fully synchronized with digital transformation. A united Europe needs more and more investment in innovation, science and applied science solutions which are the basis of its competitiveness.

The EU has taken first steps towards **a future new enlargement**. This presupposes the need to change the dynamics of decision-making and policy-making in the EU, but at the same time it will undoubtedly contribute to the development of a United Europe.

 **Ensuring food security remains a huge challenge for the EU.** The food problem has several dimensions: providing nutrition to the growing global population with limited natural resources; producing clean food which meets consumers’ increasingly high expectations for high quality and nutritious food, as well as accessibility of food at rising prices.

Throughout Europe, there is an alarming wave of protests of farmers for whom the reformed Common Agricultural Policy is too ambitious and bureaucratic. Environmental measures create the feeling among farmers that Europe is abandoning its food producers: a feeling that deepens the dangerous anti-European trend. For the first time, 65 years after the creation of the Common Agricultural Policy, it is unable to achieve two of its main goals - guaranteeing food security and ensuring a fair income for farmers. The key question concerning the future of European agriculture remains open in the context of Ukraine’s EU membership. The biggest reform of the CAP since its creation lies ahead. Two factors will be key in this respect: the EU’s green policies and Ukraine’s future membership in the EU.

Once again, the solution lies in dialogue, in closeness to farmers and responsible balanced decisions.

The EU’s presence on the international scene is far from what could be desired and expected. Geopolitical conditions require high-level diplomacy, both political and economic. The clumsy approach, caused by the lack of consensus and regrouping on sectoral policies of individual countries within the Union, contributes to growing skepticism and the rise of populist trends predisposing internal divisions, undermining the common European aspiration for development at European level. **However, the EU requires more than just a presence: its vocation is to participate actively in the management of geopolitical and economic processes**.

**For the MRF to have its own elected representatives in the EP is not only a matter of responsibility to our country, but also for the development of the EU.** Active and competent participation in the decision-making processes is a prerequisite for Bulgaria’s full membership in the EU in the context of the multipolar modern world.

The MRF has the potential to transform the challenges facing the EU into opportunities, **we can contribute to the renewal of the EU and we will prove it in the upcoming elections for MEPs, our EP**.

Dear Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**In the view of the MRF, Bulgaria has an extremely important role as a stabilizing factor and an engine for development in the Balkans.**

At the European level, the MRF strongly insists on enlargement and a stronger commitment to the countries of the Balkans and their prospects within the European Union, despite the emerging nationalistic sentiments and skepticism about further enlargement in the EU. Taking into account the need to strengthen the mechanisms of the rule of law and the reform of the EU, the MRF supports the development of these policies hand in hand with the enlargement process, rather than as mutually exclusive axes. While supporting good neighborly relations and maintaining that the enlargement process continues to be of mutual interest and benefit to both the EU and the accession countries, at the **international level, the MRF is keen to promote the Bulgarian ethnic model with regard to the Western Balkans. The architect of these policies is the honorary chairman of the MRF, Dr. Ahmed Dogan,** thanks to whom Bulgaria managed to sustain the peaceful nature of the transition to democracy amid ethnic contradictions. The MRF firmly asserts that European prosperity and security are closely linked to the process of integration and the development of peace, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law in the Balkan region, whose future belongs to a stronger and renewed European Union.

Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Crises** – Covid-19, economic, military conflicts, energy crisis, climate change, natural disasters, migration – integration – labor force, inflation and rising cost of living. **Crises**. They have been a major feature of the world and Europe in recent years. Recent research shows that crises are reflected and perceived in different ways and with different degrees of assessment in different EU member states, depending on their geographical location and belonging to spheres of influence.

Undoubtedly, Bulgarian society sees **the economic crisis** as key and perceives other crises as factors that deepen the economic situation, expressed in rising inflation levels and a sharp increase in the cost of living.

The effect of global crises has been exacerbated in Bulgaria by the severe national **demographic crisis**. However, global crises have additionally intensified the dimensions of the demographic crisis in Bulgaria reaching the dimensions of a demographic catastrophe and depopulation of settlements and areas of the country.

The crises have had a long-term impact on national finances and there is a need for rapid reactions to the public tensions caused by them. There is a lot **of work to be done to balance the national budget as a basis and tool for accelerated economic growth.**

**The political stagnation of the series of caretaker governments** which have governed Bulgaria during this period of crises, has resulted **in our country severely falling behind in terms of investing in** the financial resources of European solidarity, expressed through the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism and the Cohesion Policy. At the beginning of 2024, the percentages of actual implementation, i.e. funds paid, are impressively low – 2.9% for the Recovery and Resilience Plan and 2.34% for the operational programs for the period 2021-2027.

The slow resolution of the Covid-19 crisis and the ensuing economic crisis have coincided in Bulgaria with a period of **political instability which has quickly turned into a political crisis** leading to 5 consecutive unsuccessful parliamentary elections. They, in turn, have intensified attempts to dismantle party systems and caused severe deep division of society. The political crisis is deepening the impact of all global crises and unfortunately has lead to a series of missed opportunities for recovery, chaotic inconsistent solutions, public tensions, the abdication of the state from a series of responsibilities, opposition to institutions, which is growing into open conflicts, concentration on internal problems of power and neglect of local and regional problems.

In the context of the caretaker governments and the ensuing political crisis, **local authorities** lack the support of the central executive in resolving people’s problems, in overcoming crises and their consequences, without clearly defined funding, without the opportunity to receive support from European support and cohesion instruments. The central executive has abdicated much of its responsibilities at the local level. Local authorities **in practice compensate for the lack of a clear vision of the country’s governance, the refusal to reform and inconsistent decisions.**

The election of the 49th National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria gives hope that the political crisis can be overcome. The fragile parliamentary majority considers Bulgaria’s full participation in the EU and fulfilment of the country’s commitments as a NATO ally as a top priority. **The strongly motivated participation of the MRF Parliamentary Group in the National Assembly, is both politically competent and clear in its messages, responding to the will of the sovereign and returns the center of political decision-making to the core of Bulgarian democracy – the National Assembly.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Colleagues,

One of the expectations of our conference is for the MRF to present its priorities for work in the coming years and to define the main challenges facing Bulgaria.

**Demographic crisis - demographic policy**

In Bulgaria, demographic problems have become exacerbated to the point of a severe crisis. The demographic crisis threatens our future. In search of a better life, hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens have left Bulgaria. According to the latest research, Bulgaria and the 11th fastest diminishing nation in the world.

The effective management of demographic processes and the scale of the problem require **a coordinated approach** which encompasses all levels of government and all actors in the economy and society in a democratic and inclusive manner. Economic development, social guarantees, access to healthcare, quality education, good infrastructure, transport connectivity, environmental efficiency, personal and social security, culture and cultural institutions are all important. Moreover, this must be a demographic policy which fulfils people’s expectations for the development of the country and for a better life.

**The MRF** **calls for a move forward from statements to actions, in order to overcome the demographic crisis by accepting that these actions should be reflected in all political fields and require a complex approach expressed in the national doctrine “The future of Bulgaria is Bulgarian citizens!”**

 **Key reforms and investments** are necessary with the active participation of citizens and businesses, social partners, and organizations of civil society. Suitable policies which take into account local realities can only be pursued with the active participation of local authorities.

Today, when **young people** are increasingly looking for personal development abroad, it is more important than ever to give them the opportunity to make a future for themselves in Bulgaria and to participate in the decision-making process that shapes the future of the country, the way in which they would like to live. The labor markets and education systems need to be updated and modernized. It is time to prepare for the professions of the future.

**Health care** is an essential element of demographic policy and national security. The health of Bulgarian citizens and the normal effective functioning of the public health system require political will and concrete consistent action.

**The priority of the MRF** is to carry out a comprehensive reform of the health care system by taking specific actions to: **develop a national health map and restructure municipal medical institutions** in coordination with local authorities; to **ensure accessibility to high quality medical care for all citizens, regardless of** where they live - in cities or small and remote settlements; **care for children’s and maternal health** through specific programs; to increase the funds in the annual budgets of the NHIF for **outpatient care, prophylaxis and prevention,** in order to detect socially significant diseases at the earliest possible stage; solutions to overcome staff deficits in the health care system.

**Social policy** is a key tool in overcoming the demographic crisis. A **new vision for social policy** is needed. One which is **coordinated** with all policies: health, education, regional policy, local self-government, culture, transport, environment; has a **long-term horizon**; plans and implements **higher levels of social protection for all citizens** of Bulgaria, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity and religious affiliation, paying particular attention to vulnerable groups of the population and young people; and makes full use of all instruments of **European solidarity**, but also conducts **national programs**. It is extremely important that this social policy is addressed to young people.

The demographic crisis in Bulgaria requires targeted **investments in municipalities in rural areas.** The demographic decline and ageing of the population is most evident in rural areas. People living in these areas, especially young people, have the right to equal access to services and quality of life as those from cities, as well as opportunities for professional and personal fulfilment

An important component in conducting a successful demographic policy is **education:** pre-school, school, and university. The training of personnel and specialists in secondary and higher education and their personal development in Bulgaria is directly dependent on the needs of the labor market and the industrial and technological development. Modernization and digitalization are needed; equal access to quality education; program funding for school education; training, qualification and continuing qualification for teachers; mother tongue learning; sustainable legislation; development of academic staff. The solution of these problems within the broad framework of demographic policy can contribute to changing trends.

Transport connectivity is key to a balanced development of the regions and creating conditions for the realization of young people and young families.

Cultural institutions have their place in creating an environment that attracts young people. Cultural centers, libraries, museums, monuments of culture, archaeological monuments, are not just in need of financing. They have the potential to change the environment and contribute to improving the demographic profile of settlements.

**Security**

Bulgarian citizens expect their political parties to demonstrate clear positions, political measures and concrete actions to ensure their security in all its aspects, they expect an answer to their concerns and guarantee their personal rights and freedoms.

Bulgaria is a member of the EU and NATO and the Bulgarian political system has the responsibility to support and develop Bulgarian participation in ensuring collective security.

The modernization of Bulgaria’s armed forces is vital for the security and defence of our country and for the common European security.

The MRF will also work to build the EU’s defence doctrine, European security forces and a strong European defence industry.

**Energy** is a key element of national security and the development of **a new Energy Strategy for Bulgaria** is necessary to ensure the security and standard of living of Bulgarian citizens and the competitiveness of Bulgarian industry.

There is a need for a new strategy to reflect policies aimed at achieving models different from the existing and familiar use of energy resources, production, transmission and distribution of energy, energy consumption, and energy efficiency. It must meet the growing need for new facilities using modern technologies for energy production and distribution.

The Energy Strategy will include the introduction of innovations and low-carbon technologies in the energy sector by 2050: smart electricity networks, intelligent energy consumption management systems, the creation of electricity storage farms, the introduction of electric transport, increased use of renewable energy, carbon capture and storage, the development of hydrogen technologies and their implementation at the investment level.

**For the MRF, modernizing and reducing the carbon footprint of Bulgarian energy is a necessary step in improving people’s daily lives**. The prices of electricity and energy carriers can and should be affordable for citizens and businesses. Those who work in the Energy sector can and should look to the local authorities and the state as partners, and have clear prospects for personal careers and security.

**Food security**

The crises in the agricultural sector show that a **new principle is needed, a new vision in the agrarian politics of the country with a focus on clean food, a clean environment, clean energy:** priorities set out in the vision of the MRF in 2013. We will lay the basis for a new start and a new model **together with farmers**. This new approach means that policies should be developed together with farmers, not imposed on them.

**The MRF will initiate the preparation of a Strategy for Rural Areas** in the Republic of Bulgaria. However, not a pro-forma strategy. We need a digital open platform that is a field for free expression of the opinion and expertise of farmers, academia, industry organizations and consumers.

The development of Bulgarian agriculture in the context of security requires **investments to modernize** farms, investments in processing enterprises, investments in irrigation, investments in science, innovation, technology, investments in education, training, and skills. The production of high quality and healthy food through organic farming provides an opportunity to increase the income of producers, stop the depopulation of rural areas, and protect the environment. We remain concerned about small farmers, especially in mountainous areas. Immediate, targeted and consistent measures are needed to adequately finance small farms and create conditions for their association/cooperation for high competitiveness and modern marketing.

**Migration** as a global challenge has its specific dimensions in Bulgaria which in turn have a direct bearing on national security.

The migration of Bulgarian citizens to the countries of the Western part of Europe has directly exacerbated the demographic crisis in the country, damaging the opportunities for economic development and undermining national security. The measures proposed by the MRF to overcome the demographic crisis will have a direct impact on reducing the flow of emigrating Bulgarian citizens.

The MRF expresses its political support for the modernization of the common European migration policy, which must and will offer a balanced approach, equality between member states and will ensure a commitment to the common processes in Europe that corresponds to the capabilities of our country as an EU border.

**Investment and accelerated economic development**

For many years now, the MRF has been calling for the urgent development and adoption of a national vision for accelerated economic development of Bulgaria, based on investment, innovation, digitalization, green transition and hydrogen transformation.

The most serious measures aimed at increasing investment in recent years were made in Budget 2024. For the first time since the beginning of the Transition to democracy, we have a Municipal Public Investment Program budget with an estimated amount of 1 billion Bulgarian levs with the potential to be increased. For the first time, the entire public investment part forms part of a program budget. **For the MRF, this is the formula for a successful national investment program - budgeted, transparent, and responding to national priorities and local specifics.**

Constitutional changes are a first step towards judicial reform. Full participation in the Schengen area and belonging to the Eurozone have the potential to support the accelerated development of the Bulgarian economy.

**Effective investment in EU solidarity instruments is a prerequisite for supporting the Bulgarian economy, local authorities and generally balanced development,** bridging the gap between urban and rural areas, but which also ensures the participation of business and academia in EU horizontal programs and participates in the common innovation environment.

There is a need for new dimensions of the business environment, directly related to innovation and the hydrogen industry. This is a critical moment for the initiatives of business and business organizations. Bulgarian business, unlike the state administration, has demonstrated high competence, participation in the work of common European organizations, the self-confidence to present its achievements at global forums and willingness for green and digital transformation. **The partnership between business and local authorities-business is the formula for economic growth.**

**Political realism/pragmatism**

Political realism and pragmatism have always been an essential element of the MRF. At a time when incompetence, demagogy and disinformation have found their places in political life, it is extremely important for the MRF to uphold its principles and values, to fulfil its commitments to its voters, to work for the functioning of institutions without corruption, and which are open to citizens.

Again, the MRF is calling for awareness of the role and added value in politics offered by coalition governments. They expand the range of government programs, guarantee mutual control of participants and, last but not least, respond to the will of the sovereign, which is increasingly unlikely to give confidence and power to a party.

**Today, 2024, political realism above all means returning to the people.**

**Let us say “Добър ден! Как си?“, ”İyi günler! Nasılsın?”, “Hello! How are you?”**

Analysts and political scientists say that demagoguery and populism are a threat to civilization, but the modern political landscape is increasingly filled with populism. **The MRF remains a guarantor of realism**. The solutions proposed by the new parties are in fact solutions of the MRF from 15 or more years ago. However, they lack the sense and expertise for orientation in the new environment and political situation. This is becoming a practice that threatens to divert political life in Bulgaria away from the context of modern development.

Disinformation is a technique that the MRF has faced over the years. **Only a consistent, responsible, competent and professional policy can counter aggressive disinformation.**

**An indivisible part of the political realism of the MRF is the building of new dimensions of the responsibilities and potential of local authorities**. The role of local authorities and local self-government is becoming increasingly clear, with expanded decentralization for investment, job creation, local security and close contact with people, and active citizens. In the coming years, they will be the tool to compensate for delays in the central government’s investment policy and to counter disinformation and populism. Now is the time to congratulate all the elected representatives of the MRF in the local government – mayors, municipal councilors for their success in the 2023 local elections and to wish them success!

**Political pragmatism lies in strengthening the youth organization of MRF** with all structures throughout the country and beyond the borders of Bulgaria. Let us also congratulate the newly elected leadership of the youth wing of the MRF and wish them success. They have already said that they are better than us. Let us once again show them what masters we are of politics!

The MRF is the political force in Bulgaria that has put the topic of active and free citizens at the center of the political process. The direct involvement of citizens as a strategic partner is a long-standing and consistent policy line of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF). Perhaps this relationship is best formulated by Dr. Ahmed Dogan: “Civil society has the chance to actually transform itself from a voter and observer into an active sovereign of democracy...”.

**Bulgaria as the leader in the Balkans, a factor in the EU, an active participant in global processes. Modernizing the EU**

The foreign policy priority of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms is the preservation of the EU’s homogeneity by reforming it, the removal of unanimous blocking votes and making it a global actor on the international stage.

The attitude of the MRF towards the Republic of Turkey is that of a strategic partner of the EU. In this context, good neighborly relations between the two countries are also included, united by common challenges and common goals related to both migrant pressure and progress in economic relations, as well as the development of trade and tourism between the two countries.

We defend the role and actions of the EU and the international community I support of Ukraine, as well as the conduct of an effective and consistent common European foreign and security policy. The MRF adheres to full respect for international law and the protection of human rights, environmental care and energy independence, a reformed migration policy and the promotion of multilateralism as the best way to address global challenges.

**For MRF, these challenges mean - A new beginning!**

**We, the MRF, with our competence, organizational structure and high ambitions, are ready for it!**

**THE NEW BEGINNING - UNITED WITH THE PEOPLE!**