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### Balkan Update

15 January 2003

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#### Macedonia Developments

- Georgievski, by contrast, publicly threatened that the party might resort to violence if the prosecutions continued.

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#### **Government's Crackdown on VMRO Corruption Threatens Further Political Friction**

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Macedonia's coalition government, led by the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), is targeting corrupt officials of the former Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) for prosecution despite threats that VMRO-DPMNE could provoke violence.

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Prominent party members who have already been arrested include the former land registry director, a VMRO-DPMNE secretary general and former health fund director, and other party officials close to former Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski.

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- VMRO-DPMNE officials do not seriously dispute most of the corruption charges but contend that the SDSM's targeting of its personnel is politically motivated selective prosecution.

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*VMRO-DPMNE's reaction to date has been peaceful, but party leaders are sending mixed signals as to how they will respond to further arrests.*

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This report was prepared by the Office of Russian and European Analysis. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the [redacted] Manager, OREA, [redacted]

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