



20 Years Together

To celebrate the anniversary BBLF held a meeting for members, partners and supporters, and two Bulgarian presidents

Sofia, 7 November 2018 On 6 November 2018, 20 years after its launch, the **Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum (BBLF)** celebrated its **anniversary** at a cocktail for member companies, partners and supporters. The event was attended by presidents of Bulgaria **Petar Stoyanov** and **Rosen Plevneliev**, Sofia Deputy Mayor **Doncho Barbalov**, representatives of business and civil organisations, foreign ambassadors and diplomats.

The **Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum** is this country's biggest and most prominent responsible business community. Founded in 1998 in Sofia by 12 international companies and NGOs in association with the International Business Leaders Forum. Today BBLF comprises over 120 member-companies from various sectors of the economy sharing the values of business ethics and corporate social responsibility. The Forum's **mission** is to work for a long-lasting positive transformation of Bulgaria's economic and social environment by encouraging business ethics standards, responsibility and sustainability. For 20 years BBLF has contributed to making Bulgaria a better place to work, invest and live in.

The anniversary cocktail held at InterContinental Sofia was attended by senior executives of member-companies, partners and supporters from business, NGOs and the public sector as well as individuals associated with the Forum.

„BBLF started off from the premises that this country's successful development needed high business standards and transparent business practices, i.e. playing by the rules to help move forward the economy but also the society in general towards progress and welfare. If back in 1998 business and ethics seemed incompatible, today BBLF is this country's most prominent organisation that encourages business ethics, good CSR practices and sustainability. We would like to thank our member companies for contributing to changing Bulgaria for the better”, BBLF chairman **Irvan Hira** said.

The event's special guests included **Petar Stoyanov**, president of Bulgaria in 1997-2002 who attended its launch in 1989 along with HRH The Prince of Wales. „Our task back then was to recreate our country. Now we see that your achievements have mirrored Bulgaria's successful development. Do keep on building the country we all wish to live in”, he said in his address.

Rosen Plevneliev, president of Bulgaria in 2012-2017 who is also one of the long-time supporters of the Forum and was personally involved in its activities, also addressed the business community: “You have demonstrated that one can be successful in Bulgaria by playing by the rules, that entrepreneurs can be the role models the young generation needs. You are not alone in your mission, the shared vision of politicians and business people is to construct an economy we would be proud of”.

Doncho Barbalov, deputy mayor of Sofia, **Vasil Velev**, Bulgarian Industrial Capital Association chairman and **Tsvetan Simeonov**, Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chairman also took the floor to address BBLF’s community. President Rumen Radev’s office, The Prince of Wales, minister Lilyana Pavlova, BBLF’s first chairman Bill Drysdale, the Bulgarian Red Cross, BA Glass Bulgaria and Dundee Precious Metals Chelopech has also sent their greetings.

Guests of the event included **Maxim Behar** and **Maria Shishkova**, former chairs of BBLF, current deputy chairman **Levon Hampartzoumian**, CEOs of founding member companies. The evening’s vibes were boosted by crooner **Vassil Petrov** and TV anchor **Mia Santova** who hosted the event.

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