

**Statement by Bert van Selm, IMF Resident Representative,
FYR Macedonia**

May 9, 2007

"The IMF staff welcomes the authorities' decision to repay Macedonia's debt to the Fund early. This is precisely what the Fund was created for: for members to borrow from the Fund when there is a balance of payments need, and repay the Fund when this need no longer exists. The fact that Macedonia is now in a position to repay its IMF loans early is a sign of strength. Recent early repayments of debt to a number of international creditors have helped reduce the government's interest bill and improved medium-term debt sustainability. The IMF will continue to support the government's reform efforts in the context of Macedonia's 2005-2008 Stand-By Arrangement."