

September 22<sup>nd</sup>

## BULGARIA

### *Independence Day*

On September 22<sup>nd</sup> 1908 Bulgaria's monarch Ferdinand proclaimed the country's independence. This event took place 30 years after the end of the Russo-Turkish War that led to the signing of the San Stefano Treaty on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1878. The Treaty restored the Bulgarian state to its previous ethnic boundaries. But a great and powerful Bulgarian state would not appeal to the Great Powers, and so several months later they convened the Berlin Congress that revised the San Stefano Peace Treaty and settled territorial claims in other parts of the region, as well. The Berlin Treaty ruled that Northern Bulgaria and Sofia region formed the Principality of Bulgaria, while the southern part remained under the political and military authority of the sultan of the Ottoman Empire under the name of Eastern Rumelia. Macedonia, Aegean and Edirne Thrace were given back to the Ottoman Empire. In 1885 the two parts united without resorting to armed struggle, but remained nevertheless subject to the Ottoman Empire. With the proclamation of its independence Bulgaria finally joined the family of the civilized modern European states. There were no longer any barriers to contacts with the rest of the world. The National Assembly had the right to choose the monarch, instead of waiting for approval from foreign nations

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Ceremony of the opening of the National Assembly in Sofia after the proclamation of Bulgaria's independence in 1908.

