

Committee: Special Political and Decolonization Committee (GA4)

Issue: Greece-N. Macedonia: International impact of interstate memoranda towards resolving long-standing crises

Student Officer: Andreas Georgantis

Position: Co-Chair

INTRODUCTION

GA4 MANDATE

The General Assembly is the main deliberative body and one of the principal organs of the United Nations. It was established in 1945 by Chapter IV of the Charter of the



The United Nations General Assembly

United Nations and is comprised of all 193 UN Member States. The

GA's broad membership enables it to engage in unique high-level diplomacy and the Charter allows the GA to consider and take action on almost any topic, including political, economic, humanitarian, social, and legal issues. The GA expresses the will of the international community in the form of written resolutions that, while not legally binding, set the policy direction for the UN as an organization and can influence Member States and regional organizations. These resolutions sometimes take direct action, but it is far more common that they lay out a set of policies or, in the case of legal resolutions, international norms. The development of these resolutions takes a significant amount of time, as disagreements on policy are common, so the work of the GA is broken up into six subsidiary committees.

COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION

The third topic of the GA4 is a very concerning issue and that's why it certainly, belongs to a MUN conference and of course in the Political Committee. Greece and North Macedonia are in great dispute for the name "Macedonia" of the second state. Greeks have started to protest with rallies and strikes among the Greece and the Greek populations around the world. The name Macedonia was and is really important because two major countries was

trying to adopt the history of Macedonia and of “Alexander the Great”. The political instability among the states reached its peak level when North Macedonia was brought Greece to the International Court of Justice. Even through all the efforts and treaties the political instability between the States and their citizens remains.

Important Clarification: I want to clarify *a priori* that any reference to the state of North Macedonia before the treaty of Prespa will be with their ex-official name Former Republic of Macedonia (F.Y.R.O.M.) and to their citizens as Skopjan’s. Any reference to the state after the treaty of Prespa will be with the name North Macedonia and to their citizens as North Macedonians. It is important to follow the official names recognized by the United Nations on its specific situation.

Taking into account the complexity and the importance of the issue in hand it is of the utmost importance to understand all aspects of the matter. If any inquires arise please feel free to contact me for further information and explanations at my e-mail address (andreas.georgantis@yahoo.com).

Important note from the chairs’ team

In order for the chairs to fully understand the dynamics of the committee, discovering any misunderstanding prior to the debate and for the better preparation of the delegates you are asked to proceed as indicated below;

- 1) Conduct your chairs via email and informing them about your mun experience so that they can know what exactly to expect of you.
- 2) Prepare and send your chairs by 11:59 of the 6th of November one position papers for each of the topics you are going to discuss during the conference. You can conduct the expert chair, of each topic for further information concerning your country’s policy if needed, and for general guidance when it comes to your position papers (word limit structure etc). You are going to receive general comments during the lobbying for your position papers as well as personal feedback and grades for your papers. The points you will receive will add up to your general score which is one of the factors that determine the best delegate award. If you for any reason fail to send your papers before the final deadline you will not be eligible for any award.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (F.Y.R.O.M.)

F.Y.R.O.M. was the official name that major UN NGO's adopted in 1992 and the UN Security Council in 1993 as a temporary name of the second state. The permanent name of the State was set after the Prespa Agreement as Republic of North Macedonia.

Macedonia

Both Greece and North Macedonia was claiming their rights to the Macedonian name but for different reasons. Greece claims that the Macedonian name is Greek due to the history that is connected with the name and with the Greek tradition. North Macedonia claims that they have rights on the name due to its geographical position.

i) Macedonian Empire

Macedonian empire was the Greek empire envisioned by King Philip II (382-336 BC) and thrived by Alexander the Great (356-323 BC) during Archaic and Classical Greece times and after the death of Alexander following the Hellenistic Greece. However, Macedonia kept its name during Byzantine times until nowadays. The capital of Macedonian Empire was Pella - a city in Northern Greece -. The language of the ancient Macedonians was Greek and their symbol was the



The Map of the ancient Macedonia

sun of Vergina.

ii) The Geographical Perspective

The ancient Macedonia was extended from Thessaloniki to North Macedonia and from Thrace to Epirus. So, it's undoubtedly true that ancient Macedonia had a part of today's North Macedonia and Bulgaria.

iii) Historical Perspective

The ancient Macedonian’s was speaking the ancient Greek language and Alexander the Great referred to himself as a Greek.

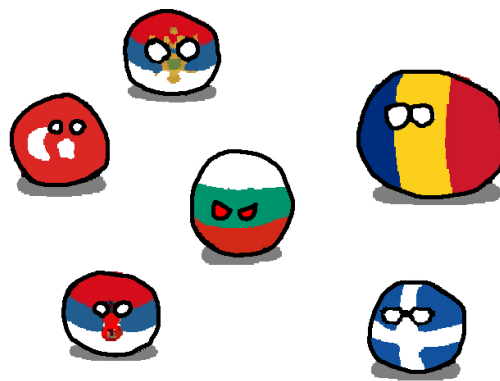
Constitution of F.Y.R.O.M.

The constitution of FYROM before the Interim Accord named some ancient Greek symbols as theirs, including the sun of Vergina. After the sign of the Interim Accord FYROM changed some articles but not the article about the name that remained as “Republic of Macedonia”. This is important, first of all, because it was a violation of the interim accord and a different name from the official recognized name by the United Nations and, second of all, because the Greek Prime Minister *Konstantinos Karamanlis* claimed that it was one of the main reasons why Greece vetoed the entrance of F.Y.R.O.M. in N.A.T.O. .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Historical Background

The name dispute began in the Second Balkan War. In 1913, the Second Balkan War began in the aftermath of the division of the Balkans among five entities to have secured control over these territories: Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro. Albania, in conflict with Serbia, Montenegro and Greece, declared its independence in 1912, striving for recognition. The Treaty of London (1913) assigned the region of the future Republic of Macedonia to Serbia. The



The Situation on the Second Balkan War

outbreak of the First World War allowed Bulgaria to occupy eastern Macedonia, helping Austria-Hungary defeat the Serbs by the end of 1915, and leading to the opening of the Macedonian front against the Greek part of Macedonia. Bulgaria would maintain control over the area until their capitulation in September 1918, at which point the borders reverted (with small adjustments) to the situation of 1913, and the present-day F.Y.R.O.M. became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

During World War II the leader of the Yugoslav Republic *Josip Broz Tito*, named the part of today's North Macedonia as "Vardar Macedonia". After the Yugoslav liberation war, the independent state of Vardar Macedonia changed their name to Republic of Macedonia, as they stated that they want nothing to remind the Yugoslav Republic. Greece protested and this name have never been official.

During 1992, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia all adopted the appellation "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" to refer to the Republic in their discussions and dealings with it. The same terminology was proposed in January 1993 by France, Spain and the United Kingdom, the three EC members of the United Nations Security Council, to enable the Republic to join the United Nations. The proposal was circulated on 22 January 1993 by the United Nations Secretary General. The United Nations Security Council decided the entrance of the F.Y.R.O.M. after the proposition of the UN General Assembly in 1993 and the proposition on the name of the UN Secretary General. However, it was initially rejected by both sides in the dispute.

Political Instability

After the acceptance of the North Macedonia to the United Nations with the name F.Y.R.O.M., both Greece and F.Y.R.O.M. signed the Interim Accord as a first step to achieve good faith negotiations and better economic and political relations. The treaty never reached its goal since both Greek and Skopjan ethnicism adumbrated the treaty. The ethnicism reached its peak with Skopjan's claiming that the ancient Macedonian history is theirs, Alexander the great was speaking the Slavic language and get an article to their constitution about the great Macedonian empire that should include the unredeemed places of Greece. On the other hand, Greece was claiming that Macedonia was and is Greek and if the Skopjan's wants to be Macedonians they have to speak the Greek language and be a part of Greece. Furthermore, Greece vetoed the entrance of North Macedonia to both the NATO and the European Union.

The two sides were unable to find a common solution until 2018. In 2015 for the first time in Greek history a leftish party elected in Greece. Under the leadership of the Greek Prime Minister *Alexis Tsipras* and Skopjan Prime Minister *Zoran Zaev* signed the treaty of Prespa in June 2018 and ratified by the United Nations in February 2019. The hope now is that a new page is being written for the Balkans. In Tsipras' worlds:

“The hatred of nationalism, dispute, and conflict will be replaced by friendship, peace, and cooperation.”

The Prespa accord was one of the most successful agreements, since it was the first time in history that both the sides achieved good faith negotiations. Greece got their rights on Macedonian name and history, since F.Y.R.O.M. resign from their demands on the history and also the whole world that was recognizing F.Y.R.O.M. as Macedonia, now are recognizing that Macedonia is Greek and F.Y.R.O.M. only got the northern part of it. For F.Y.R.O.M., they finally get a permanent name for the state, recognized by all the United Nations members and allows them to enter both North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Union without the veto of Greece. The treaty might seem as the best solution possible, but Greece was once again protested. The ethnicism of Greece once again overshadowed the country with the disagreement on the Treaty. Protestors blamed the Greek Prime minister for treason against the country and loyal opposition of Greece threatened to veto the agreement. Greece has been plunged into political turmoil after the defense minister, who heads the coalition government’s nationalist junior partner, resigned, citing the landmark accord aimed at settling the decades-long dispute over Macedonia’s name. The Greek elections of the July 2019 ended with a new government for Greece, under the leadership of the ex-loyal opposition Mr. Mitsotakis and the *status quo* of the treaty is currently unstable. In contrary, Skopjan’s followed the lead of Greek protestors and protested about the agreement and new conversations about the Macedonian history



The sign of the Treaty of Prespa, Zoran Zaev-Alexis Tsipras

began.

The crisis

The last few months the relationship between Greece and North Macedonia are again frozen. Political instability with economical and trading instability among the states is continuing to creating problems.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Greece

Greece is one of the major states involving in the issue. Greece vetoed the entrance of F.Y.R.O.M. in the European Union and in NATO, violating the Interim Accord. A few years later proposed the Prespa Agreement. Their foreign policy is still unstable.

North Macedonia

North Macedonia is the second major involving state on the issue. North Macedonia (ex F.Y.R.O.M.) violated the Interim Accord with their foreign policy and with their constitution. A few years later negotiated for the treaty of Prespa. Their foreign policy is still unstable.

The United States of America

The United States of America head of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and a P5 member of the Security Council supported Greece before the Interim Accord on the name issue. In the 21st century they pushed Greece to withdraw their veto on FYROM's entrance. The policy of the USA is decisive on the matter.

European Union Negotiator

One of the most important reasons that FYROM opened the name dispute was because of the European Union. Without an official name recognized by all member states of the EU the entrance was not allowed. After the Prespa Agreement North Macedonia fulfilled their obligations under the EU law. The solution of the political instability between the states is important



The World Map

because they are going to be allies under the EU.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
31 st July 1913	The end of Second Balkan War
8 th September 1991	Independence of the North Macedonia
29 th November 1993	FYROM entrance on the United Nations/ Security Council's resolution 817/1993
13 th September 1995	The signature on Interim Accord
First Semester of 2008	Greece VETO F.Y.R.O.M. on NATO
17 th November 2008	F.Y.R.O.M. brings Greece to The Court
12 th June 2018	The signing of the Treaty of Prespa

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

Security Council Resolution 817/1993

The General Assembly is able to recognize a country only after the recommendation of the Security Council and cannot skip the recommendation. If the Council declines the recommendation the Assembly cannot bypass it (as the UN Charter states in Article 4). In this case, this is the resolution that accepts the F.Y.R.O.M. with the temporary name F.Y.R.O.M. There were several discussions on this decision and many points of order in the GA from Greece due to the wrong use of the name.

Interim Accord

The Interim Accord was a treaty signed and ratified both by Greece and F.Y.R.O.M. in 1993, a temporary treaty recognized by the United Nations. The main goal of the treaty was to achieve negotiations in good faith from both parties and to avoid any further disputes. Both F.Y.R.O.M. and Greece violated the treaty. First it was F.Y.R.O.M. with the constitutional articles and the actions of propaganda against Greece. After that, Greece vetoed the entrance of the F.Y.R.O.M. in NATO in 2008. However, when F.Y.R.O.M. brought the case to the International Court of Justice, they claimed the respondents as innocents. In the end, this treaty did not affect the relationships of the two States.

Prespa Agreement

The Prespa Agreement signed in 12th June 2018 by the Hellenic's Republic Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and North Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev under the auspices of United Nations, with the goal of solving the "Name Dispute". The Treaty replaced the "Interim Accord", but created many criticisms on both States.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

European Council of Lisbon

The parties failed to reach an agreement in the negotiations which ensued concerning the name and the European Council of Lisbon issued a resolution in June 1992, stating:

"The European Council expresses its readiness to recognize [the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia] within its existing borders according to their Declaration on 16 December 1991 under a name which does not include the term Macedonia."

The Government in Skopje rejected EU recognition on these terms. So, no major solution was proposed by the European Union.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The solutions provided on the matter should aim to build a stable political situation and raise public awareness on the matter, since not only the abroad populations but also the citizens of both the states are not fully aware neither on the historical background of the issue, nor the process of the negotiations. Each delegation should come to the negotiating table well aware of its country policy, goals and foreign relationships with both of the parties.

Punishing the states or support the Security Council's involvement to the issue is recommended to taken in to consideration if the states are not abiding by the Treaty of Prespa. To ensure that both the States will abide by the treaty is mandatory since it is a United Nations resolution and any other action will create a bigger political instability. The delegates may bear in mind that the most of the Greece's income and a big part of North Macedonia's is the tourism and should not be affected by the resolution, since such measure might create economic instability to Europe.

Furthermore, delegates may focus on the cultural perspective of the issue. Both Greece and North Macedonia have historical and cultural landmarks referring to the other state that must be protected from illegal arbitrary actions of civilians.

Last but not least, the delegates are suggested to ensure good faith negotiations and bear in mind that this dispute has already been one time in the ICJ. It is on any case suggested that delegates study the already existed UN resolutions (mentioned above) as they can be used as a helpful starting point.



Flags of Greece and North Macedonia

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