

XV. The European Union and the Macedonian Question

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1. European Political Cooperation and the Dissolution of Yugoslavia

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the “Eastern Bloc” was received with speculation and scepticism in southeastern Europe. The Cold War had virtually “frozen” the history of the region, leaving in this way room for an almost unprecedented period of four decades of relative stability and peace.¹ After the end of this period, however, politicians, academics, and a large part of the world were possessed by fears of a possible resurgence of nationalism, the return of wars, changes in national frontiers and violations of human rights. Besides, these were things which had troubled the Balkans from the 19th century until the end of the Greek Civil war in 1949.² The beginning of the ferment which led to the violent break up of Yugoslavia appeared to testify to the gloomiest scenarios.³

More specifically, in the elections of 1990, the nationalists came to power in all the republics of Yugoslavia (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia), and the tensions between the different ethnic groups in the country increased significantly.⁴ From July 1991, with eventual instability being seen as a much greater reality, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) of the then European Economic Community (EEC)⁵ almost exclusively took on the responsibility for confronting the problems that would arise out of the process of dissolving Yugoslavia, and, therefore, for the new parameters of the Macedonian Question which were related to the independence of the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).⁶ This period (1991-1992) remains the most important period connecting Europe with the question of the name of the newly-formed neighbouring republic.

In its attempt to support the prospect of a united Yugoslavia, the Community initially offered a substantial financial incentive. At the beginning of June 1991, the then President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, visited Belgrade and informed the Yugoslavians that “they would be providing them with financial aid in the region of four to five billion dollars”.⁷ On the 24th of June, the Community and Yugoslavia signed the Third Financial Protocol, which amounted to 730 million ECU for a period until the 30th of June 1996.⁸ However, despite these attempts by the Community, the process of dissolution of Yugoslavia soon proved to be unavoidable.

On the 25th of June 1991, Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence. The war in Yugoslavia began two days later, with an attack, controlled by the Serbian-Yugoslavian People’s Army (YPA), against Slovenia. The same day, the Foreign Ministers of the EPC met in Luxembourg and decided that the Troika should make a visit to Yugoslavia.⁹ The Troika put forward a plan which included the suspension of all declarations of independence for a period of three months, the return of the army to their camps, as well as a series of other measures which aimed at settlement of the constitutional crisis in the country.¹⁰ Notwithstanding the fact that all parties agreed to the measures, not one was implemented. The Troika was forced to return on the 30th of June, this time threatening to suspend financial aid.

While the hostilities continued in Slovenia, the army of this new republic proved to be exceptionally successful in its campaigns against the YPA. In order to increase the pressure which it was exercising and to achieve a realistic settlement, an Extraordinary

Meeting of the EPC on the 5th July 1991 decided that the EPC would impose an embargo on weapons in all the Yugoslavian republics.¹¹ Similarly, urged the members of the international community to follow the same line. Greece approved of the decision and of the warning that failure to arrive at a settlement of some kind would result in a suspension of the Second and Third Protocols with Yugoslavia. These protocols, which constituted the largest aid packet which the European Community had ever made available to a single state, amounted to the sum of one billion dollars.¹²

On the 5th of July, the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) accepted the EPC plan, which asked primarily for an end to hostilities.¹³ This acceptance also signaled the relinquishing by the CSCE of responsibility for finding a solution to the war in Yugoslavia. Perhaps for the first time in so many decades, the members of the EPC would shoulder the leading and almost exclusive role in solving an important international crisis.

The attempts by the EPC to achieve some kind of settlement appear to have culminated in the signing of the Brioni Agreement on the 7th of July.¹⁴ This agreement provided for the withdrawal of YPA forces from Slovenia, a move which would mark the end of a limited war of only ten days duration. Furthermore, it was decided to send a delegation from the Community to monitor the ceasefire, while there was also an agreement for the commencement of negotiations before the 1st of August negotiations, which would deal with all aspects of the future Yugoslavia.

With the visits of the Troika and the Brioni Agreement, the EPC managed to gain a little time. The war had ended in Slovenia and had not been transferred to any other Yugoslavian republic. Nevertheless, it was clearer to all observers that “the era of the Yugoslavian Federation in its present form had become a thing of the past”,¹⁵ as Jacques Delors observed. On the 13th of July, the Dutch presidency sent a telegraph to the members of the EPC, proposing that they move towards the “voluntary recasting of internal borders as a possible solution”.¹⁶ The Greek government disagreed, but its negative stand did not cause problems. The Dutch proposal for an attempt at changing the borders before the granting of recognition did not manage to win support from within the EPC and as such did not advance.

2. CPC and the Question of the Name

In August of the same year war broke out in Croatia. On this occasion, the YPA proved to be more effective than it had been in Slovenia, managing to take control of a quarter of Croatia by the beginning of September. Faced with this undesirable development, Greece agreed to have her anxiety expressed during the Ministerial meeting of the CPC on the 27th of August. The meeting made clear that the forces of Serbian irregulars in Croatia and the YPA were considered responsible for the outbreak of violence in the region.¹⁷ The then Greek Foreign Minister, Antonis Samaras, also decided together with his counterparts to establish a Peacekeeping Conference and an arbitration procedure which would be incorporated in the Conference.¹⁸ This procedure would involve a five-member Arbitration Commission, with two of its members appointed by the Presidency of the Yugoslavian Federation. The decision to have Yugoslavian representatives participate on the Arbitration Commission was not finally realized, and, consequently, this commission was made up of only representatives from the member states of the EPC, who were at the same time the presidents of the Constitutional Councils of each country, with the Frenchman, Robert Badinter, as President.¹⁹

During the EPC meeting of the 27th of August, Antonis Samaras expressed his government's anxiety over an issue which was destined to develop into an extremely

ambiguous matter and submitted a memorandum on Yugoslavian Macedonia.²⁰ The text began by expressing concern over Kosovo and FYROM, stressing that in the case of these two regions it might be necessary to use a different approach from that which had been adopted for Slovenia and Croatia. Using an academic, diplomatic but extremely unsettling tone, the memorandum maintained that a declaration of independence by Yugoslavian Macedonia would create serious problems. The state was not economically viable, while the huge Albanian minority which existed there would constitute a source of instability and perhaps, eventually, war.

It is worthwhile noting the prophetic content of the memorandum in connection with international relations in the region of the Balkans. The crises and the dangers which Greek diplomacy had been warning of from as early as 1991 were finally kindled eight years later in Kosovo and after ten years in FYROM. Justifiably, an analyst might wonder what the outcome of these crises might have been if the Greek reservations had been taken more seriously by our European partners.

In all events, the memorandum made it clear that Athens would not welcome a declaration of independence by FYROM. Nevertheless, since such a move was expected, the memorandum did not propose steps for its definitive annulment or postponement. On the contrary, it attempted to determine possible moves on the part of FYROM which Greece would consider hostile and provocative. In this way, the issue of the name of the new state arrived in the diplomatic foreground:

*The Greeks strongly disputed the use of the traditional Greek name of Macedonia for the definition of a Slavic people... The Greeks believe that this name constitutes a part of their historical heritage and should not be used for the recognition, in an ethnic sense, of another nation.*²¹

The memorandum may stress the Greek sensitivity on the issue of the naming of Macedonia, but it does not demonstrate an absolutely specific and clear stand. Moreover, the objection to the specific ethnologic use of the name Macedonia, together with the fact that the document refers five times to the inhabitants of Yugoslavian Macedonia as Slavo-Macedonians, may imply that Greece might possibly have been open to a conciliatory appellation which would have included the term Macedonia, such as for example "Slavo-Macedonia".²²

On the 8th of September 1991, the Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia held a referendum on the question of its independence. According to the official results, there was a 72.16 per cent turn-out.²³ Out of those who voted, 96.44 per cent declared their support for an "autonomous and independent state of Macedonia, with a right to become a part of a future union of sovereign Yugoslavian states".²⁴ On the basis of this referendum, the Assembly of the Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia declared the country's independence on the 17th of September.²⁵

The Greek Prime Minister, Constantine Mitsotakis, responded to the results of the referendum by stressing that "the position of the Greek government, in connection with the name which they use [the inhabitants of the Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia] is given, self-evident and shared by the entire Greek nation".²⁶ This statement sent a resounding message that the name of the new republic was as important to the Greek people as it was to the government. At the same time, it did not reject or propose any particular name, leaving in this way sufficient room for negotiations and a possible compromise solution.²⁷

On the 6th of October, Greece and its partners in the EPC

agreed that a political solution should be sought with the prospect of recognizing the independence of those republics which desire it, at the end of a

*negotiation process which is conducted in good faith and includes all the parties involved.*²⁸

A similar statement was included in the Declaration of the 28th of October 1991.²⁹

These statements definitely prepared the ground for FYROM's request for independence. However, the Greek government did not attempt to exploit this early opportunity to express its concerns or introduce certain terms which FYROM would be compelled to implement in the event of its declaring independence.

On the 7th of December 1991, the Arbitration Commission published its first resolution, which concluded that "the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia is in the process of dissolution".³⁰ As a result, it became more and more difficult for the member states of the EPC to avoid the subject of recognition, at least of certain Yugoslavian republics.

The question of recognition was also dealt with by the Greek government in its Cabinet meeting of the 4th of December 1991.³¹ According to the minutes, there was a decision reached to support a united Yugoslavia.³² Furthermore,

*the government set out three provisions for the Republic of Skopje, which it would have to accept if it wished to have recognition from Greece: firstly, to change the name "Macedonia", which has geographic and not ethnic hypothesis, secondly, to recognize that it does not have territorial claims to the disadvantage of our country, and, thirdly, to recognize that there is no "Macedonian minority" in Greece.*³³

As the Maastricht Summit approached, German pressure for the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia was stepped up. On the 14th of December, Dieter Vogel, the representative of Chancellor Kohl, affirmed Germany's intention to move for recognition of these two republics, regardless of whether or not this was keeping in step with the other European states.³⁴

Under the prism of these developments, an Extraordinary EPC Ministerial Meeting was convened in Brussels on the 15th of December 1991,³⁵ a dramatic session which lasted ten hours. The agreement which was reached early the following morning marked the official and irreversible end of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This meeting also provided an example of the seriousness of the intergovernmental approach of the EPC, since these weighty decisions were taken by the Council of Ministers.

The EPC ministers at the meeting adopted a common stand in connection with the terms which had to be fulfilled in order for recognition of the different republics to be granted.³⁶ The applications for recognition had to be submitted by the 23rd of December. It was also agreed that the Arbitration Commission would offer advice on the advantages of the different applications.

The stand taken by the German Foreign Minister, who was steadfast in his intention to recognize, be it unilaterally, some of the Yugoslavian republics, was definitely conducive to the taking of the above decisions. In order to preserve even a sense of the principle of solidarity, the Foreign Ministers of the EPC accepted the German stand in connection with recognition.

Antonis Samaras had never withdrawn his serious concerns over the repercussions which an eventual decision by the EPC to recognize the former Yugoslavian republic would have, especially in the event of an application by FYROM for recognition under the name "Republic of Macedonia". In the circumstances, however, the Foreign Minister considered that to veto all the decisions taken during the meeting would have been counter-productive. Nevertheless, in order to adequately confront the legitimate concerns of Greece, he insisted that there be included a paragraph which would set

additional provisions, which would apply to a future application for recognition by FYROM.

The Italian Foreign Minister, De Mikelis, proposed adopting a simple solution to the question with the name New Macedonia. Samaras, however, rejected this proposal. Finally, the ministers of the EPC agreed on the 16th of December to the three following conditions:

*The Community and its member states also request that every Yugoslavian republic, before being granted recognition, undertake to adopt constitutional and political guarantees which ensure that they do not have territorial claims upon neighbouring member states of the Community and that they will not carry on hostile propaganda against neighbouring members, including as well the use of names which imply territorial claims.*³⁷

The first two conditions proved to be a little less ambiguous. FYROM would appear to have realized that the vociferous conducting of hostile propaganda and whatever territorial claims it had upon Greece would not have been in accordance with the expectations and specifications which had to be satisfied by the states which were seeking recognition by the EPC. Consequently, it went ahead and made certain significant (but not necessary or adequate) changes in the constitution of the country.³⁸ All the same, the third condition which requested that countries applying for recognition not use a “name which would imply territorial claims”, proved to be important, vague and ambiguous.

Samaras maintains that during the meeting of the 16th of December, he acted on the instructions in connection with FYROM, which he had been given by the government on the 4th of December. This assertion is accurate in as far as it refers to the name of the republic. Indeed, the wording of the third condition is consistent both with the decision taken during the Cabinet meeting of the 4th of December and with the memorandum on Yugoslavian Macedonia. Despite this, Samaras, as was clearly shown by his subsequent stand on the question, underestimated or misapprehended the possibility of a name such as Upper Macedonia or Vardar Macedonia being at least negotiable, if not acceptable, in accordance with the above records.³⁹

The news of the agreement of the 16th of December, which set out the three conditions, generated enthusiasm in Greece. The government announced “a great national success”,⁴⁰ while PASOK stated that the agreement constituted a “positive development”.⁴¹ The official and celebratory Greek statements, however, did not involve a restricted interpretation of the third condition set by the EPC, according to which the term “Macedonia” would have to be removed from the future name of FYROM.⁴²

On the 22nd of December, in a significant development, the following question was put to Foreign Ministry spokesman, Ambassador Kalamidas: “If our partners [in the EPC] press for a composite name, would we reject it?”⁴³ The Ambassador replied that “it is clear that there is no question of backing down. What do you mean by a composite name?”⁴⁴ This dialogue constitutes the first indication of the adoption of a maximalist and a restricted interpretation of the third condition of the EPC. Notwithstanding this, the answer given by Kalamidas was somewhat vague. However, such a restricted interpretation was not the result of a certain document, the decision of a Cabinet meeting or a statement by the prime minister after the EPC meeting of the 16th of December. In other words, this was still not the official stand of the Greek government.

In the meantime, FYROM had submitted an application for recognition by the Community on the 20th of December, announcing its decision to satisfy all the required conditions.⁴⁵ On the 6th of January 1992, the parliament of this new republic added two amendments to its constitution. The first declared that FYROM would not revive terri-

torial claims upon neighbouring states, while the second pledged that “the republic would not intervene in the sovereign rights of other states and in their internal affairs.”⁴⁶ Apart from these amendments, FYROM sent a series of answers and documents to the Badinter Commission.⁴⁷

While the Arbitration Commission was studying the question carefully, Greece gave further indication of the significance of the name of the new republic. In a letter to the heads of the governments of the member states of the Community on the 3rd of January 1992, the President of the Greek Republic, Konstantinos Karamanlis, noted that the name of this republic was “*of fundamental importance* to Greece... This republic has absolutely no right, historical or ethnologic, to use the name Macedonia”.⁴⁸ It is worth noting that this wording did not support the restricted interpretation of the third condition of the EPC, in the sense that it did not contain a clear rejection of a composite name.

A few days later, on the 11th of January, the Arbitration Commission’s decision on FYROM was announced.⁴⁹ The shock for the Greek circles where decisions are taken was great. The Arbitration Commission decided that FYROM conformed fully with the EPC’s guidelines for recognition, laying emphasis on the decision by the republic to refrain from carrying on hostile propaganda. However, what was more significant was that the Badinter Commission adopted the view

*that, furthermore, The Republic of Macedonia clearly renounced every territorial claim, whichever may be with declarations, without there being any vagueness and with obligatory validity under international law. And, consequently, the use of the name “Macedonia” would not be able to imply any territorial claim upon another State.*⁵⁰

The decision of the Badinter Commission dealt a serious blow to the Greek arguments. Fortunately for Greece, the Arbitration Commission resolved at the same time not to recognize Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁵¹ This fact provided Greek diplomacy with an opportunity. Attempting to win support from the EPC, Mitsotakis went to Rome and Bonn on the 14th of January. During meetings with Prime Minister Andreotti and Chancellor Kohl, he maintained that the EPC’s recognition of FYROM under the name Macedonia would mean a tremendous blow for his government and, consequently, would endanger their small parliamentary majority of just two seats.⁵² Something like this could return to power the then leader of the Opposition, Andreas Papandreou, who, it was considered, would adopt much more ‘uncontrollable’ behaviour within the scope of the EPC.

As a result of these arguments, Mitsotakis won Italian and German support, so as not to have FYROM recognized by the EPC unless the republic complied with all three conditions which it set at its meeting of the 16th of December 1991. Mitsotakis also appears to have pledged Greek support for the recognition of Croatia. After these developments, the EPC decided to ignore the advice of the Arbitration Commission and, on the 15th of January 1992, recognized Slovenia and Croatia but not FYROM.⁵³

This decision marked the end to a period during which the Greek government exercised collaboration and a spirit of conciliation towards the former Yugoslavia and FYROM. Between June 1991 and January 1992, Greece collaborated fully within the framework of the EPC on almost all the issues which arose from the dissolution of Yugoslavia, contributing in this way to the attempts to limit and end the war.

Of special importance to subsequent developments was the rally in Thessalonikie, which constituted a historic event at which approximately one million citizens in Northern Greece expressed their interest in and sensitivity over the Macedonian Question.⁵⁴

This enormous peace rally proceeded to condemn different hostile propagandistic activities of FYROM and, most important of all, attested to the special Greek Macedonian identity which is indissolubly associated with an uninterrupted historical and cultural presence which spans almost three thousand millennia.

The rally ended with the reading and adoption of a resolution which contained the following paragraph:

*The government is called to stand by the spirit and message of the resolution of today's rally. The people of Macedonia and Thessalonike ask the Foreign Minister to continue to struggle and not to agree to recognize the government of Skopje by any name or appellation which would include the word Macedonia.*⁵⁵

The Thessalonike rally supported the maximalist position on the question of the name, according to which the term "Macedonia" should not be included in the name of this new republic. In this way, it linked the question of a name for FYROM with authentic concerns, emotions and patriotism which could only be manifested in the freely expressed and unreserved will of one million people who were demonstrating in the streets.

Before the 14th of February 1992, Greek foreign policy was being exercised exclusively by experienced diplomats and elected politicians. Nevertheless, the fact that nearly one tenth of the population of the country so fervently supported a specific stand on a question which clearly concerned foreign policy had inevitable consequences. The people represented an important, if not a leading factor in the diplomatic efforts of Greece, not only because of the electoral power which they were able to exercise every four years, but mainly because of the constant reminder and pressure which they exercised in connection with the specific policy which the government should apply on the question of FYROM. It should be pointed out that the Thessalonike rally was the starting point of a process of interaction between foreign policy, internal policy and nationalism, which were linked with the activities of the country in connection with the Macedonian Question.

More specifically in connection with the name, this interaction culminated in the Second Council of Party Leaders which was convened on the 13th of April 1992, under the presidency of the then President of the Greek Republic, Konstantinos Karamanlis.⁵⁶ It proved to be a dramatic meeting, with an outburst from the president against the Foreign Minister, which virtually announced his dismissal from the government and also the formal adoption by almost the entire Greek political leadership of their preferred stand on the question of the name.

The meeting ended with a bulletin that stressed the following:

*In connection with the question of Skopje, the political leadership of the country, with the exception of the Greek Communist Party, agreed that Greece will recognize Skopje as an independent country only if it complies with the three conditions which were stipulated by the EPC on the 16th of December 1991, with the self-evident clarification that in the name of that state the word Macedonia will not appear.*⁵⁷

This wording marked the formal adoption, at the highest political level, of the non-negotiable maximalist position on the question of a name for FYROM. The combined results of the Thessalonike rally and this decision were enormous. The political leaders of the country responded in a positive way to this expression of power, quality and breadth of popular feeling. This agreement between the people and their representatives remained undisturbed for almost a decade, and was in fact displayed in different ways,

mainly with the rejection of international attempts at mediation which proposed settlements on the question of the name that were incompatible with the maximalist line which had been adopted.

In particular, in April of 1992, the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Joao De Deus Pinheiro, following a decision taken by the EPC, made specific diplomatic attempts and presented a settlement packet, known as the Pinheiro Packet, which aimed at a settlement of the dispute between Greece and FYROM.⁵⁸ This solution called for among other things abstaining from threats and the use of violence, offered guarantees of the inviolability of the frontiers and the territorial integrity of the two countries and ensured the legitimate and unobstructed transportation of goods. That which determined the fate of the Pinheiro Packet was the fact that it proposed the recognition of FYROM with the name "New Macedonia", provoking in this way a furious response from the then Foreign Minister of Greece, Antonis Samaras⁵⁹ and bringing about the final rejection of the proposed settlement.

Yet another attempt to achieve a compromise was made at the end of 1992 by the retired British diplomat Robin O'Neill,⁶⁰ under the aegis of the British Presidency of the EPC. The initiative by O'Neill resulted in a report submitted on the 3rd of December 1992,⁶¹ which announced that "the government of FYROM... is ... ready to accept the name Republic of Macedonia (Skopje) in all its international transactions".⁶² The dissatisfaction of Athens with this unacceptable proposal was obvious and, consequently, the O'Neill Report was rejected with bitterness because it was not considered objective.⁶³

After O'Neill's failure, the EU abandoned the attempt to solve the dispute between Greece and FYROM and the negotiations in connection with the question of the name passed into the scope of the UN, where in effect they remain up to this day.

3. The Interim Agreement of 1995 and rapprochement between Greece and FYROM.

Intense diplomatic activity behind the scenes in New York led to a third unsuccessful attempt at mediation by the UN negotiators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen, who, in May of 1993, submitted a draft plan which covered almost all the differences and points of disagreement between the two countries.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the main provision of the draft plan in connection with the issue of the name included a proposal for the new country to be recognized internationally under the name "Nova Makedonija". The proposal was ostensibly similar to that of Pinheiro, but its notable difference was that it included the name in its Slavic (untranslatable) version, implying in this way that FYROM was without ancient Greek origins. Though many politicians in Athens saw the Vance-Owen draft plan as "a masterpiece of diplomatic expertise",⁶⁵ it was not compatible with the maximalist stance of the country on the question of the name and, despite its serious concern, the Mitsotakis government was not in a position to support or sign it.

The PASOK government under Andreas Papandreou imposed a more stringent and extensive embargo in February of 1994.⁶⁶ In addition to closing the General Consulate of Greece in Skopje, it decided to ban the movement of goods from and to Skopje, especially through the port of Thessalonike. Certain exceptions were made on humanistic grounds and, consequently, food and pharmaceutical products were not included in the otherwise almost general embargo.

Although at an international level the reaction to the move by Athens was almost universally adverse, it managed to put the question of the name of FYROM back on the agenda of the international community. One important problem appeared to have arisen when, on the 6th of April 1994, the European Council decided to take legal action

against Greece in the European Court of Justice (EC) over the question of the embargo.⁶⁷ Athens responded with a thorough and flawlessly grounded legal document.⁶⁸ Finally, on the 29th of June 1995, the EC decided in favour of Greece, rejecting the rationale of the Council as well as the request for the adopting of provisional measures.⁶⁹

The question of the embargo was finally resolved with the signing of the Interim Agreement in New York on the 13th of September 1995, which formed a nodular point in the rapprochement and settlement of bipartite relations between Greece and FYROM.⁷⁰ This agreement was mainly the result of the intense pressure which had been exercised on both sides by the United States (and not the European Union).⁷¹ The most important consideration before the signing of the agreement was whether to adopt the approach foreseen by the “big” or the “small packet”. In the first case, the question of the name would be confronted and settled, while in the second, settlement over the question of the name would be postponed to a later time. Finally, the second approach was chosen for obvious political reasons.

Despite this, the approach foreseen by the “small packet” proved to be adequate enough to settle and stabilize bipartite relations between Greece and FYROM, and this was so because the Interim Agreement provided both sides with substantial benefits and advantages. More specifically, Greece managed to get a change made to the flag of FYROM. This concerned a sensitive matter since the flag of the country, which, as of August 1992, featured the Sun or Star of Vergina, had rightfully enraged the Greeks, who saw in this move an unfounded usurpation of the symbol of the ancient Macedonian dynasty.⁷² Furthermore, Articles 6 and 7 of the Interim Agreement contained several clarifications and interpretations which referred to the constitution of FYROM, all of which fully satisfied the Greek side.

On the other hand, FYROM won recognition by Greece at an international level.⁷³ Similarly, it succeeded in ending the afflictive embargo (Article 8) and secured the pledge that Athens would not try to obstruct attempts by this new republic to join international organizations and institutions (Article 11). On the basis of the above, it becomes clearer that the Interim Agreement of 1995 settled many bipartite issues on the grounds of reciprocal accommodations and in this way allowed the postponement of the final settlement of the question of the name. As a result, this sensitive but at the same time crucial question was put aside.

In the five years that followed, the spectacular improvement in bipartite relations led the then Prime Minister of FYROM, Loupso Georgievski to describe the new situation as a “small miracle”.⁷⁴ “By the end of 1999, the total amount of Greek investments was 150 million dollars and the invested capital amounted to 300 million dollars”.⁷⁵ Between 1995-2000, Greece became the second largest trade partner of FYROM... and the largest investor in the country.⁷⁶ Greece was also in third place as a destination for FYROM’s exports and in second place as the country of origin of its imports.⁷⁷ During the period 1995-2001 the “average annual rate of growth [of Greek investments was] 223.55%”.⁷⁸ By March 2001 “Greek exports to Skopje constitute[d] 25% of our exports to the Balkans and Greek investments in the neighbouring country [had] created 5,000 jobs there”.⁷⁹

This success was the result of the fact that Greek companies purchased the largest petrol refineries, opened supermarket chains, and proceeded to invest in sectors of mining, meat processing, brewing and cement manufacturing. In addition, a petroleum pipeline was constructed connecting Skopje and Thessaloniki, while many joint ventures were established in the sectors of electricity generation, telecommunications, and the expansion of railway lines between the two countries.⁸⁰ Fully aware of the importance of national interests of the common objectives in foreign policy and of the

important economic opportunities, Athens provided for FYROM the sum of 74,840,000 Euro (for the five year period 2002-2006) within the framework of Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (HIPERB).⁸¹

Today (2005) it is estimated that:

*The volume of direct Greek investments which have been carried out or are in the process of being carried out exceeds 460 million US dollars, creating 8,000 jobs mainly in the sectors of petroleum products, telecommunications, mining, textiles, banking, tobacco manufacturing and food and drink. As far as bipartite trade is concerned during the year 2002, Greece was the third largest supplier of goods to FYROM, after Germany and Serbia-Montenegro.*⁸²

Furthermore, Greece also signed a military pact with Skopje in December 2000, which provided for increased cooperation on border patrols, the secure exchange of classified documents between the respective heads of the armed forces and collaboration in the sector of arms manufacture.⁸³ For a period before the outbreak of ethnic disturbances in FYROM in 2001, hopes emerged for an agreement which would have been concluded successfully on the basis of the name "Gornamakedonia" [Upper Macedonia], in combination with the provision of substantial Greek aid and guarantees of security.⁸⁴ The outbreak of an armed ethnic crisis during 2001,⁸⁵ effectively ended these attempts.

Athens stood actively by Skopje when the territorial integrity and existence of the neighbouring country was endangered. Greek diplomacy openly condemned all attempts at using violence to change the borders of the southeastern Europe and at the same time gave its support for human and minority rights.⁸⁶

The responsible and mature behaviour of all the Greek parties allowed Greece to appear internationally as righteous and earnest in its attempts to confront a problem which, on top of all, had the potential to destabilize the wider region.⁸⁷ Special mention must be made of the letter which was sent by the then leader of the opposition and president of the New Democracy party, Kostas Karamanlis, to the *International Herald Tribune*, in which he observes the following:

*Greece...desires a more tangible display of the determination of the international community to oppose ethnic terrorism. Clear guidelines must be formulated for the protection of minority rights, while effective mechanisms of regional cooperation must be established for their implementation. The Greek government has stressed its commitment to moves in this direction, and on this [matter] it has the support of the New Democracy, the main opposition party.*⁸⁸

It would have been in vain to seek a somewhat similar example of public and international support of the government's foreign policy in relation to the post-Cold War Macedonian Question in the decade preceding this.

The positive assistance of Athens culminated in a series of steps which resulted in the signing, on the 9th of April 2001, of the Stability and Association Agreement between the European Union and FYROM. In fact, FYROM was the first western Balkan country to succeed in signing a Stability and Association Agreement with the EU.⁸⁹ This event is particularly significant because it also marked the indirect association between the EU and FYROM and by extension the parameters which are established by the new phase in the Macedonian Question.

The ethnic crisis in FYROM ended with the signing of the Ochrid Agreement.⁹⁰ During this period, intense international pressure was exerted on Athens (mainly by the USA) to give way and accept a compromise on the question of the name.

Finally [the then Greek Foreign Minister, Georgios] Papandreou resorted to a bold move. He successfully requested that the EU Foreign and Security Policy Chief, Xavier Solana, be assigned to function on behalf of the EU as mediator on the problem with [FYROM]. The purpose was twofold: Greece gained a necessary breathing space and *the matter was once again brought within the jurisdiction of the EU as well.*⁹¹

With this move, Athens managed to avoid further pressure, which together with the events of the 11th of September helped shift the strategic interest and priorities of the USA. In addition, the role of the EU in connection with the question of the name did not continue beyond that certain, brief point in time since the actual negotiations remained within the scope of the UN.

In any case, it is significant that became clear to the leadership of the Slavo-Macedonians that the only valid hope of preserving their nation lay in its accession to the Euro-Atlantic frameworks. The future of Skopje is indissolubly connected with Brussels. The realization of this fact by both Athens and Skopje gave rise to the conditions for a new phase of serious negotiations the outcome of which were the Nimitz proposals of April 2005.

4. The European Union as a Catalyst in the Settlement of the Question of the Name;

The ulterior motive of all the Balkan states, including FYROM, is still to gain accession to the European Union. The summit meeting of the European Council (EC) in Thessaloniki on the 19th and 20th of July 2003, held during Greek presidency of the EU, constituted a focal point in this process.

More specifically, the European Council of Thessaloniki used language which left no doubt over the European future of the Balkans:

*recalling its conclusions in Copenhagen (December 2002) and Brussels (March 2003), it reiterated its determination to fully and effectively support the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries, which will become an integral part of the EU once they meet the established criteria.*⁹²

In addition, on the 21st of June 2003 a separate summit meeting was held between the EU and the Western Balkan countries to deal with all the problems in the region as well as bipartite relations. In the declaration which followed, the EU affirmed

*its outright support of the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries. The future of the Balkans is to be found within the scope of the European Union.*⁹³

Taking into account the above developments, the government of Skopje submitted, on the 22nd of March 2004, a formal application for accession of the state of FYROM to the EU.⁹⁴ At the same time, attempts were stepped up to have FYROM admitted to NATO, in all likelihood by 2007.

Athens, after “reading” correctly the significance of these developments, asked in September 2004 for a stepping up of the talks in New York over a settlement of the name.⁹⁵ The Greek government chose in this way to take the initiative so as not to be faced with a fait accompli, or to be dragged under the weight of developments into spasmodic and ineffective actions, as had unfortunately happened on several occasions

in the past. In other words, seeing that the intention of Skopje to gain admission to the Euro-Atlantic framework would inevitably bring the question of the name back into the foreground at international level, it was preferable to have it presented by Greece, which in this way was able to surprise and take (at least in the first stages) the “reins” in this new diplomatic attempt.

Furthermore, Athens used rhetoric and argumentation which was not only based on incontestable Greek laws on issues connected with the (ancient and modern) history of the Macedonian Question. The leadership of the Foreign Ministry linked the settlement of the issue of the name with the wider stability of the Western Balkans, in expectation of a decision on the final regime for Kosovo as well. In effect, Greece called for the active support of the international community (and especially of the USA) not only as confirmation of the validity of the Greek position, but mainly as a basis for a realistic formulation of reciprocal regional interests.

Greek diplomacy suffered a serious blow when the USA recognized, on the 4th of November, the newly-formed republic under its constitutional name “Republic of Macedonia”.⁹⁶ Despite this, the negotiations continued in New York and finally a proposal was submitted by the special UN mediator, Matthew Nimitz. On the question of the name, Nimitz concluded that

*The essence of the solution which is embodied in this resolution is an explicit recognition that the constitutional name of the State is “REPUBLIKA MAKEDONIJA”, but a further decision that in the interest of peace and harmony in the region and good neighborliness, and to avoid misunderstandings, the name of the capital of “REPUBLIKA MAKEDONIJA” will be appended to the constitutional name with a hyphen to form a new composite name to be used in the United Nations and for other official international usage.*⁹⁷

Athens initially approved the Nimitz proposal as a basis for further negotiations,⁹⁸ while Skopje appeared to reject it.⁹⁹ The reaction from Greece was strong and it virtually threatened to exercise its veto and thereby deprive FYROM of the possibility of acceding not only to the EU but to NATO as well.¹⁰⁰ However, for the first time since 1991, FYROM and not Greece was seen by the international community to be the main obstacle to the finding of a conciliatory solution. Skopje is indeed inexplicably adhering to an unwarranted maximalist position. This development constitutes a clear diplomatic gain for Greece, which perhaps “shields” us from unfavourable reactions, provided it becomes necessary in the future to take tough decisions which are connected with FYROM’s move towards accession.

In any case, it must be stressed that the European perspective of FYROM constitutes a difficult, distant but at the same time feasible and necessary objective. The possibility of realizing such a development sends a clear message to the Albanian citizens of the country that their future has to be sought in Europe and not in armed nationalistic escapades and expansionist ideas. The well-being and security of the newly-formed neighbouring republic can be safeguarded in the long run only through the procedure which will lead to its accession to the Euro-Atlantic frameworks. The road to Europe constitutes for FYROM the best guarantee of peaceful coexistence among the nationalities and long term political stability.

Both of FYROM’s strategic goals (admission to NATO and especially the EU) remain connected with the institutional choices and capabilities of Athens, which (rightly so) continues to support political stability and admission to the Euro-Atlantic frameworks for all the Balkan states.

Furthermore, the establishing of a permanent regime for Kosovo constitutes a development which affects perhaps the structure and existence of FYROM. Public opinion among the Slavo-Macedonians perceives that major reclassifications in the Western Balkans which are related to the Albanian element do not bring adverse consequences for their nation.

Consequently, it is not out of the question, despite the initial rejection of the Nimitz proposal, for the government of Skopje to be forced to accept a diplomatic compromise on the question of the name, allowing for the country's relatively unhindered admission to the EU and, at the same time, creating the conditions for a virtual overcoming of the almost endemic instability which continues to characterize FYROM. In the event of something like this happening, and in spite of the failures of the decade of the 1990s, the EU, the allurements of being accepted within its embrace, and the institutional parameters which are connected with the procedure of expansion will play a catalytic role which will probably lead to developments that would include a final settlement of the question of the name.

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Notes

1. For the history of the Balkans see Glenny, 1999, Hupchick, 2002, Castellan, 1991, Mazower, 2000 and mainly Stavrianos, 2000.
2. See Kofos, 1999, pp. 227-9.
3. For the dissolution of Yugoslavia see Burg and Shoup, 1999, Glenny, 1992, Gow, 1997, Holbrooke, 1988, Owen, 1995 and Woodward, 1995.
4. Montenegro was perhaps the only exception. For an analysis of the elections of 1990 see Woodward, 1995, pp. 117-125.
5. For the more standard and important study of the EPC see Ifestos, 1987. Nevertheless, we may briefly mention, in connection with the status of the EPC as a regime, the principle of solidarity which governs it. (See the Luxembourg Report of 1970, Part Two I. b, the Copenhagen Report of 1973, Part I. ii, the Introduction to the London Report of 1981 and the Single European Act (SEA) of 1986). Other important principles are that of deliberation, confidentiality and the parallel status as a member of the Community and the EPC (For the principle of deliberation, see the Copenhagen Report Part II. 11, and SEA Chapter III. Article 30. 2. a. On the subject of confidentiality, see The London Report, Article 6. For the parallel status of a member, see Nuttall, 1992a, pp. 43 and 260). Furthermore, the EPC functions on the basis of the principle that there cannot be any military confrontation between its member states. We can therefore assert that the members of the EPC constitute a plural community which focuses on security issues "Within such a community, the likelihood of a military confrontation had been removed together with all the special preparations for such an event" (Deutsch, 1979, p. 180).
6. In this work, the term FYROM will be used. This approach has the advantage of being consistent with Resolution 817 adopted by the UN Security Council on 7th April 1993, for that state's "being provisionally referred to for all purposes within United Nations as 'the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia' pending settlement of the difference that has arisen over the name of the state". For the full text of the resolution see Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, p. 147.
7. Gow and Freedman, 1992, p. 99.
8. For the terms of the protocol, see Official Journal of the European Communities (hereafter referred to as OJ), No C 134/6, 24.5.91.
9. See Bull. EC 6-1991, p. 8.
10. See Gow and Freedman, 1992, p. 102.
11. See EPC Press Release P. 61/91, 5 July 1991.
12. *The Times*, 6 July 1991, p. 10. See also Weller, 1992, p. 573.
13. For further details on the EPC plan, see Gow and Freedman, 1992, pp. 105-106.
14. For the text of the Brioni Agreement, see European Political Cooperation Documentation Bulletin (hereafter referred to as EPCDB), vol. 7, 1991, pp. 334-338. See also *The Financial Times*, 8 July 1991, p. 1, Gow and Smith, 1992, p. 10, Weller, 1992, pp. 573-574 and Woodward, 1995, pp. 168-172.
15. See OJ No 3-407/68, 9.7.91.
16. The text of the telegraph can be found in Owen, 1995, pp. 2-3.

17. For the declaration concerning Yugoslavia which was arrived at during this conference, see EPCDB, vol. 7, 1991, pp. 389-390.
18. The peace-keeping conference began in The Hague on the 7th of September 1991 and was presided over by the former British Foreign Minister, Lord Carrington.
19. For this reason the Arbitration Commission is often referred to as the Badinter Commission. Badinter was eventually supported by his fellow ministers from Belgium, Spain, Germany and Italy.
20. For the text of the memorandum see Skylakakis, 1995, pp. 258-260.
21. Skylakakis, 1995, pp. 259-260, the emphasis being my own.
22. See Skylakakis, 1995, pp. 42-43.
23. The full results are to be found in Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, pp. 38-39.
24. Quoted in Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, p. 38.
25. For the text of the declaration of independence of FYROM see Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, pp. 40-42.
26. Skylakakis, 1995, p. 46.
27. Mr. Mitsotakis made several similar statements prior to the meeting of Cabinet on the 4th of December 1991. For a reference to the most important statements which were made in the middle of November 1991, see Lygeros, 1992, pp. 104-105 and Tarkas, 1995, p. 64.
28. EPCDB, vol. 7, 1991, p. 476, the emphasis being my own. See also Genser, 1997, pp. 792-793.
29. See EPC Press Release P. 106/91, 28th of October 1991.
30. *International Legal Materials* (hereafter referred to as ILM), Vol. 31, No. 6, (December 1992), p. 1494.
31. For important references to this meeting see Skylakakis, 1995, pp. 62-63 and Petridis, 1997, p. 391.
32. The minutes are to be found in Papakonstantinou, 1994, p. 419.
33. Papakonstantinou, 1994, p. 419, the emphasis being my own.
34. *The New York Times*, 15 December 1991, p. A1.
35. See Genser, 1997, pp. 797-799, Skylakakis, 1995, pp. 63-64 and Tarkas, 1995, pp. 67-69.
36. See EPC Press Release P. 128/91, 16 December 1991. These terms were also to be applied to the recognition of the new states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.
37. Quoted in Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, p. 52, the emphasis being my own.
38. See Kofos, 1994, p. 49.
39. For example, the meeting of the Council of Ministers on the 4th of December 1991 had decided that the name Macedonia "had a geographic...basis" (Papakonstantinou, 1994, p. 419).
40. The official government statement is referred to in Tarkas, 1995, p. 70.
41. *Eleutherotypia*, 18 December 1991, p. 4.
42. For statements by Mitsotakis and Samaras, see *Makedonia*, 18 December 1991, p. 1.
43. Quoted in Tarkas, 1995, p. 77.
44. Quoted in Tarkas, 1995, p. 77.
45. See *Macedonia*, 21 December 1991, p. 20.
46. 31 *ILM*, p. 1511 (1992).
47. For the answers given by FYROM on the important questionnaire which was sent by the Arbitration Commission, see Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, pp. 54-62.
48. For the letter from Karamanlis see Ioannou, 1992, pp. 101-102, the emphasis being my own.
49. For the resolution of the Arbitration Commission, see Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, pp. 65-71.
50. Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, p. 71.
51. For the resolutions of the Arbitration Commission on Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, see 31 *ILM*, pp. 1501-1507 (1992).
52. See Lygeros, 1992, p. 117, note 64.
53. See EPC Press Release P. 9/92, 15 January 1992.

54. For a lengthy analysis of the Thessalonike rally and its immediate consequences, see Tziampiris, 2000, pp. 97-101.
55. *Macedonia*, 15 February 1992, p. 5.
56. For the Second Council of Party Leaders, see Papandreou, 1997, pp. 516-539, Skylakakis, 1995, pp. 133-143, Tarkas, 1995, pp. 282-291 and Tziampiris, 2000, pp. 122-125 and 132-133. The First Council of Political Leaders was of lesser importance and took place on the 18th of February 1991. See Skylakakis, 1995, pp. 93-96.
57. Valinakis and Dalis, 1994, p. 93.
58. For the content of the Pinheiro Packet, see Valinakis and Dalis, 1996, pp. 87-90.
59. See Skylakakis, 1995, p. 284.
60. Important information on this diplomatic episode is given in O'Neill, 1997 and Papakonstantinou, 1994, pp. 169-210.
61. For the text of the report by O'Neill, see Papakonstantinou, 1994, pp. 431-439.
62. Papakonstantinou, 1994, p. 437.
63. See Tziampiris, 2000, p. 151.
64. For an analysis of this initiative, see Kofos, 1999, pp. 243-244, and Papakonstantinou, 1994, pp. 381-412.
65. Kofos, 1999, p. 244.
66. See Kofos, 1999, pp. 244-246, and Tarkas, 1997, pp. 376-403. For important statistical data in connection with the economic burden to FYROM after a year's enforcement of the embargo, see Valinakis and Dalis, 1996, pp. 329-332. Gligorov in his memoirs made the following assumptions: "It is not unlikely that when the Greeks imposed the embargo, they calculated that we would not be able to hold out. There is no way for us to import from abroad petrol and the necessary raw materials for our industry, which at the same time obstructs our exports. Especially our very important exports, such as, for example, the exports of minerals... Meaning – the embargo hit all our remaining production" (Gligorov, 2001, p. 306). It has also to be pointed out that the huge mass rallies which were held in Athens and Thessalonike in 1994 (in combination with the embargo) attest to the strong popular feeling over the question of the name at the time.
67. For the announcement of and thinking behind the legal action see Valinakis and Dalis, 1996, pp. 239-240.
68. See Valinakis and Dalis, 1996, pp. 241-298.
69. See Valinakis and Dalis, 1996, pp. 302-327.
70. For the text of the Interim Agreement see Rozakis 1996. For the more interesting analysis of the Interim Agreement which in addition proves that Athens gave ground in connection with the Vance-Owen plan, see Kofos, 2003a, pp. 167-170.
71. Richard Holbrooke has given a singular, frank and lengthy report on the American diplomatic efforts. See Holbrooke, 1988, pp. 121-127. See also Rozakis, 1996, p. 15.
72. See paragraph 2 of Article 7 and Tziampiris, 2000, p. 144.
73. Article 1.
74. See website: http://world.flash.gr/research/print_version.asp?articleid+2251.
75. *The Vima*, "Epicheirimatika Kardiochtypia sta Skopia [Business Heartbeat in Skopje]", 25 March 2001.
76. See *Flash.gr*, "PGDM: Menei mono to onoma [FYROM: Only the name remains" December 2000.
77. Nikas, 2003, p. 122.
78. Nikas, 2003, p. 135.
79. *Flash.gr*, "Simitis stin Bouli gia PGDM [Simitis in parliament on FYROM]", 2 March 2001.
80. See mainly Nikas, 2003, pp. 135-139 and Tziampiris, 2000, p. 53.
81. See web page http://www.mfa.gr/greek/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/-balkans/fyrom.html as well as *The Kathimerini*, "Dysphoria Skopion gia kathysterisi boitheias [Resentment of Skopje over delay in help]", 21 February 2003.
82. See web page http://www.mfa.gr/greek/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/balkans/fyrom.html.
The data comes from the Greek Foreign Ministry.

83. See *Eleutherotypia*, “Tha boithame ta Skopia na phylane ta synora tous [We will help Skopje to guard its borders]”, 12 December 2000.
84. See Kofos, 2003a, pp. 199-204, *The Vima*, “Epitynchanetai symphonia gai to onoma ton Skopion [Agreement reached on the name for Skopje]”, 26 January 2001, *Eleutherotypia*, “Protasi Athinas sta Skopia me prospores kai onoma [Proposal from Athens to Skopje with offers and a name], 9 February 2001, *Kathimerini*, “To zitima tou onomatos se krisimo staurodromi [The question of the name at a crucial crossroads]”, 11 February 2001, *Kathimerini*, “Kai to onoma autis ‘Gornamakedonia’ (Anomakedonia) [And its name ‘Gornamakedonia’ (Upper-Macedonia)]”, 13 May 2001 and mainly, International Crisis Group, “Macedonia’s Name: Why the Dispute Matters and How to Resolve It”, 10 December 2001, p. 10.
85. For detailed explanation of the events in connection with the nationality crisis in FYROM see Vichou, 2005, Balalovska, et al, 2002, Phillips, 2004 and Roudometof, 2002, pp. 211-223.
86. A complete explanation and justification of the Greek position during the crisis in FYROM can be found in the announcement of the then Foreign Minister, Mr. Georgios Papandreou in connection with the Cabinet meeting on the 5th of July 2001 over the latest developments in FYROM. See web page: http://www.papandreou.gr/2.../-ana_yplex_fyrom_05072001.htm. See also, *The Vima*, “I Athina aporriptei kathgorimatika ta senaria gia diasiasi tis PGDM [Athens categorically rejects the scenario for the disruption of FYROM]”, 7 June 2001.
87. For interesting argumentation according to which Greece chose the path of ethics and not that of *Realpolitik*, missing perhaps a unique opportunity to place the question of the name imperatively to the government of FYROM, which had been weakened by the nationality crisis, see Kofos, 2003a, pp. 203-204.
88. *International Herald Tribune*, “A United Response to Ethnic Violence”, 12 May 2001, the emphasis being my own.
89. See Kontonis, 2003, pp. 92-93.
90. For the text of the Ochrid Agreement see web page <http://www.sinf.gov.mk/-PressRoomEN/2001/07/n0815.htm>.
91. Kofos, 2003, p. 204, the emphasis being my own.
92. Conclusions of the Presidency, European Council meeting of Thessalonike 19 and 20 June 2003, the emphasis being my own.
93. Statement, Summit Meeting European Union-Western Balkans, 21 June 2003, the emphasis being my own. Likewise, the European Union pledged to increase economic aid to the Western Balkans by an amount in excess of 200 million Euro, which represented an increase in the respective expenditure of 12 per cent.
94. The opinion of the European Commission is expected in October 2005.
95. *Flash.gr*, “Synechisi tou dialogou gia tin onomasia tis PGDM apophasian oi YPEX Elladas kai Skopion [The Foreign Ministers of Greece and Skopje have decided to resume talks on the name for FYROM]”, 23 September 2004.
96. See International Crisis Group, (ICG), *Macedonia: Not Out of the Woods Yet*, 25 February 2005, pp. 4-5 on web page: <http://www.crisisweb.org/home/-index.cfm?id=3295&l=1>
97. *Eleutherotypia*, “Sto phos to akros aporrison [The top secret come to light]”, 13 April 2005.
98. For the full text of the letter from Nimitz see *Eleutherotypia*, *op. cit.*, It contains some problematic provisions, such as for example in the text of the proposed UN resolution it states that it will “declare that no state or official subdivision of it will be referred to, at any time in international and formal use, as ‘Macedonia’ or ‘Makedonija’ ”.
99. *The Kathimerini*, “Oute bima piso apo ta Skopia [Not a step back by Skopje]”, 20 April 2005.
100. See in particular the respective interview with the under-secretary for Foreign Affairs, Gianni Valinakia (*Eleutheros Typos*, “ I adiallaxia tha echei megalo kostos gia ta Skopia [Intransigence will be of serious detriment to Skopje]”, 11 April 2005.