BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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Despite the unresolved issue of the name, bilateral relations between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) have improved at all levels since the Interim Accord was signed in New York on 13 Sepember 1995. Conscious of the complexity and sensitivity associated with the name issue, the two parties have focused their efforts on creating a climate of co-operation. This co-operation has taken place on the political and economic levels, and in military affairs, policing, cultural and educational relations, development co-operation and infrastructures.

A. Political Relations

In the domain of political relations the improvement has been steady without particular fluctuations, setbacks or crises. Moreover, bilateral relations at this stage can not be compared with the state of affairs until 1995, when an uneasy situation was fuelled by the broader regional crisis plaguing the Balkans. For example, the Balkan region was characterised by ethnic fanaticism and political immaturity, by foreign policies based on short term

interests, by fear, by rival arcs of Islam and Orthodoxy, and by traditional alliances real or imaginary. In short, the Balkans suffered from a mindset which greatly differed from that of convergent development, sound economies, and social cohesion functioning within democratic institutions.[1]

On the other hand, in Skopje, the struggle for the survival and preservation of a national identity and territorial integrity fed nationalistic and irredentist views.[2] Meanwhile, Athens confined itself to political choices that made it, regionally speaking, part of the problem rather than part of the solution thereby isolating her from its European partners.[3] As a result of the confrontation regarding FYROM's name and a series of unfortunate political choices, relations between the two countries were characterised by a mutual lack of trust, which has been difficult to overcome.

The signing of the Interim Accord was of particular importance both for FYROM's existence and its bilateral relations with Greece, as well as for its admission to international organisations. The Accord gave Skopje the necessary legal and political basis for opening diplomatic relations, for substantially

1. "There are certain indications that our bilateral relations are developing well. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a viable state, whose existence we must strengthen in any way we can. We are demonstrating in practice that we believe in a stable and peaceful Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia." Andreas Loverdos, Greek Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, *Kyriakatiki Eleftherotypia* 8.6.2003.

2. For endeavours to create a "Macedonian" ethnic identity see L. M. Danforth, *The Macedonian Conflict: Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1995.

3. For Greek policy in relation to the Macedonian question in the first half of the 1990s, see S.Valden, *The Macedonian Question and the Balkans (1991-1994): Greek Policy's Road to Nowhere*, Themelio, Athens, 1995 [in Greek].

improving its relations with Greece, and for its integration into the international community.[4]

The Interim Accord stipulates Greece's acceptance of the name "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and the lifting of the Greek embargo. On the other hand, FYROM agrees to change its flag (which displayed the Sun of Vergina), and make significant changes to its constitution which, according to Greece, contained irredentist positions and justified intervention in the affairs of neighbouring countries, including Greece.

The first year following the signing of the Accord was characterised by talks on "practical measures" and technical issues in order to create a mechanism of bilateral relations for formal contacts. Indeed, in January 1996, Liaison Offices,[5] were created in order to, among other things, forward correspondence and other technical matters. Herein lies the great importance of the Interim Accord, namely that it succeeded in creating functional bases for the development of co-operation on – mainly, but not solely – the governmental level, on promoting significant constitutional changes, as well as on changes in political choices, along with the popular acceptance essential in both countries.[6]

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4. "The Interim Accord laid the foundations for the development of the country's constructive historic interests and, more importantly, for the preservation of its independence and sovereignty as an independent European and Balkan state, ... while at the same time it paved the way for its admission into the most important international organisations. Two months after the signature of the Accord, are its opponents still of the same opinion?" *Vecer*, 2.12.1995.

5. The Liaison Offices of both countries were functioning in fact at the level of embassies and were headed by well-experienced ambassadors.

6. There were of course reactions from other political forces within both countries. Indisputably the event that proved the danger and uncertainty of political developments in Balkan states was the October 2, 1995, assassination attempt against FYROM's President, Kiro Gligorov, after the signing of the Interim Accord.

Although talks on the issue of the name continued in New York, under the aegis of the United Nations, it became apparent that they would be unable to lead to a solution due to reactions of patriotism and of nationalism both within the two countries and their diaspora. Moreover, there was also, perhaps, a lack of political will on behalf of the two leaders, namely, Andreas Papandreou and Kiro Gligorov, who did not appear to be willing to jeopardise their political image in their respective countries.[7]

The importance of the talks in New York diminished with the increase in the number of political meetings and processes which began between Athens and Skopje after the signing of the Interim Accord, and particularly after October 1996. Then the Greek government of Prime Minister Kostas Simitis won the elections, thus strengthening the collaborative (and better attuned to the West) policy in South-East Europe that he had been pursuing since he took over the premiership in January.

However, in the summer of 1997, FYROM's delegation presented an official motion to Cyrus Vance in which it asked that the country be recognised under its "constitutional name: Republic of Macedonia." This indicated that the talks were, yet again, at an impasse.

The years that followed were characterised by a steady improvement in bilateral relations. Both the general climate of détente prevailing in the region as a result of the signing of the Dayton Agreement, and the implementation of a political and ethnic peace, however fragile, which was solidly supported by the international community, played an important role toward this.

7. Interesting view cited in E. Kofos, "Greek Policy Considerations over FYROM Independence and Recognition", in J. Pettifer (ed.), *The New Macedonian Question*, MacMillan Press, London, 1999, pp. 247-256.

Of particular importance was that, in 1996, both sides began to talk at the governmental level with political and ethnic forces that they had in the past dismissed for either being nationalistic (such as the VMRO-DPMNE), or politically and ethnically unimportant (such as the Albanian parties). These new channels of communication played a determinant role in helping FYROM's entire political and ethnic spectrum understand Greek policy and its political choices and vice versa. At the same time, it ensured that Greece was relatively well prepared politically, with open and exceptionally useful contact channels, for significant political changes, such as the rise to power of the VMRO-DPMNE, the war in Kosovo, and the interethnic crisis between Albanians and Slav-Macedonians in 2001, where the Albanian factor proved crucial to future developments in FYROM.

It is true, however, that it was not until after 1999 and the war in Kosovo that Greece made any political effort toward FYROM's Albanian minority, and saw it as a real and substantive political constituent, whose demands had to be taken into account. This had to be done within the framework of international legality and on the basis of maintaining regional stability as well as FYROM's territorial integrity.

Greece's support for its neighbour's stability and territorial integrity were repeatedly demonstrated in the post-Dayton era. This was especially the case in the 1999 Kosovo crisis and the 2001 ethnic crisis between Albanians and Slav-Macedonians. In both cases Athens stood by Skopje, by providing it with financial and humanitarian assistance, as well as condemning extremist actions that directly endangered the country's viability.[8]

8. In 2000 Greece sent to FYROM a total of 480,000 euros in humanitarian aid. This was mainly in support of programmes for Kosovar Albanian refugees. International Development Co-operation Department, Hellenic Aid, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Athens.

Particularly in the case of the 2001 inter-ethnic crisis which shattered the West's impression of FYROM as the "only oasis of stability in the Balkans" and an "example of respect for minority rights", Greece - realising how dangerous the situation was and despite the pressures relating to the name dispute - supported the government in Skopje. This stance had, for the first time, a significant positive influence on the Slav-Macedonian element of the population and also on the international perception that Greece could be an influential factor for maintaining stability in the region.

It is particularly significant that Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou had visited Skopje on three occasions during the 2001 crisis. Indeed, during the course of that year, he met his counterpart a total of five times.[9]

Moreover, Greece's strong co-operation and interest, especially during the inter-ethnic crisis, led to visits from all political parties, and to the frequent and fruitful exchange of views.[10]

It is significant that the only disenchantment expressed with

9. These were Foreign Minister George Papandreou's meetings with the entire political leadership (6.3.2001), in celebration of Olympics Day; bilateral meetings (28.3.2001); visit in the framework of SEECP (12.4.2001), also attended by American Secretary of State Colin Powell; visit of FYROM's Foreign Minister Ilenka Mitreva to Athens, (23.8.2001); and a quadripartite meeting of the Foreign Ministers of FYROM, Greece, Albania and Bulgaria at Florina / Prespa (25.8.2001).

10. The President of the New Democracy Party, Konstantinos Karamanlis, visited Skopje three times in 2001: on 21.3.2001 (additionally in his capacity as Vice-President of the European People's Party), on 12.5.2001 and on 11.12.2001. In addition, the General Secretary of the governing PASOK Party, Costas Skandalidis, on 16-18.4.2001, and the President of the Alliance of the Left, Nikos Konstantopoulos, on 14.3.2001.

regard to Greece's position during that period came from extremist elements from the Albanian communities in Kosovo and of FYROM.

Demonstrative of the delicate political balances and relations between the two countries was that at such a crucial national moment FYROM used the issue of its name as a negotiating card. Indeed, this was urged through Foreign Minister Ilinka Mitreva who claimed that by not resolving the name issue FYROM's very integrity was put into danger and, therefore, pressed for the international recognition of its constitutional name.

At the same time, and given the unravellings in the region, Greece decided to neither press Skopje nor the international community for a hasty solution regarding the name issue. A solution at that time might have been a fleeting diplomatic success for the Greeks, but it would not have been viable nor would it have had positive results in the longer term. On the contrary, it would have reinforced feelings of suspicion and hostility between the two peoples.

B. Other Non-Economic Sectors of Bilateral Co-operation

In examining the co-operation between the two countries, it is particularly important to look at both the immediate results as well as how the agreement was reached. Namely, the transparency of the process, the balance of gains, the long-term effects and the real creation of a climate of confidence and co-operation must be examined.

With regard to military co-operation and after some justified delay, an Agreement on Military Co-operation was finally signed on 14 December 1999. This Agreement was rapidly expanded via agreements and memoranda, while officers of FYROM's Armed Forces attended the Multinational Peace Support Operations

Training Centre in Kilkis, in the Greek province of Central Macedonia.[11]

It is a fact that while the Military Co-operation Programme for 2000 was carried out normally, this proved impossible in 2001 due to FYROM's inter-ethnic crisis. The programme for 2002, however, went ahead as planned, and was based on the Agreement of 23 May 2002.[12] Planning programme for 2003 was also concluded after Greek Deputy Defence Minister Lucas Apostolidis' visit to Skopje on 19 December 2002. Co-operation in military training is also moving ahead. This is largely thanks to the granting of scholarships which enable cadets from FYROM to attend military academies in Greece, and to the Greek Ministry of National Defence's financial assistance in housing renovation and minor reconstruction projects in FYROM.[13]

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11. The Agreement was signed on 10 July 2000. By December 2002, 27 officers from FYROM's Armed Forces had taken part in related training programmes. In the period 2000-2001 the Centre received financial support from Greece and via the 3rd Working Table on Security in the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, in the amount of 100,000 Euros. Two further related agreements were also signed: a Memorandum of Mutual Understanding on Co-operation in the Field of Armaments and Defence Technology, Skopje, 10.12.2001, for exchanges of visits between representatives of the General Directors of Defence Industries; and a Memorandum of Mutual Understanding for Intelligence Security, Skopje, 10.12.2000, while the Greek Defence Chief of Staff General Manousos Paragioudakis paid a visit to Skopje and Ohrid (12-14.2.2001).

12. The principal activities in 2002 were: Continuing the training of Armed Forces cadets from FYROM at the Multinational Centre in Kilkis, observing the Annual Joint Branch Exercise "Sarisa 2002", and an exchange of visits by working groups of staff officers.

13. In 2002, an army officer from FYROM studied at the National Military Academy. Also, the Ministry of National Defence has promised 580,000 euros worth of assistance for repairs to public buildings damaged in Aratsinovo during the 2001 crisis.

As an indication, one of the programmes is concerned with the renovation of school buildings and places of worship (a mosque and an Orthodox church) in Arachinovo; a city with a primarily Albanian population.[14] In general, the humanitarian assistance carried out by the Greek army in missions to South-Eastern Europe, in particular to Albania, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina is extremely important, both in and of itself as well as for the national and political messages it sends.

In addition, Greece contributed a 400-man unit to the NATO "Essential Harvest" (for the consolidation of stability in FYROM and in the region in general) and "Amber Fox" (for the protection of international observers) operations in FYROM. Greece's military presence and contribution continued with the participation of 43 men in the European Union's first peace mission outside its own borders, as well as the "Concordia" mission to FYROM that replaced the NATO "Allied Harmony" mission.[15]

In the sphere of Judicial Co-operation, bilateral relations are based on both bilateral and European conventions and agreements.[16] However, there have been significant delays in implementation, particularly in relation to the Convention on

14. The Greek Army has also sent humanitarian aid to Kumanovo, and has provided hospital care for seriously wounded FYROM soldiers in Thessaloniki's Inter-Balkan Medical Centre. Moreover, it has provided direct military assistance during the crisis.

15. The mission was taken over by the European Union on 31 March 2003. It is particularly significant that a senior Greek officer has been appointed Deputy Forces Director, while both Greece and France have offered to serve as "Framework Nations".

16. The Judicial Agreement is governed by: (a) the Convention on Mutual Legal Relations (legislative decree 4009/1959) for civil matters, (b) the European Convention on Legal Aid in Criminal Cases, (c) the European Convention on Extradition, and (d) the European Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.

Mutual Legal Relations, Legislative Decree 4009/1959. By contrast, the situation has improved and greater effectiveness has been achieved in criminal matters and extradiction of prisoners.

With regard to Police Co-operation, a Protocol on Police Co-operation was signed in Ohrid, on 8 July 1998. The meeting of the corresponding Ministers on 29 July 1999 resulted in a decision which agreed to the co-operation between the border police. Significant progress has been made in co-operation against organised crime, particularly in matters relating to illegal immigration, illegal cross-border networks, and in the trafficking of drugs and human beings. This is primarily achieved via the sharing of information and the meetings between border police directors. Greece has also provided substantial intelligence and technical assistance to the Ministry of the Interior in FYROM.[17] In addition, both countries are members of and collaborate within the SECI Regional Centre for Combating Organised Crime in Bucharest.[18]

The Joint Border Commission for the examination of technical matters for the precise demarcation of borders met in Kilkis and Bitola, on 1 March 2001. Furthermore, a Protocol on Border Co-operation was signed in Athens on 23 June 1998.

With regard to entry visas, and so long as it does not come in conflict with the terms of the Interim Accord,[19] Greece follows its

17. Meeting between the Greek Minister for Public Order Michalis Chrysochoidis and his counterpart from FYROM, Interior Minister Ljube Boskovski, in Bucharest on 21 May 2001.

18. It is characteristic of the cooperation and of the overall climate that on 12 April 2001, during the crisis in FYROM, the Greek Association of Police Officers sent a letter of condolences and financial assistance for fallen colleagues from FYROM.

19. Entry visas that have been approved by other Schengen countries do not automatically give citizens of FYROM the right to enter Greece. This regulation has a legal basis in the Interim Accord, but causes distress and contributes to a climate of suspicion between the two countries.

international obligations under the Schengen Agreement. The positive climate in bilateral relations is reflected in the "open border policy" adopted in relation to FYROM's citizens.[20] Although FYROM is pressing for a review of the entry visa system, this is not a matter for bilateral negotiation but has to be handled within the framework of the Schengen Agreement.

Another sector in which important efforts are being made both on the bilateral and on a broader regional level, is that of transport; an area of strategic priority for both countries. The need for close co-operation in the area of trade infrastructures and development became obvious early on. The Greek embargo against FYROM and the war in ex-Yugoslavia rendered the Belgrade-Skopje-Athens route (Corridor X) un-usable, thereby creating problems both for the shipments of Greek products into the European markets, and for Greece's trade contacts with the Western Balkans. It is indicative that only one month after signing the Interim Accord, a Protocol on Transport and Communications was signed in Athens (18-20 October 1995). Of the more recent agreements, it is worth mentioning the 1999 Draft Agreement on Air Transport,[21] and the signing of the Memorandum on Co-operation between FYROM and Greece for the development of Corridor X, in Thessaloniki on 15.03.2001. Underlining the political importance of that project for stability and prosperity in the region, is that all countries which made use of his corridor participated in its signing.

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20. Between 1997 and December 2002 the Greek Liaison Office in Skopje had issued more than 286,500 entry visas, while after the signature of the Interim Accord nearly 1.5 million FYROM citizens visited Greece.

21. Also, a tripartite Protocol on Co-operation in Aero navigation, Thessaloniki, 17.11.1999, and a Letter of Agreement on establishing co-ordination procedures between the two countries and providing air traffic services were signed.

With regard to Development Co-operation, the single most important event was FYROM's integration into the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (Hellenic Plan). This was signed by Deputy Minister Andreas Loverdos, in Skopje on 30 July 2002, and provided a total of 74.84 million euros for development aid for the following five years. The main sectors of activity are the promotion of investments, infrastructures (principally in transport and energy), the modernisation of public and local administration, the development of the rule of law and democratic institutions, social cohesion and education.

Despite having been set up in 1999, the Hellenic Plan was considerably delayed. This was the result of the fact that it came in a period characterised by significant changes in the region given the war in Kosovo, the political changes in Serbia-Montenegro (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), and FYROM's ethnic crisis. Its immediate and effective implementation would have sent clear political messages with regard to both the efficiency of Greek international development policy mechanisms in South Eastern Europe, and the Greek support for specific political positions relating to democratisation, stability and viable development in the region. However, delays in the implementation of the Hellenic Plan in many cases sent wrong political messages. Now that the signing of bilateral agreements with the recipient countries has been completed, it remains to be seen how ready and how effective the mechanisms for the realisation and final evaluation of the projects proposed by the recipient countries actually are.[22]

22. In March 2002, and for the period 2002-2006, the Hellenic Plan provided 49.89 million euros for Albania, 74.84 million euros for FYROM, 54.29 million euros for Bulgaria, 70.43 million euros for Romania, and 250 million euros for Serbia-Montenegro. Furthermore, 15 million euros were earmarked for the Serbian province of Kosovo (under international protection). See detailed information on the Hellenic Plan on www.mfa.gr.

Specifically with regard to FYROM, implementation of the Hellenic Plan has to deal with the additional problem of the name which, as a resut, has delayed final approval of the earmarked sums. This resulted in it not being ratified by the Greek Parliament in February 2003. In this case, Greece's political dilemma is the following: to use bilateral development aid as a lever for exerting pressure in the matter of FYROM's name, or to choose a more flexible solution, namely the use of an international financial institution such as the World Bank, for the co-financing and implementation of programmes in FYROM.

On the level of Cultural and Educational Relations, it should be noted that no Training Agreement has been signed, nor is there any reference in the Interim Accord to the matter of recognition by the Greek state of the diplomas granted by FYROM's Institutions of Higher Education. This, however, does not prohibit increasing co-operation among non-governmental organisations and universities focusing on educational exchanges and educational and cultural programmes.[23] There has been considerable co-operation in matters relating to the protection of antiquities and conservation of cultural heritage sites and monuments, the restoration of monuments and conservation of icons and transfer of know-how.[24] Despite the fact that talks on the formalisation of

23. This has included, by way of example, financial aid amounting to 58,000 euros for the Computer Science Department of the Cyril & Methodius University for the creation of a computer lab, and collaboration between Cyril & Methodius University and the University of Ioannina in natural sciences, in June 2001. Also, there have been Greek NGO programmes in FYROM, such as e.g. the programme for combating unemployment through training, in 2001-2002, carried out by the Thessaloniki-based NGO Humanitarian Defence in collaboration with local NGOs.

24. Visit by a delegation from the Technical Chamber of Greece to Skopje with a view to collaboration with the Skopje-based State Institute for the Protection of Monuments, in 1996.

bilateral co-operation in education and culture began in 2000, the name dispute obstructed co-operation initiatives. Hence, these have remained at a non-governmental level.

It should be noted that regional initiatives like the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and the South East European Co-operation Process (SEECP) have emphasised the importance of protecting cultural monuments and places of worship which were destroyed or endangered during the unrest in the Balkans. Greece takes an active part in related programmes and conventions and, during the Greek EU Presidency raised the matter within the European Council Working Group for the Western Balkans.[25]

It is a fact, however, that mutual mistrust remains in relation to how monuments and archaeological findings might be appropriated for historical reference or argumentation. From time to time the authenticity or historical interpretation of findings are challenged, or even distorted to serve propaganda.[26] This is why it is important that co-operation in this sector be strengthened and a climate of confidence gradually be built.

On the cultural and educational level, the financial support of international organisations and Greek state agencies has made possible numerous bilateral and multilateral programmes to be implemented by non-governmental bodies and organisations. An example of this was the 2001-2002 "Pericles Programme" for Greek language teaching in Bitola and Gevgeli, which was funded

25. Greece participated in a convention on this subject in Ohrid, 20-23.2.2002. Also European Council Working Group for the Western Balkans (COWEB), Brussels, 2.4.2003, on Teaching History and School Textbooks and the Protection of Cultural Monuments.

26. In February 2000, the Greek Ministry of Culture mentioned alleged instances of deliberate alteration to the painted decoration of Orthodox churches in FYROM, in an attempt to conceal their Greek identity.

by UNESCO.[27] A number of joint educational co-operation programmes have also been developed within the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. This refers mainly to history textbooks, as well as educational and cultural exchanges in the framework of the Euroregions. Such regions have been formed, mainly in the Prespa / Ohrid districts, together with agencies from Albania, as well as in the Doiran lake region in co-operation with Bulgarian organisations.

Regarding Environmental Co-operation, the 2001 tripartite collaboration (Greece – FYROM – Albania) for the creation of the Prespa International Park, is particularly noteworthy. The prime ministers of the three countries met in Prespa on 2 February 2000, and signed an agreement for the environmental protection and sustainable development of the Prespa lakes district and its environs. In addition, since 1996, there have been meetings between experts on matters including fisheries and the protection of fish breeding areas, in an endeavour to develop more effective co-operation for the environmental preservation of the Doiran lake. One such meeting, held in Athens on 5 July 2002, resulted in the setting up of a mechanism for monitoring the cross-border waters. In the future, this type of co-operation may lead to an international agreement upon which a joint commission responsible for managing cross-border waters may be based.[28]

Further co-operation will be based on the Memorandum of Understanding and Co-operation for Sustainable Development and the Environment, which was signed in Skopje on 4 September

27. This programme was implemented by the Florina Primary Education Department, the University of Bitola, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Florina Municipal Agency for Social Development, and the Municipality of Bitola.

28. FYROM's Draft Protocol and Greece's counter-proposal for Cooperation on Fishing in the Doiran lake was concluded in January 2000.

2000. In addition, Greece is providing 5 million euros in a co-financing effort to construct a wastewater unit at Strumica. The total cost of this programme amounts to 70 million euros and falls under the framework of the Municipal Environmental Action Programme – MEAP.[29]

C. Bilateral Relations and the Issue of the Name

Despite the positive climate within which bilateral relations between Greece and FYROM operate, the dispute over the name remains unresolved, and is the "sole outstanding issue between the two countries".[30] Premier Branko Crvenkovski and President Boris Trajkovski both supported the "double formula" solution. This means that while the constitutional name 'Republic of Macedonia' be used in the country's international relations, a name such as "Nova" or "Northern Makedonija" or "Makedonija-Skopje" be used in its bilateral relations with Greece.[31]

However, such a solution does not appear to be acceptable for the Greek side. Equally unacceptable is the perpetuation of the situation and the tactics of "solution by oblivion".[32] At the

29. Greece is donor country in the framework of the Stability Pact in South Eastern Europe, Working Table II for Reconstruction, Trade and Development Cooperation.

30. 'We have agreed that this matter is in abeyance. And it is the sole issue outstanding between us. It must be resolved by means of mutual concessions. Because it has not yet been resolved, it can spark unfortunate incidents', Andreas Loverdos, Greek Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister, *Kyriakatiki Eleftherotypia*, 8.6.2003.

31. Indicative of the importance attached to bilateral relations and to the issue of the name, is that in the spring of 2003, after a lengthy debate, FYROM's government appointed as its new negotiator for the talks in New York its ambassador to Washington, Nikola Dimitrov, and as the new head of its Liaison Office in Athens the former Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence, Blagoj Hadjinski.

practical level, continuing disagreement regarding the name has delayed the Greek Parliament's ratification of the 18 agreements and protocols[33] which were signed by the two countries following the Interim Accord.[34]

Given that Greece is the country's "principal strategic partner", officials in Skopje describe bilateral relations with Greece as "exceptional and extremely important". Apart from the 18 bilateral agreements and protocols, Greece has invested more than 400 million dollars in FYROM and has actively supported that country's progress towards European and Euro-Atlantic structures, based on the signature of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union and FYROM's inclusion in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative.

In their shared pursuit of economic development, of the strengthening of democratic institutions and respect for human rights, of the state's and citizens' security, and of stability and peace, Greece and FYROM have often supported each other's positions on the regional and international level, as well as in the framework of regional initiatives and international organisations.

The Interim Accord laid the foundations for institutionalised bilateral relations and the signing of the related memoranda, agreements and protocols, freeing the two countries from their hitherto unproductive bilateral political stance and allowing their political leaders to take initiatives towards a rapprochement. The

32. Costas Simitis' remarks, during a meeting with his counterpart from Skopje, Branko Crvenkovski, on 3 April 2003.

33. On 27 May 2003, however, the Greek Parliament ratified (with an overwhelming majority) the Stabilisation and Association Agreement which FYROM signed with the European Union, in April 2001.

34. FYROM has requested the conclusion of a bilateral agreement on seasonal employment. The matter remains under consideration by the Greek Labour Ministry.

unfinished business of the name remains an obstacle which reminds us of the dangers which threaten the stability and good-neighbourly relations in the region.

Currently, the international community has turned its focus to new global crises which have surfaced. This increases the duty and responsibility of the South Eastern European countries to safeguard the peaceful co-existence and management of their economic development and their common European integration process.[35] In this process, it is essential to further normalise bilateral relations.

D. Bilateral Relations in the Framework of International Organisations

FYROM became a member of the United Nations (UN), on 7 April 1993, two years after its declaration of independence and after two unsucceseful applications for admission in UN, on 30 July and 16 December 1992. Membership was effectuated under the above mentioned name,[36] which it must use when it participates in international organisations and meetings. Greek objections with regard to the country's name had prevented FYROM from joining any other international organisation before the signing of the Interim Accord on 13 September 1995.

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35. It is indicative that the European Union's (Thessaloniki Summit Conference for the Western Balkans, 22.6.2003) regional initiatives as the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (Regional Table, Cavtat, 27.5.2003) and the South East European Cooperation Process (Belgrade Summit, 9.4.2003) increasingly mention the role and responsibility of the countries of South Eastern Europe (regional ownership, regional leadership).

36. Resolution 817 / 1993, paragraph 2, of the United Nations Security Council. During its 3196th session, FYROM became a member of the United Nations, under this "provisional name" and without the right to raise a flag at that time.

Given that Greece is a member of the most important international organisations and strategic international partners that FYROM wanted for political and developmental reasons, the Interim Accord served to normalise FYROM's relations with the international community. Illustrative of the importance attached by FYROM to its relations with the European Union, is that a direct reference to the EU is made in the Interim Accord.[37]

Specifically, the Interim Accord states that "The Party of the First Part [Greece] agrees not to object to the application by or the membership of the Party of the Second Part [FYROM] in international, multilateral and regional organisations and institutions of which the Party of the First Part is a member; however, the Party of the First Part reserves the right to object to any membership referred to above if and to the extent that the Party of the Second Part is to be referred to in such organisation or institution differently than in paragraph 2 of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 817 (1993)".[38]

It is obvious from the above mentioned UNSC Resolution, that FYROM was admitted in international organisations under the UN approved name. That name has to be used by all parties during official meetings and in official documents.

The fact remains, however, that FYROM has continuously endeavoured to win recognition of the name contained in its Constitution within the international organisations of which it is a member. At the same time, Greece seeks to prevent this and, pending a bilateral agreement, to preserve the UN-sanctioned

37. "The Parties agree that the ongoing economic development of the Party of the Second Part should be supported through international co-operation, as far as possible by a close relationship of the Party of the Second Part with the European Economic Area and the European Union", Interim Accord, Article 11, paragraph 2.

38. *Ibid*, Article 11, paragraph 1.

name of FYROM. While this has, on occasion, strained bilateral relations between the two countries, it has also become somewhat of a routine for government officials of both countries.[39] By contrast, however, the issue of the name, when used by political factions and the media in both countries for domestic consumption and as an opportunity of stirring up nationalistic antagonisms, may be standard but are far from empty.[40]

i. Bilateral Relations within the European Union

Since FYROM's admission to the United Nations, its relationship with the European Union has been a benchmark of its progress towards development and stability.

FYROM was integrated into the Phare programme[41] immediately after signing the Interim Accord. Apart from the political message it sent, the PHARE programme provided it with significant development aid. At the same time, talks towards the elaboration of a Co-operation Agreement were initiated. The first important stage in FYROM's European course was the Co-operation Agreement which was signed on 29 April 1997, and became effective on 1 January 1998 for four years. Throughout the negotiating period, one of the things that preoccupied the press and political circles in Skopje the most, was how the

39. Witness the phrase used by officials of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, such as the Foreign Minister Ilenka Mitreva and President Boris Trajkovski about "the proofs Greece has to supply to support its European behaviour".

40. "Within their own political system, guided by domestic political cost and benefit, FYROM's parties and press are implacable towards us. This is not the case on the governmental level". Andreas Loverdos, *op. cit*.

41. "'Macedonia' had been included in the Phare programme since 1993, but was blocked by Greece. After the signing of the Interim Accord, the committee received the order to examine all means of developing relations between the European Union and 'Macedonia'", *Nova Makedonija*, 1.11.1995.

country would be named and referred to in the text. Skopje pressed for reference to the "contracting party" or "contracting sides", so as to avoid using the name 'the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia'. Athens rejected it and, as a consequence, so did Brussels.[42] Indeed, even the initial stages of the Co-operation Agreement in June 1996 was effected by means of verbal notes on FYROM's part to avoid an impasse with regard to the name.[43]

The Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), signed on 9 April 2001 normalised the country's relation with the European Union. This was done on the basis that there would be an eventual accession without, however, granting FYROM the status of being an official candidate.[44] The government in Skopje intends to apply for European Union membership as soon as possible, following the example of Croatia, with the aim of accession in 2007, which however is

42. *Vecer*, 22.6.1996.

43. See the declaration by Mr Jane Miljovski, head of FYROM's delegation, that "the Agreement was initialled in the manner provided by the Constitution, that is, we signed only the text in which the name Republic of Macedonia occurs ... and we avoided signing with the provisional name used at the United Nations, without interrupting the talks. There was insistence on account of the presence of Greece as a member of the European Union. We succeeded in initialling the Agreement with an exchange of verbal notes". *Nova Makedonija*, 29.6.1996.

44. Specifically, the Agreement recalls "the readiness of the European Union to integrate FYROM to the fullest possible extent into the political and economic mainstream of Europe and its status as potential candidate for EU membership on the basis of the Treaty on European Union and fulfilment of the criteria defined by the Council of Copenhagen in June 1993, subject to successful implementation of this Agreement, notably regarding regional co-operation." EU – "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" Stabilisation and Association Agreement, 9.4.2001, p. 6.

felt to be unlikely.[45] The Stabilisation and Association Agreement covers a far broader spectrum than the 1997 Co-operation Agreement, and gives particular weight to trade matters in the framework of co-operation and good neighbourly relations, including relations with Greece.[46]

It is important to stress that the Western Balkans, including FYROM, was one of the priority areas for the Greek EU Presidency during the first half of 2003. The stated priorities included implementation of the Ohrid Agreement, continuation and implementation of the Agreement on Stabilisation and Association with the European Union, and the importance of the process of European integration in the Balkans. It underlined the need for co-operation in horizontal issues such as refugees and organised crime, and the strengthening of regional co-operation with the active participation of the countries of the region. These priorities also shape the framework of co-operation between the European Union and FYROM.[47]

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45. The immediate aims of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement are: a. to create a suitable framework for political dialogue, that will permit the development of close political relations between the parties; b. to reinforce the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's efforts for economic development and international co-operation, by the approximation of its legislation to that of the Community; c. to promote harmonious economic relations and gradually develop a free trade zone between the Community and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and finally; d. to strengthen regional co-operation in all the sectors covered by the Stabilisation and Association Agreement." *op. cit*., p. 7.

46. "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia commits itself to enter into co-operation and good neighbourly relations with the other countries of the region including an appropriate level of mutual concessions concerning the movement of persons, goods, capital and services, as well as the development of projects of common interest. This commitment constitutes a key factor in the development of the relations and co-operation between the Parties and this contributes to regional stability", *op. cit*., Article 4, p. 9.

47. Taken from the Programme of the Greek EU Presidency for the Western Balkans, December 2002. Presented by Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou inter alia in Skopje, 13.1.2003. For details, see www.mfa.gr.

The fact that the Stabilisation and Association Agreement was examined by the respective committee on 14 May and ratified by the Greek Parliament on 27 May 2003, provides us with an indication of the positive climate which characterised Greek-FYROM bilateral relations. This is of particular importance since it is the first case in which Greek Parliament ratified an international joint treaty or agreement with FYROM.[48]

This decision was saluted by FYROM's political world, from the President down, who characterised it as "an expression of specific support towards the 'Republic of Macedonia' and a clear signal that Greece was treating its neighbour as a future equal member of the European family".[49] Moreover, they maintained that it was a "genuine step in the right direction, at the right time, a responsible attitude towards its neighbour and the entire region, especially since Greece is undertaking the Presidency of the European Union".[50] As it is rather common in such political situations, there were also some isolated declarations and press reports expressing scepticism and suspicion.[51]

ii. Bilateral Relations within NATO

Turning to FYROM's relations with NATO, it is important to note that the country became a member of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) process on 16 November 1995. This was achieved with

48. "We are serving the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's European orientation with the greatest enthusiasm", Andreas Loverdos, *op. cit*.

49. Statement from the Office of the President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Boris Trajkovski, 29.5.2003.

50. Radmila Sekerinska, at the Ohrid Regional Conference, 2.6.2003.

51. "Greece expects Macedonia's gratitude", front-page headline, *Dnevnik* 29.5.2003. "I hope that this positive development on the part of the Greeks does not come with conditions attached", Stojan Andov, *InfoMac* 29.5.2003.

Greece's support and on the condition related to the name in Article 11 of the Interim Accord. FYROM's participation in the PfP was more of a political stance by the international community in support of the country's territorial integrity and its overall participation in the "new European defence architecture ... and the European collective system".[52]

After a period of constraint during the Kosovo conflict in 1999, FYROM's relations with NATO greatly improved during the 2001 ethnic crisis. Given that the Greek Liaison Office in Skopje was NATO's point of contact in the country through the period 2000-2002, Greece's contribution to the co-ordination of actions and co-operation within the NATO framework was extremely important.

A significant development on the level of international organisations is that when NATO's "Allied Harmony" mission in FYROM came to an end in March 2003, it was replaced by a European Union mission code-named 'Concordia', which was a 360-strong force with a considerable Greek contingent. This marked the European Union's first attempt at crisis management through military means, and it involved the participation of other non-EU member states including Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey.[53]

It should be noted that apart from humanitarian aid, Greece has also contributed a 400-man contingent to NATO's "Essential Harvest" stability mission in the country. It has also sent a team of

52. Announcement by FYROM's Minister for Defence and External Affairs, 11.11.1995.

53. Approval of joint EU action by General Affairs Council on 27.1.2003 and North Atlantic Council (NAC) decision to meet, 5.3.2003. The European Union's military operation was inaugurated on 31 March 2003, in response to a request from the government of FYROM, 17.1.2003 and based on UN Security Council resolution 1371 (2001).

10 officers and 12 soldiers to NATO's "Amber Fox" operation for the protection of international observers in FYROM.

iii. Bilateral Relations within the OSCE

FYROM joined the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in October 1995. This was presented by the country's media as "another sign that 'Macedonia' is an independent country, recognised by the international community".[54] As a member of the OSCE, FYROM has repeatedly called upon international observers from the OSCE/ODIHR and from the Council of Europe to observe elections and censuses. These are sensitive matters and Greece has always been present in these electoral missions.

iv. Bilateral Relations within the Council of Europe

Following the signing of the Interim Accord with Greece in 1995, FYROM also became a member of the Council of Europe.

In April 2001, the Council of Europe adopted a resolution underlying the need for the "preservation of the multi-ethnicity of the country." This statement provoked the reaction of the government in Skopje and of the Slav-Macedonian community.[55]

54. *Nova Makedonija*, 13.10.1995.

55. The Council of Europe allotted FYROM the sum of 6 million euros that year for democratisation process projects. In addition, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe visited Skopje on 19 July 2002 and stressed the need for strengthening democracy, implementing free and fair elections and harmonious co-existence between different ethnic groups. see also Council of Europe Report on Torture, Inhuman Behaviour and Punishment, 16 January 2003; Amnesty Law, 8.8.2002; Council of Europe Report on Implementation of the Ohrid Agreement, 17.4.2002; Council of Europe Report on Freedom of Expression and Information, 10.11.2002; Council of Europe GRECO Report on Fighting Corruption, 13.12.2002.

Regarding bilateral relations between Athens and Skopje within the Council of Europe, FYROM has made the fullest possible use of that institution in order to promote its ethnic policies. These ethnic policies regarding the so-called "Macedonian minorities" and the "Macedonian language", are undertaken within the framework of respect for human rights.[56]

Within the Council, FYROM stresses the fact that Greece has not ratified the Framework Agreement for the Protection of Ethnic Minorities and has not signed the European Declaration on Minority Languages and Religions. Indeed, the Council's Human Rights Commissioner Alvaro Gil-Romples took issue with this and, in his annual report, asked that Greece sign the Agreement as soon as possible.[57]

The fact that the Commissioner's Report made no mention of the existence of a "Macedonian" minority in Greece aroused virulent reactions from the media and political parties in FYROM.[58] The question of whether or not there is a Slav-Macedonian or a Slavophone minority in Greece, has been a source of friction. In fact, Greece does not recognise the existence of an ethnic minority, but merely of a small group of people who speak a Slavic idiom but maintain a Greek national consciousness. Moreover, the Greek Constitution allows any citizen who feels

56. FYROM is only represented at that body by a Chargé d'affaires, and not a Permanent Representative.

57. Alvaro Gil-Romples, Annual Report of the Council of Europe, 11.9.2002.

58. "The Commissioner expunged the 'Macedonians' from Greece. He did not even mention the ethnic 'Macedonian' minority, referring only to Turks and Roma", *Dnevnik* 17.10.2002. The Report is incomplete because it does not mention the Sidiropoulos affair and the existence of a 'Macedonian' minority, while the US State Department report mentions the 'Macedonians' as a minority in Greece", Zvonimir Jankulovski, FYROM's representative at the Council of Europe, 23.10.2002.

that his/her personal rights are being infringed to seek redress in the Greek courts, as well as appeal to the European Court of Justice and the International Organisations.[59]

It should be noted, that the existence of a limited number of Slavophones mainly in the Greek province of Western Macedonia has been used for the purposes of propaganda by nationalistic and political circles in FYROM and throughout the Slav-Macedonian diaspora. On the other hand, the Greek state's refusal to either admit to or thoroughly study the issue, should at some point be allowed to move on. This can only materialise when circumstances permit, namely, when foreign governments stop using minorities and ethnic groups living in border zones for propaganda purposes. This, unfortunately, has been in the Balkans common practice for decades.[60]

v. Bilateral Relations within the framework of Regional Initiatives

On the regional level, FYROM and Greece participate jointly in several multilateral models and initiatives. For instance, they participate in the South-East European Co-operation Initiative (SECI), the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SP) and the South East European Co-operation Process (SEECP).

59. Official Greek position presented in all international *fora*. See Annual OSCE Meeting for Human Rights, Warsaw, September 2002.

60. In contrast to the existence of several reliable studies in Greece, the absence of an official Greek governmental position, scientifically documented and with objective research criteria, on the existence of a Slavophone or Slav-Macedonian minority, gives international research centres and NGOs the space to publish arbitrary data, especially in studies from the early 1990s, see *Minority Rights Group, Helsinki Watch*, etc.

The South East European Co-operation Process (SEECP)

With regard to the South East European Co-operation Process (SEECP) - of which FYROM held the Chairmanship in Office (CiO) in 2000-2001[61] - the two countries supported the principles of independence, territorial sovereignty and the inviolability of borders. This was particularly important to FYROM during its period of crisis. It also underlined the need for a peaceful settling of crises and condemned "the threat or use of violence, ... and terror", and stressed the need to "respect human and minority rights, ... and the establish the rule of law".[62]

It is obvious that of SEECP's areas of concern are also top priorities for FYROM. This is especially the case following the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union. Again, it should be noted that Greece has a very important bilateral and multilateral role to play in the achievement of these priorities. In addition, Greece politically

61. During FYROM's CiO, and despite the crisis, numerous SEECP meetings were held, principally in Skopje: e.g. the Balkan Meeting of Local Government Authorities, Skopje, 3-5.12.2001; the Balkan Seminar on Public Administration, 4-11.12.2001; the Meeting of Parliamentary Speakers, Skopje, 20.3.2001; the Meeting of Ministers for Youth, Skopje, 14.3.2001; the Enlarged Meeting (with the participation of the Ukraine and the United States) of Ministers of Defence, Skopje, 5.4.2001; and the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Skopje, 12.4.2001, attended by US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

62. Particular weight was also given to regional co-operation in the sectors of fighting organised crime, liberalisation and facilitation of trade, investments, energy, transport infrastructures, refugees and internally displaced persons, improving school textbooks and protecting cultural monuments. It also supported co-operation with other regional initiatives, mainly the Stability Pact for SEE, but also the European Union, given that SEECP functions supplementary to the European integration process of the countries in the region. SEECP "supports acceleration of the processes that will lead to full integration into the European Union for all the countries in the region", Joint Declaration of SEECP Foreign Ministers, Belgrade, 19.6.2002.

supports this specific regional cooperation model, since the institutional establishment of its mechanism will strengthen it considerably, and will provide the region with a more powerful voice in European developments.[63]

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

Regarding the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, FYROM has been a recipient country since the Pact was established in Cologne on 10 June 1999 and has received significant assistance within the framework of the Pact's three Working Tables. As a Stability Pact donor country, Greece is a partner in many of these programmes either via state agencies or, more frequently, through the private sector and Greek NGOs. To date, financial assistance has concentrated on:

(a) issues of equality, education, media, gender, parliamentary co-operation, decentralisation and cross-border co-operation within the Working Table I for democratisation and human rights.[64]

63. Greece has repeatedly supported the need for collaboration between the Stability Pact and SEECP, the formal institutionalisation of the latter and the creation of a Secretariat in Thessaloniki. SEECP, although simply an international regional forum, situated in the region politically, strengthens co-operation on "low politics," and provides the opportunity for unofficial meetings between the region's Heads of State. At the meetings of the Heads of State which were held in Crete on 7 November 1997 and Skopje on 23 February 2001, attempts were made to find solutions and to avert the crises in Kosovo and FYROM respectively (unofficial meeting Milosevic-Nano, support for the inviolability of borders, etc.): see H. Kondonis, "Prospects for Balkan Cooperation after the Disintegration of Yugoslavia", *East European Quarterly*, 32/3, Colorado, Fall 1998, 377-394.

64. Commitment to financial support for the Equality Centre in Skopje, creation of a journalists' network, programme for school textbooks and history teaching, programme for collaboration among women members of parliament, etc.

(b) energy, private sector development, trade, infrastructures, social cohesion and protection of the environment, within Working Table II regarding trade, economic co-operation and infrastructure.[65]

(c) military co-operation, the fight against organised crime, trafficking in human beings and corruption, border management, training of judicial and police officials, ombudsman institutions and harmonisation of legislation to European norms within the framework of Working Table III for security and internal affairs.[66]

As a European Union initiative under the aegis of the OSCE, the Stability Pact has a regional approach and philosophy. Indeed, it is the first time that a collaboration mechanism provides those donor countries, international organisations, and international financial institutions who have an interest in the region, with a loose, but in many cases effective structure for co-operation and co-ordinated action.[67]

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65. Several programmes for reinforcing infrastructures (in conjunction with the Hellenic Plan), Thessaloniki-Skopje natural gas pipeline, financial support for the social cohesion initiative, creation of a Business Advisory Council, etc.

66. Military training at the Kilkis Centre, financial support for the asylum and immigration initiative, training for judicial officials, support to the SP anti-corruption initiative, support for a network and co-operation between ombudsmen, etc.

67. Despite the criticisms that have been put forth, it has helped considerably in the creation of mechanisms for the definition of priorities and for the evaluation of projects. This has particularly been the case with recipient countries, and in strengthening governmental co-operation with the private sector and NGOs. It has also demonstrated the need for co-ordinating actions at the horizontal level, and at underlining the interrelation and interaction of the problems that the region faces. H. Kondonis, Civil Society and Multilateral Cooperative Models: The Role of NGOs in the Stability Pact for S/E Europe, in: D. Sotiropoulos - T. Veremis (eds.), *Is Southeastern Europe Doomed to Instability? A Regional Perspective*, Frank Cass, London, 2002, pp. 43-62. For the structure and activities of the Stability Pact for S/E Europe, see www.stabilitypact.org.

E. Conclusion

The importance of the Interim Accord cannot be challenged, for it allowed FYROM to become an active member of the international community. This has a direct impact on its survival as an independent country, especially given the crisis it faced in ex-Yugoslavia and the war in Kosovo, as well as with the associated resurgence of nationalism throughout the region.

It also provided FYROM with a foundation for the normalisation of its bilateral relations with Greece. Moreover, it created a framework for close co-operation - both on the bilateral and multilateral levels - in the economic and political sectors.

The Interim Accord remains in force until it is superseded by a definitive agreement regarding the matter of the name. The Accord stipulates that seven years after its signing - meaning after 13 September 2002 - either party may withdraw from the Accord. This withdrawal, made by written notice, takes effect 12 months after the petition to withdraw has been made.[68] This means that in the absence of a definitive agreement, in the Interim Accord remains valid for an indefinite period of time.

Since the Interim Accord was signed, it is obvious that important changes at the regional level, such as the Dayton Agreement, the war in Kosovo, the ascedance of democratic forces in Serbia and the ethnic-crisis within FYROM itself, have had a determinant influence on the balances and the political choices of the governments of the two states.

68. Interim Accord, New York, 13 September 1995, Article 23, par. 2.

Bilateral co-operation, supported by governments both in Athens and Skopje, has flourished in all sectors. Moreover, bilateral cross-border co-operation networks of municipalities, universities, and NGOs have proved that both people are more eager to live and work together for the prosperity and stability of the region.

Athens and Skopje, distanced from nationalistic political choices and having adopted a more realistic approach, have similar interests and treading on similar paths. There is a common commitment to peace, stability and sustainable development. Moreover, it is hoped that through the building of a bilateral and regional political and economic co-operation, there will be a harmonious co-existence within the European structures, given that South Eastern Europe will be in the future an integral and institutional part of the European Union. The real challenge for both countries is to prepare their economies and societies for this forthcoming reality.

APPENDIX

BILATERAL AGREEMENTS (MEMORANDA & PROTOCOLS) BETWEEN GREECE AND THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

1. Interim Accord, New York, 13 September 1995
2. Memorandum on Practical Measures related to the Interim Accord, Skopje, 13 October 1995
3. Memorandum on the Mutual Establishment of Liaison Offices, Athens, 20 October 1995
4. Protocol on Transport and Communications, Athens, 18-20 October 1995
5. Agreement on the Reciprocal Protection and Promotion of Investments, Athens, 18 March 1997 (has been initialled but not signed)
6. Protocol on Police Co-operation, Ohrid, 8 July 1998
7. Protocol on Border Co-operation, Athens, 23 June 1998
8. Agreement on Abolishing Visas on Diplomatic and Official Passports, Thessaloniki, 11 May 1999
9. Agreement on Investments in the Energy Sector, Athens, 8 July 1999
10. Agreement on Military Co-operation, Skopje, 14 December 1999
11. Agreement on the Multinational Peacekeeping Operations Training Centre, Athens, 10 July 2000

12. Memorandum of Understanding and Co-operation for Sustainable Development and Environment, Skopje, 4 September 2000
13. Memorandum of Mutual Understanding for Co-operation in the Armaments and Defence Technology Sector, Skopje, 10 December 2000
14. Agreement on Budgetary Support of FYROM, Athens, 14 December 2000
15. Memorandum of Mutual Understanding for Intelligence Security, Skopje, 23 May 2002
16. Five-Year Agreement on Development Co-operation (Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans), Skopje, 30 July 2002
17. Protocol on Co-operation in Military Training, and Military Co-operation Programme for the Year 2003, Skopje, 19 December 2002

- *FYROM has also requested conclusion of a bilateral agreement on seasonal employment. The matter is being studied by the Greek Labour Ministry, but without result as of June 2003.*

•• *As of June 2003, none of the above agreements, protocols or memoranda had had been ratified by the Greek Parliament, because of the problem of the name of FYROM.*