

# what's in a name?

## A challenge for regional stability

### \* Why is the Macedonian question so delicate and complex?

The term "Macedonia" is not exclusively related to a specific state. Rather, it has always been used to delineate a wider geographical area, approximately 51% of which is part of Greece, 37% is in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 11% in Bulgaria and 1% in Albania. The choice of one state alone to monopolize the name "Macedonia" - the largest part of which lies outside its borders - neither reflects geographical and political reality, nor contributes to stability in the Balkans.



\* Skopje, February 2008 – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's Prime Minister, Nikola Gruevski, lays a wreath on the monument of national hero Georgi Delchev, to which a map of the so-called "Greater Macedonia" is attached; the map includes a considerable part of Northern Greece, including Greece's second-largest city Thessaloniki, and the Halkidiki peninsula. This is no less than 30% of the territory of Greece - a 55-year-old NATO member. Can this be the behavior of a friend and perspective ally?

### \* Why does Greece oppose the name "Republic of Macedonia"?

"Republic of Macedonia", or just "Macedonia", fails to solve the problem, as it does not distinguish this new country from the Northern Greek region of Macedonia, or from the parts of the wider Macedonia, which are also in Bulgaria and Albania. Furthermore, it is associated with the argument for the unification of "Greater Macedonia" - a policy conceived by Stalin and Tito and pursued by the leadership in FYROM to the present day. The name is therefore linked with an ongoing policy that foresees territorial claims to a part of Greek territory, that has had a Greek identity for more than three millennia, and is associated with immense pain and suffering by the peoples in the region.

### \* Why does Greece favor a compound name?

Greece unlike FYROM has made great strides to try to resolve the name issue under U.N. auspices and has gone more than half-way to find a solution. It has sat at the negotiating table since 1995 and has shown willingness to consider a compound name such as "North Macedonia", which includes the term "Macedonia" but attaches an adjective to it to distinguish it from the Greek province with the same name. This is sensible, reasonable and fair for both sides. A win-win solution.

### \* Why is it time to end the debate?

Today, the conditions for achieving a breakthrough are better than ever. Greece is the single largest investor in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). Athens supports FYROM's bids for NATO and EU membership, but this crucial issue must be resolved first. Alliances and partnerships can only be fostered among countries if there is good will, mutual trust and good neighbourly relations.

### The geographical region of Macedonia

