
AUSTRALIAN HELLENIC COUNCIL CONDEMNS EXTREMISM AMID MACEDONIA NAME DISPUTE

-

08.03.2018

Neos Kosmos (8 March 2018)

As the governments of Athens and Skopje continue talks to reach a mutually acceptable resolution to the decades long Macedonia name dispute, tensions have been heating up in the respective diaspora communities in Australia, and reached a new level at the FYROM rally in Melbourne on Sunday where two piles of Greek flags were burned before the Victorian parliament.

In response, The Australian Hellenic Council (NSW) has issued a statement condemning the actions.

The Australian Hellenic Council deplores the actions of radical ultra-nationalists in demonstrations held in Sydney and Melbourne in support of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), the statement read.

The council went into the legacy of FYROMs former Gruevski government, which had embarked upon a policy of antiquisation by appropriating Hellenic history and symbols of statehood and seeking to portray SlavMacedonians as the heirs to the Macedonian Hellenes of antiquity, the provocation including aspirations of a Greater Macedonia stretching into Greece and absorbing surrounding areas.

It went on to recognise the renewed diplomatic efforts since the election of left-wing Prime Minister Zoran Zaev, and the positive steps taken to reverse this fabrication of history by discarding the name Alexander the Great from its international airport, and taking down Greek statues.

While they acknowledged that there has been some resistance regarding the moves being made in deciding an appropriate name from both the Greek and FYROM communities, they draw the line at acts such as those over the weekend.

The spectre of Greek flags being burned in the streets of Melbourne and Greeks being racially vilified – all supposedly in the name of – a name – is simply deplorable and merely plays into extremists hands, read the statement.

The issue of the Macedonian name should not be the domain of such extremists and jingoists who are content to resort to populist and ultra-nationalist rhetoric, including the use of derisive symbols (such as Nazi insignia) and racist hate speech, to incite violence and hatred. The ugly face of Balkanisation has no place in Australia.

The council concluded by urging restraint and common sense to allow a diplomatic solution to be

properly explored and found without resorting to the ugly face of ultra nationalist fervour disguised as patriotism.

<https://neoskosmos.com/en/112000/australian-hellenic-council-condemns-extremism-over-macedonia-name/>

Kaynak/Source: