
GREECE PUTS FORWARD FIVE ALTERNATIVE NAMES FOR MACEDONIA

- 21.03.2018

SBS News (21 March 2018)

Upper Macedonia. New Macedonia. Northern Macedonia.

These are some of the proposed new names for the country of Macedonia, with which Greece has fought for years, arguing that the country's name is too close to that of a northern Greek province, also called Macedonia.

Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotsias has sent the proposal to Skopje in hopes of settling the dispute, media in both countries reported on Tuesday.

Kotsias, who is due in Skopje on Thursday, told Greek state TV ERT in Athens that he has sent the draft several days before.

Along with accusations about the name "Macedonia", Athens accuses Skopje of usurping Hellenic heritage, such as the mantle of Alexander the Great.

The row broke out when Macedonia split from the former Yugoslavia and became independent in 1991. UN-brokered talks, launched in 1995, produced no result. Greece has blocked Skopje in international organisations, including NATO and EU, ever since.

The new Skopje government, led by Social Democrats who last (northern) summer ended an 11-year reign by the nationalists, have made appeasing moves, such as renaming infrastructure previously called after Alexander.

The new proposal from Athens is a result of the thaw. The five proposals all retain the word "Macedonia", but include an adjective to differentiate it from the Greek province and the ancient Hellenic kingdom.

The other two proposals are: Vardar Macedonia and Macedonia-Skopje.

Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev said he hopes for a solution in time for Macedonia to receive an invitation to join NATO at the bloc's summit in July.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/greece-puts-forward-five-alternative-names-for-macedonia?cid=trending>