
S. KOREA ESTABLISHES DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH NORTH MACEDONIA

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SEOUL

South Korea has formally established diplomatic relations with North Macedonia, the foreign ministry said Thursday.

Ambassador to the United Nations Cho Tae-yul signed the joint communique with Sanja Zografska Krsteska, North Macedonia's charge d'affaires at the U.N. on Thursday, the ministry said in a release.

North Macedonia is the 191st country to have established formal ties with South Korea.

Syria, Kosovo and Cuba remain the only three U.N. member states that have yet to forge diplomatic links with Korea.

North Macedonia, a country on the Balkan Peninsula with a population of 2 million, had been at odds with Greece over its use of "Macedonia" as its name since it declared independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991.

Greece objected to it using the name citing historical and geographical ambiguities. Greece was a participant in the 1950-53 Korean War and is a key South Korean trading partner in the shipping and maritime sectors.

The dispute ended last year when the two sides agreed on a renaming of the smaller country as Republic of North Macedonia. The new name came into effect early this year.

Upon the forging of diplomatic relations, Korea expects to see increased bilateral exchanges with North Macedonia both at the governmental and private levels, as well as a boost in cooperation in the Balkan region, the ministry said.

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