

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 15, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will soon hold its summit in Lisbon to discuss the future of the Alliance and adopt a new Strategic Concept. We are writing to urge your Administration to engage in concerted diplomacy to encourage NATO allies to offer Macedonia a formal invitation to become a member of the Alliance.

A strong consensus for such an invitation was exhibited by Alliance members at the 2008 Bucharest Summit in concluding that Macedonia had achieved all criteria to merit NATO admission. The Alliance reiterated its intention to offer membership to Macedonia at the 2009 Strasbourg/Kehl Summit. However, a dispute between Greece and Macedonia over Macedonia's official name continues to inhibit the Alliance from issuing a formal invitation of membership to Macedonia. While a satisfactory resolution of this dispute remains of understandable importance to their bilateral relations, we believe that the United States should dedicate necessary resources to pressing forward with the vital work of NATO enlargement.

We believe that an invitation to Macedonia to join the Alliance will benefit U.S. national security interests and NATO's global mission. Apart from augmenting stability and political development in Southeastern Europe, Macedonian accession to NATO will encourage further contributions to and interoperability with NATO operations. Macedonia has sent a 255-troop contingent to ISAF in Afghanistan, placing it among the top four per capita

contributors to our mission, and has contributed to other multilateral missions in Lebanon and Bosnia.

We strongly encourage the Administration to work with our NATO allies to achieve this outcome.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark Begich
United States Senator



Richard G. Lugar
United States Senator



James E. Risch
United States Senator



George V. Voinovich
United States Senator

cc: The Honorable Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State

cc: The Honorable Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Secretary General