

# **In Support of Macedonia's North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Membership**

**Chicago Summit, May 20-21, 2012**

*Prepared by the United Macedonian Diaspora – Updated January 23, 2012*

The upcoming NATO Summit in Chicago provides an opportune time for NATO to accept the Republic of Macedonia in the Alliance. Macedonia has shown a steadfast commitment to joining NATO for almost 20 years, satisfied all military and civil criteria - a goal supported by over 90 percent of its population. Throughout the past two decades, Macedonia has made numerous valuable contributions to NATO, including combat troops under NATO command. Despite fulfilling all criteria, Greece vetoed Macedonian accession into NATO at the 2008 Bucharest Summit.

- Macedonia affirmed its commitment to joining NATO in 1993, signed the Framework Documents for NATO's Partnership for Peace in 1995, and started its Membership Action Plan (MAP) in 1999.
- Macedonia, a net exporter of security, has been an active participant in NATO's mission in Afghanistan, making it the fourth highest ISAF troop contributor per capita.
- Under Article V of the Washington Treaty, an attack on one NATO member is an attack on all members. Macedonia's NATO membership would result in its commitment to foster regional stability and the important principle of mutual defense of all NATO members, including Greece.
- According to the CIA World Factbook, Macedonia ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in the world for military expenditure as a percentage of GDP.
- Macedonia has hosted the logistical support center for NATO's Kosovo Mission (KFOR) since 1999, providing safe refuge to over 360,000 Kosovar refugees during the conflict.
- Macedonia has also contributed to other multilateral missions in Bosnia, Iraq, and Lebanon.
- Macedonia has met all MAP criteria to be invited to join NATO.
- At the 2008 Bucharest Summit, Greece violated the Interim Accord between both countries, and vetoed Macedonia's accession into NATO.
- The December 2011 judgment by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) clearly confirmed that Greece's actions in 2008 were in violation of international law and were expressly prohibited by Article XI of a 1995 United Nations-brokered Interim Accord, which normalized relations between both countries.
- Canada, through statements by Minister of National Defence, Peter MacKay, has openly called for a "consensus minus one" approach, in order to reduce domestic affairs like Greece's problem with Macedonia's identity becoming obstacles to NATO membership.
- Macedonia is strategically located in Southeast Europe – a unique gateway for rapid NATO troop deployments to the Middle East and North Africa in order to maintain broader regional stability.
- A recent Heritage Foundation/Wall Street Journal Survey of Economic Freedom ranked Macedonia as 43rd overall, well ahead of regional neighbors.
- Given that Macedonia satisfied all NATO membership criteria, is active in NATO missions, and obtained the support of the ICJ, the Chicago Summit in May provides the opportune moment for the Alliance to complete Macedonia's transition into NATO.

Greece's hostile complaints about Macedonia's name are no more than a political distraction to cover up its domestic misdeeds and to silence the ethnic Macedonian minority in northern Greece. The reality is that Macedonia is internationally recognized under its constitutional name by 133 countries, including NATO states such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Czech Republic, Poland, and Turkey. Given the recent ICJ ruling, and the fact that Macedonia has met all NATO membership criteria, the Chicago Summit on May 20-21, 2012 provides the perfect moment to invite Macedonia to join the Alliance, and send Greece a strong message that regional security, stability, integrity and the rule of law come first.

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