

### III. Recognition

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#### **Recognition of States — Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

On 15 February 1994, the Australian Government made the decision to recognise the independence of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). Previous volumes of the *Aust YBIL* (1994, vol 15, p 416; 1995, vol 16, p 417) explore this issue in detail. The following is an extract from the text of a media release on the topic issued by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Senator Bolkus, on 2 June 1995:

The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Senator Nick Bolkus, today gave an assurance that there had been no change in Federal Government policy on the issue of recognition of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

“Nothing has changed, either in relation to Australia’s recognition of the FYROM, or in relation to guidelines distributed 12 months ago on the issue of nomenclature,” Senator Bolkus said.

“The Federal Government has made it consistently clear in regular meetings with the communities concerned what our policy is, how it operates, and how it will continue to operate pending agreement between Greece and the FYROM.”

On 15 September 1995, a joint statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Evans, and the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Senator Bolkus, was issued. The text of the statement follows:

The Australian Government welcomes the interim agreement, signed in New York on 13 September, between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia which establishes a new relationship between the two countries based on international law and peaceful, friendly relations.

The agreement should make a positive contribution to regional security and allow the two countries to develop constructive bilateral relations as neighbouring countries should.

The agreement is a comprehensive one based on the so called “small package” which was developed under United Nations auspices and puts to one side for the time being the issue of the future name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

It provides for both parties to recognise the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the other. This will involve the mutual recognition of Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the establishment of diplomatic relations and liaison offices in each other’s capital, with the ultimate goal of relations at Ambassadorial level. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will cease to use the symbol that is now on its national flag and will provide binding assurances that its Constitution is consistent with the principles of international law and good neighbourly relations. Greece will terminate the trade embargo it imposed on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in February 1994.

Senator Evans and Senator Bolkus said the agreement was consistent with the approach the Australian Government had taken on these issues and met its key concerns.

Both Ministers see the agreement as an encouraging development and look forward to other outstanding issues, including that of nomenclature, being settled in the same spirit of constructive cooperation.

Australia and the FYROM announced their decision to enter into diplomatic relations in a media release issued by the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator McMullan, on 23 October 1995. See p 550 of this volume for the text of this release and an answer provided to a question on this same topic.

### **Australian Non-Recognition of the Republica Srpska**

In the course of a news release issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on 22 October 1995, the following was noted:

It has come to the attention of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade that a scheme is being promoted through Serbian language media in Australia on behalf of the "Republica Srpska" (RS—sometimes called the Bosnian-Serb Republic) for the taxation of "Serbian citizens" or persons with some connection with the RS in Australia.

Australia does not recognise the RS and its laws cannot be enforced in Australia. Any proposed tax on Serbian citizens or former citizens living in Australia cannot be regarded as a legitimate tax of a foreign government.

For the full text of this news release, see p 483 of this volume.