

Greece to Macedonia: Change your name

by UPI

BRUSSELS - Greece will not back Macedonia for EU membership as long as the former Yugoslav republic uses that name, the Greek foreign minister said Thursday. Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyanni, attending a NATO meeting in Brussels, said Greece would endorse Croatia and Albania, the EU Observer reported. The Republic of Macedonia has used the name since it became an independent country in 1991. But Greece has refused to recognize it as its official name. Greece fears that Macedonia might try to claim Greek Macedonia. The issue is an emotional one because, in classical times, Macedonia was the homeland of Alexander the Great, who spread Greek civilization as far as India. "As far as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is concerned, I stressed to our allies that, unfortunately, the policy that was followed by the government of our neighbor country in its relations with Greece -- particularly as concerns its intransigent stance and its actions of an irredentist and nationalistic logic, which is interwoven with the name issue -- does not allow us to take the same positive stance as in the case of Croatia and Albania," Bakoyanni said.

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