

**NAME DISPUTE BETWEEN
GREECE AND MACEDONIA**

(STUDENT PROJECT)

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*I had the chance to see works of Macedonian art,
beautiful icons and ceramics from Ohrid and other places.
I am especially touched by the survival of Macedonia,
which has been surrounded by stronger neighbors
for centuries...*

Martin Bernal
April 2009

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PART TWO

**PROPOSALS FOR DISPUTE
SETTLEMENT**

2

**THE PROPOSAL BY MATHEW NIMITZ
(9. XI. 2005)**



*The negotiations process concerning the name dispute
has mainly been realized in the
legal office of the Mediator **Mathew Nimitz** in New York (USA)*

MEETING WITH NIKOLA DIMITROV⁶³⁵

On 19 April 2006, at the Faculty of Law “Iustinianus Primus” within UKIM – Skopje, in the premises of the Depository library of the OUN, starting at 2 p.m., a meeting was held between the students and Mr. Nikola Dimitrov – former ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia in the USA and an official negotiator concerning the name dispute of R. Macedonia with its southern neighbour – Greece⁶³⁶, led in the headquarters of the OUN in New York (USA) under the auspices of the OUN Secretary General, represented by the Special Envoy Mr. Matthew Nimetz, attorney-at-law.

The meeting with the former Ambassador, during whose mandate the USA recognized the Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name, was initiated by the students from the Department of Law, working on the Project: “*Name Dispute between Greece and Macedonia*”, realized with support of the professors Svetomir Shkaric and Tatjana Petrushevska, who are also managers of this students’ project.

The debate was attended by approximately 30 students from the Faculty of Law, from different year of studies, both from fourth year (group of constitutional law and international law) and from the second year of studies (political system).

Several topics were raised during the debate, which are of interest to this project, which is in the final phase, and has been realized by a group of students from different generations continually, for several years.

1. *Introduction by the Ambassador/negotiator Dimitrov:*

At the beginning, Mr. Nikola Dimitrov, who is actually B.Sc. Law and M.Sc. International Law, made a brief introduction on the essence of the dispute with the Hellenic Republic concerning the name of the Republic of Macedonia.

With this presentation, he introduced the students to many details that were not known to the wider public until then:

- that Matthew Nimetz suggested several tens of proposals annually;
- that he is not remunerated for this function;

⁶³⁵ This summary of the meeting with the Ambassador Dimitrov was prepared by D. Apasiev.

⁶³⁶ Nikola Dimitrov was an Ambassador of the USA, while his father was an Ambassador in Russia! In 2008, the President of RM – Mr. Branko Crvenkovski dismissed Dimitrov from the function “negotiator on the name”.

- that the Macedonian side in the talks in New York avoided the usage of the term 'dispute', as it was not a dispute, but a unilateral request by Greece addressed to Macedonia to change its constitutional name, which was a precedent in the theory and practice of the international law until then.

In this so called "informal part" of the talks with Mr. Dimitrov, for which there was no minutes taken, but the interested students, self-initially took notes – we could have heard their personal opinions on the problem, for instance that the Macedonian diplomacy failed to succeed in the attempt to impose its truth to the international community, as well as that the constitutional name is the last pillar of the legitimacy as a country and should the Republic of Macedonia change the name under the international pressure, it will then go beyond the Macedonian dignity and so on.

2. Questions addressed to the guest:

In the second, interactive part of the meeting, Mr. Dimitrov was asked questions by the present students, to which he tried to be as transparent as possible.

The students' creativity was once again proved, thus the present addressed around ten questions to the guest, covering different aspects of the problem, such as:

- on the property of the displaced and exiled Macedonians from the Aegean part of Macedonia;
- on the biological researches of some foreign scientific institutes regarding the ethnogenesis of the Macedonian nation;
- on why does this 'virtual dispute' last for so long and consume so much energy;
- on the (latest) official proposal by Matthew Nimetz on the resolution of the name dispute and on the possible pressure on Macedonia by Greece, in context of its European and Atlantic integrations etc.

However, compared to the first part, where some informal statements, positions and thoughts of our guest could have been heard, in this so called "official part" of the talks, for which a special minutes was taken by the student appointed, a certain rigidity and diplomatic inflexibility in the answers could have been noticed, which were pretty short and poor with information. Namely, there was a tendency on legal interpretation and explanation of the dispute, for which it was previously underlined to be civilizational, and not a legal phenomenon.

Thus, after two hours of discussion, which was planned to last an hour, and owing to the resourcefulness and the interest of the audience

lasted twice as longer, professor Shkaric, in the capacity of a moderator of the meeting, expressed his gratitude to the guest for his time, and gave him as a present a copy of his book “Macedonian and Comparative Constitutional Law” (*Makedonija i komparativno ustavno pravo*).

With this act of respect and friendship he closed the meeting, which generally speaking, in many ways helped the students that worked on the aforementioned project, to get familiar with certain aspects related to the events determining the result of this “dispute” – directly from a person that has participated in a number of activities of the Macedonian diplomacy in this field.