

Samaras managed to worsen ties with Macedonia while undergoing surgery

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While new radical PM Antonis Samaras was undergoing surgery at an Athens hospital, the relations between Macedonia and Greece already took a turn for the worse.

Macedonia's southern bankrupt neighbor had already initiated provocations on a mutual border crossing by placing stickers on tourists license plates written in both English and Greek that Athens has recognized Macedonia as 'fyrom'.

"No

gestures that serve as provocation and cannot contribute to bilateral relations are welcome. Macedonia expects Greece to demonstrate good will, approximation and stimulation of good relations, not provocations,

Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki told journalists on Monday with regards to Greece's request that Macedonian tourists who cross the border put stickers on license plates.

According to him, MoFA has already reacted through diplomatic channels, whereas Greece is expected to take into account priority issues and wants to focus on what is significant for the region, cooperation and support to Euro-Atlantic integration.

"Any practice beyond the legally prescribed norms represents a signal over the lack of commitment to any bilateral issues.

Our reaction refers to the legal framework, the possibility of creating additional ties between our countries, not putting obstructions and provocations that are illegal and not in line with our aspirations for gestures of good cooperation", said FM Poposki after meeting Kosovo counterpart Enver Hoxhaj.

He stressed these actions were individual practice, not an established regulation.

"We are monitoring the situation on a daily basis.

There are international regulations on all issues of practical character. Therefore, we believe that energy should be focused on cooperation, not on creating ungrounded provocations, such as putting stickers. In any case, this practice on register plates, which are fully in line with international regulations, will surely have no positive outcome. At the moment, Greece has more priority issues, such as attraction of more tourists, instead of sending unwelcoming signals", added Poposki.

He said Macedonia is committed to building a climate for overcoming of challenges from the past.