



THE PRESS & COMMUNICATION OFFICE
EMBASSY OF GREECE IN BEIJING

The last month of the year paves the way for the EU and the euro area to improve economic governance and to adopt new measures in response to the sovereign debt crisis.

In this framework of actions towards enhanced economic policy coordination, Greece aspires to address the current challenges, and to reaffirm its position in its regional and global environment.

U.S. Vice-President Biden in Athens

Stressing that the purpose of his official visit to Greece was to express U.S. solidarity toward Greece via the IMF, U.S. Vice-President, Joe Biden, stated following his meeting with Greek Prime Min-



ister, Lucas Papademos, that Greece can count on U.S. support for its efforts to overcome the debt crisis, especially in terms of the International Monetary Fund (IMF),

On his part, Mr. Papademos stressed the importance of Biden's visit and the long ties of close friendship, shared values and struggles for freedom and democracy between the two countries, and

noted that the U.S. had steadfastly supported Greece during this critical time for Greece's economy and that Greece could hope for a positive U.S. stance in its effort to overcome the crisis.

The two men also sat down to a working dinner given by Prime Minister Papademos, during which they discussed the Cyprus issue, the Middle East and the situation in southeast Europe.



Besides, U.S. Vice-President, Joe Biden, conveyed his country's solidarity toward Greece during a meeting with Greek President of the Republic, Mr. Karolos Papoulias.

According to sources, Biden stressed during the meeting that the debt crisis was not an exclusively Greek problem but a broader European, American and global problem, and added that the U.S. wanted Greece to regain its crucial role in affairs within Europe and the Euro zone, indicating that Washington was prepared to assist and exert pressure on Europe to find solutions, even if these were not easy.

U.S. Vice-President, Joe Biden, Athens, December 5th, 2011

"We are both member-states and allies in NATO and it is in everyone's interest for Greece to overcome this difficult situation"

Eurogroup President, Jean-Claude Juncker, Brussels, December 1st, 2011

"We decided to release the sixth disbursement of the Greek program now that prior actions have been met"

IMF Managing Director, Christine Lagarde, Washington, December 5th, 2011

"Greece has substantial achievements to its credit, including a large fiscal deficit reduction. However, the program is in a difficult phase, with structural reforms proceeding slowly, the Economy weak, and the external environment deteriorating. This has warranted a substantial downward revision to the medium-term outlook. The creation of a national unity government and the endorsement of program objectives and policies by major parties is an important step. The new government should use its wider mandate to steadfastly implement the program, which is the best way to help Greece manage the risks it now faces"

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Eurogroup approves 6th tranche of bailout loan to Greece

Eurogroup President, Jean-Claude Juncker, announced in Brussels, after a meeting of the group, that the disbursement of the 8 billion euro 6th tranche of the 110 billion euro EU-IMF bailout loan to Greece has been approved.

Juncker said that the letters received by the Eurogroup from the leaders of the three political parties

backing the new national unity government in Greece and also from Prime Minister, Lucas Papademos, fully satisfied the Eurogroup demand for written commitments on the implementation of the Memorandum and the decisions of the October 26-27 Euro zone summit.

He further appealed to the Greek authorities to speed up talks with Greece's

private creditors on the Greek bond swaps, the so-called PSI, with the aim of completion of the process by the end of January.

Besides, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the fifth review of Greece's economic performance, enabling the immediate disbursement of an amount equivalent to about €2.2 billion.

Greek Government unveils 450-mln-euro project to expand Piraeus port, draw more cruise ships



Development, Competitiveness & Shipping Minister, Mihalis Chrysohoidis, unveiled an ambitious investment plan aimed to boost sea cruise and the port of Piraeus by creating new jobs in the port.

The plan, budgeted at 450 million euros, envisages a project to expand the southern part of the port and the construction of a monorail within the port. Both projects are expected

to begin in 2012 after launching separate tenders in the first half of the year.

The Minister said the Piraeus Port Authority reported revenues totalling 360 million euros from sea cruises and noted that the Ministry's aim is to double this figure in the coming years.

George Anomeritis, chairman of Piraeus Port Authority, said the port ex-

pected 800 cruise ships to arrive at the port next year.

The project to expand the passenger port will cost 230 million euros and will offer six new docking spots for cruise vessels, while the monorail system project will cost around 120 million euros. The monorail system will expand on double line track with a length of around five kilometres.



Greece on International Court of Justice ruling in FYROM v. Greece case



Prime Minister, Lucas Papademos, Athens, December 5th, 2011

"Greece is steadily aiming at the consolidation of good neighbourly relations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and will continue to work to this end.

In this framework, Greece has supported the European course of Skopje in many cases.

However, a prerequisite for the full normalisation of our relations is to reach a mutually acceptable solution to the name issue. The continuing provocations do not contribute to the consolidation of good neighbourly relations and mutual confidence.

Greece remains steadfast regarding these positions also after the Judgment of the International Court of Justice.

Our country is ready to continue the negotiations in order to solve the name issue erga omnes, under the auspices of the United Nations".

Greece said that it will continue to negotiate in good faith with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM) for a mutually acceptable solution to the name dispute, after the International Court of Justice announced its ruling in a case brought against Greece by fYROM, in which it accused Greece of violating the terms of the 1995 Interim Accord by blocking the country's admission to NATO in 2008.

The court's ruling upheld Skopje's argument that Greece had breached its obligation under Article 11, paragraph 1, of the interim accord. This states that Greece will not block fYROM's bid to join international organizations using the name "former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

The ruling is final and cannot be appealed, but does not address the main issue in the long-running dispute between Greece and fYROM concerning the latter's use of the name "Macedonia".

In a written statement issued after the International Court of Justice announced its ruling in the Greece v. fYROM case, Prime Minister, Lucas Papademos, stressed that Greece was prepared to continue negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations on resolv-

ing the name dispute with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in order to find a name to be used *erga omnes* by Greece's northern neighbour, noted that Greece has supported fYROM's European course on many occasions in this framework, underlined that complete normalisation of relations requires achieving a mutually acceptable solution to the name issue, and added that continuing provocations did not contribute to establishing good neighbour relations and mutual trust.

The Greek Foreign Ministry stressed in an announcement that the name dispute can only be resolved through negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, and added that Greece will study the court's decision, while noting that the court admitted fYROM's first submission on whether Greece had breached the terms of the interim accord but rejected fYROM's other submissions.

These asked that the ICJ order Greece not to raise objections in the future, either directly or indirectly, to fYROM's admission to NATO or other organizations in which Greece is a member provided it uses the temporary name of fYROM.

The Foreign Ministry an-

nouncement also points out that the decisions taken at the NATO summits in Bucharest in 2008 and subsequent NATO summits in Strasbourg and Lisbon were unanimous and reflected the shared conviction of the member-states that the name dispute must be resolved before fYROM is invited to join the Alliance.

Besides, in a written statement by UN special envoy for the fYRoM name issue, Matthew Nimetz, it is stressed that the ruling issued by the International Court of Justice in The Hague should be "studied carefully" by both governments

Matthew Nimetz maintained that "in the present circumstances an insightful stance that focuses on solutions and not on the differences will help to find a viable solution as soon as possible", and added that he has informed "both parties that he is ready to cooperate with them as soon as possible and to suggest intensification of the efforts for a permanent solution".

NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, in a written statement underlined that he has taken under consideration the ruling issued by The Hague as regards the bilateral issue between Greece and fYRoM, and

added that the ruling does not affect the NATO decision reached in the 2008 Summit meeting in Bucharest.

The European Commission urged Athens and Skopje to resume negotiations to resolve the dispute over the name of the for-

mer Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, while declining to comment on a ruling announced by the International Court of Justice at the Hague in the case brought against Greece by FYROM.

European Commissioner for Enlargement, Stefan

Fule, said that the Commission noted the court's ruling concerning the 1995 interim agreement between the two countries and said the European Commission had no jurisdiction with respect to the specific issue.

Delegation of Chinese maritime officials in Greece

A large group of maritime and shipping cadres from the People's Republic of China arrived in Greece for a training visit.

The visit is organized by China's State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs, while on the Greek side the visit is coordinated by the Eurasian Consulting firm S.A. in cooperation with the University of Piraeus' re-

search centre, and with technical assistance provided by the Hellas-China International Exchange Center.

The visit to Greece by the Chinese delegation is the second in consecutive years and comes within the framework of ever-closer Greek-Chinese trade and economic relations.

A briefing of Greek-owned

shipping sector and an exchange of views on all major issues dealing with international maritime shipping, particularly in the sectors of risk management, safety and insurances, is the focus.

The visit includes tours of shipping and port facilities, meetings with local shipping executives, public sector officials and Greek business leaders.

Journalist Pantelis Kapsis named new Minister of State and Government Spokesman



Journalist Pantelis Kapsis, former director of TA NEA and TO VIMA newspapers and managing director of the Lambrakis Publishing Group (DOL), has been named by Prime Minister, Lucas Papademos, as the new Minister of State and Government Spokesman.

Mr. Papademos also appointed Gikas Hardouvelis, Professor in the Department of Banking and Financial Management at the University of Piraeus and former Eurobank Group chief economist, as the director of his economic office, and George Pagoulatos, Professor of

European Politics and Economy in the Department of International and European Economic Studies at the Athens University of Economics and Business, as the director of his strategic planning office.

Education Minister proposes that EU debt-crisis countries cooperate to promote research



Greece's Education Minister, Anna Diamantopoulou, announced that she has sent letters to her counterparts in four other EU countries caught up in the debt crisis, proposing a framework of cooperation and joint action to promote research and innovation.

In the letters to her counterparts in Spain, Italy, Portugal and Ireland, Ms.

Diamatopoulou notes the negative impact of the fiscal crisis on research and innovation and the knock-on repercussions that their degradation will have on the competitiveness and growth prospects of the countries involved.

She proposes that research centers in all five of the countries worst hit by the EU debt crisis should co-

operate and that there should be increased mobility of young researchers in the framework of the Horizon 2020 program in order to attract funds for research and create conditions that will allow post-graduate students to stay in Europe, as well as making use of European Central Bank investment programs.

Sino-Greek forum in Beijing on Greek studies



The past, the present and the future of Hellenic studies in China was the subject of a two-day forum in Beijing, in early December, organised by the Centre for Hellenic Studies of Peking University and the Embassy of Greece in the People's Republic of China, and with the contribution of the Peking University Centre for Classical Studies.

Several noted Chinese Hellenists and noted academics from universities throughout China (Peking University, Tsinghua, Renmin, Nankai, Fudan, Beijing Academy of Social Sciences) participated, discussing issues and studies on ancient Greek and Byzantine history and

philosophy, ancient drama, ancient and modern Greek language teaching and translations of Greek authors to Chinese.

During the opening ceremony at the historic library of Peking University, the Ambassador of Greece, Mr. Theodore Georgakelos, the director of the University's History department, Gao Yi, the former Ambassador of PRC in Greece, Yang Guansheng, and the general director for international cooperation of the Chinese Ministry of Education, Xu Yongji, addressed the audience.

Mr. Georgakelos expressed his appreciation for the continuous teaching of Greek in China over the

past 11 years, citing the sponsorship of late Greek shipping magnate Vassilis Konstantakopoulos towards the Hellenic studies program in Beijing, as well as the support by then vice-rector of Peking University and current Vice Minister of Education, Hao Ping, along with the support of then PRC Ambassador to Greece, Yang Guansheng.

The Greek Ambassador also thanked, on behalf of Greece, all of the Chinese academics for their life-long efforts, and expressed a certainty that the upcoming younger generations will enhance the cultural and education ties for the future of the two countries.

Presentation of book on Socrates & Confucius



The presentation of the book "Socrates – Confucius: Proceedings of Three Conferences on Chinese and Greek Philosophy", which was edited by the Embassy of Greece in Beijing, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) and the Institute for the Advancement of Euro-Chinese Relations, took place in Beijing, with

the contribution of the Cultural Department of the Greek Embassy, and the promotion by the Press & Communication Office in Beijing.

The Ambassador of Greece in China, Mr. Theodore Georgakelos, stressed in his speech that the book is a pay back of debt to the scholars, who contributed to the better understanding of

the thought of the two great philosophers, expressed the strong belief that the book is the beginning for further studies to come, and thanked CPAFFC for support and personal participation of its members, the Institute for the Advancement of Euro-Chinese Relations, and the Cultural Department of the Embassy, which was in charge of editing the book.

China Foreign Affairs University students visit Embassy of Greece in Beijing



Twenty students of China Foreign Affairs University, which operates under the guidance of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited the Embassy of Greece in Beijing with the initiative and the organization contribution of the

Press & Communication Office of the Embassy.

In "Homer" Hall, where events of the Greek Embassy take place, the Head of the Press & Communication Office, supported by the staff of the Office, briefed the students on the struc-

ture and the activities of the Embassy, referred to Sino – Greek cooperation and to its perspectives, stressed the mutually beneficial nature of this relationship and presented the potential of further enhancing and deepening the cooperation.

The Chinese Media on Greece

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The students attended a DVD on Greek History and Civilization, and in the vivid discussion, afterwards, expressed their strong wish to visit Greece, made important and specific questions on modern Greek reality,

and focused on the idea that Greece, supported by China, will soon overcome the crisis, while they voiced their solidarity to Greece.

At the end of the visit, the students, who were of-

ferred folders with Press and Communication Office editions, tourism brochures, and DVDs, expressed the wish to continue cooperation and communication with the Embassy of Greece in Beijing.

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.mfa.gr (Greek MFA)

www.culture.gr (Greek Ministry of Culture)

www.mnec.gr (Ministry of Finance)

www.gnto.gr (Greek National Tourism Office)

www.investingreece.gov.gr (Invest in Greece)

www.ana-mpa.gr (Athens News Agency)

Season's Greetings



Happy

*D*ynamic Growth,
*R*emarkable records,
*A*ctive cooperation,
*G*enius innovation,
*O*verseas investment,
*N*ational pride,

Year!

*Press & Communication Office
Embassy of Greece in Beijing*