



Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear Friends,

It is a great honor and a great pleasure to communicate with you on the occasion of the 14th Annual Investor Forum titled "Building a new Greece". This distinguish initiative of prominent Greek Americans intends to provide the United States financial and business community with an important insight into the development progress of our economy as well as to the potential of our country to attract investment and promote the extroversion of Greek firms.

These are indeed challenging times for Greece and for Europe with significant global dimensions. Just a few days ago an era of wide spread pessimism, doubt and uncertainty for Greece finally has come to an end. An era of stagnation, of lack of progress, of lack of hope, a genuine threat to our present and to our future, a threat to our economy and to our society is now over.

The Greek people have undergone very painful sacrifices and have sustained a very difficult austerity program for the past few years. These sacrifices however were not in vain. We have negotiated hard throughout Europe and the world. We managed to reverse the tide, to change our international credibility. We did not talk a lot, but we acted a lot. Our partners recognized the enormous efforts and our strong commitment to structural reforms and sustainable changes throughout the country. The outcome of this week's Euro group decisions, secures above all, our stay and Europe's commitment in our stay in the Euro zone. By now, I can clearly tell you Euro phobia is now dead.

This agreement provides for the immediate dispatch of 34.5 billion euros more than the previously envisaged tranche of 31 billion euros. It will be finally over 44 billion. It brings our debt, the most persistent and destabilizing problem our country faces closer than ever, to sustainable levels by cutting it by 20% of our GDP. This money will be directed to our real economy. It will also enable the recapitalization of Greek Banks to protect savings and investments as well as to provide liquidity which is the blood of our economy to the Greek entrepreneurs. Our government representing a wide spectrum of political parties has passed in early November through parliament a number of tough, of very difficult but necessary measures to balance the budget, to implement structural reforms and to create an efficient state machine. We are finally abolishing market distortions, tightening bureaucracy and improving transparency.

Furthermore we actively promote an ambitious privatization program with the exploitation of public property assets. At this point more than ever in our history we will take advantage of our untapped potential, of our natural resources, of our mineral wealth and above all of our rich human capital. We are creating a safe and secure business environment for

attracting investment and boosting competitiveness, job creation and growth. Bureaucracy has always been in Greece the number one enemy of any investor, especially bureaucracy which for decades has killed in our Country as you well know any attempt for foreign investment. I intent to bring Greece from an era of red tape to an era of red carpet treatment for every potential investor in our Country. This is a strategy to exit the crisis, but this is also a strategy to bring back growth and employment for everyone, especially in a Country that you all love so much but which today counts for an unbelievable level of 58% for unemployment among our youth.

I know Greece is not alone in this effort. I am convinced that we can count on our partners not only within the European Union but also on your friendship, on your participation. You are out trusted allies and transatlantic friends. Furthermore I am absolutely confident that a Greek success story will be a boost for our international image as well as for every potential investor who wants to invest in Greece. It will be thus rightly perceived as a major proof that we can solve our problems, successfully overcome our difficulties and at last pave the way for prosperity in Greece. We are looking forward to a true renaissance for our Country. Greece the cradle of western civilization, the birth place of Democracy, will claim yet again its right for position among Nations.

Dear Friends, let me congratulate the organizers of this forum, for their initiative and wish all of you a successful outcome to your endeavors.

Σας ευχαριστώ από την καρδιά μου. Thank you all. Σας ευχαριστώ

Antonis Samaras.