



**25<sup>th</sup> Annual Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum  
«Accelerating Investments for Sustainable Growth»**

**21 sessions - 100 Top Level Speakers  
An International Summit About Greece in New York  
Business & Investment Opportunities in Greece  
Speakers from US & Greek Governments - Private Sector CEOs - International Banks & Investors**

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Agenda : <http://forums.capitallink.com/greece/2023/>**

New York, December 14, 2023

The following highly interesting Panel Discussions, entitled «GREEK ECONOMY: Prospects & Outlook Post Investment Upgrade», and «THE GREEK CAPITAL MARKETS, THE ATHENS STOCK EXCHANGE & THE REOPENING OF THE GREEK EQUITY MARKET», were part of the agenda of the 25th Annual Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum, entitled, «Accelerating Investments for Sustainable Growth», that was held with great success and participation, on Monday, December 11, 2023, in New York, in cooperation with the New York Stock Exchange, the Athens Exchange Group (ATHEX Group), and major Global Investment Banks & Organizations, and under the Auspices of the Consulate General of Greece in New York. The event was sponsored by top companies, and Goldman Sachs and TEN Ltd (Tsakos Energy Navigation) were the Lead Sponsors.



## PANEL DISCUSSION: GREEK ECONOMY: Prospects & Outlook Post Investment Upgrade

**Moderator:** Mr. Dimitris Diakopoulos, *Senior Partner - Fortsakis, Diakopoulos & Associates Law Firm*

### Panelists:

- **Mr. Themis Fiotakis**, *Head of FX Research and EM Macro Strategy - Barclays*
- **Mr. Filippo Taddei**, *Senior European Economist, Executive Director - Goldman Sachs International*
- **Mr. Michael Arghyrou**, *Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors – Hellenic Republic*
- **Mr. Roberto Sifon-Arevalo**, *Managing Director, Global Head of Sovereign & MLI Ratings - S&P Global*

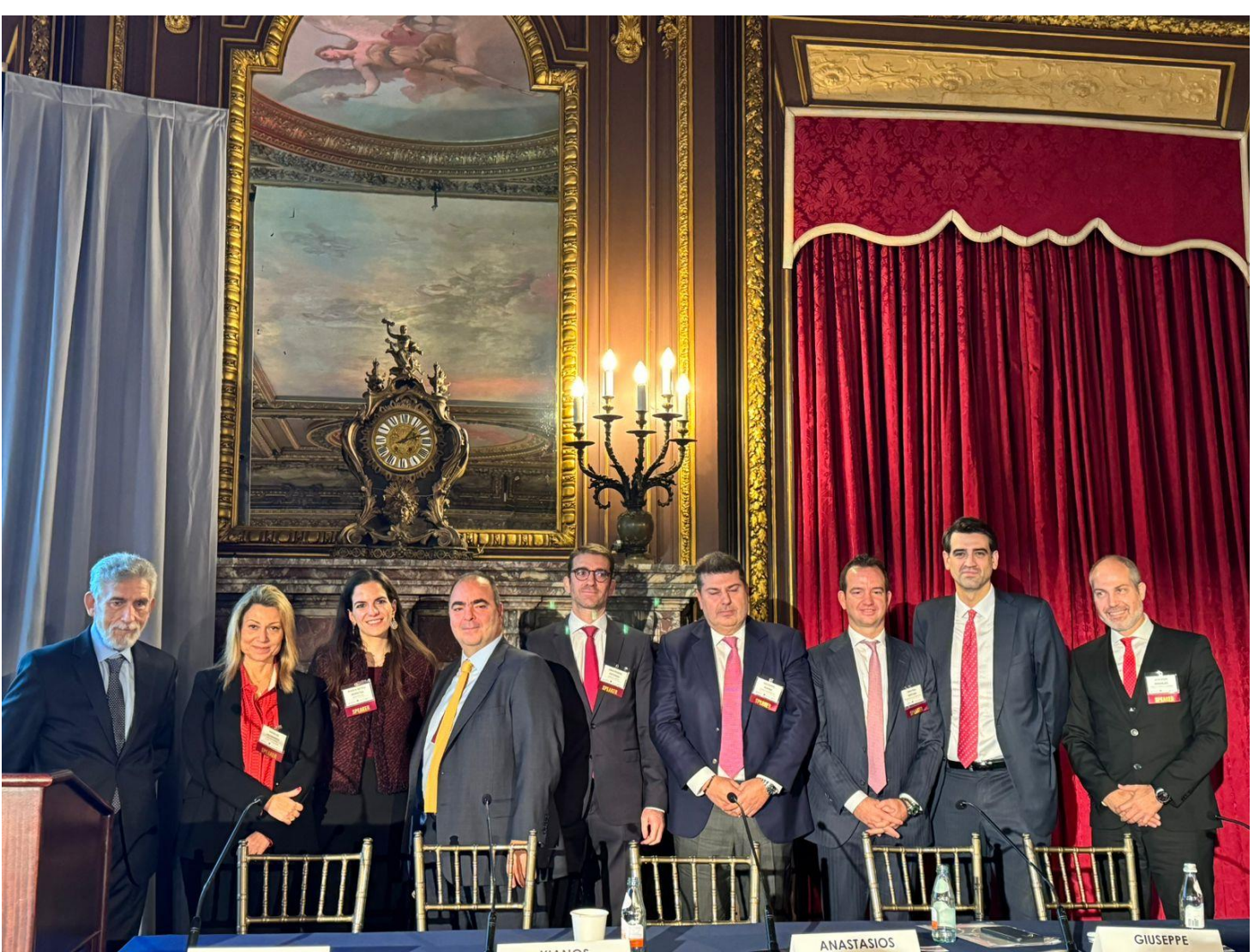
**Mr. Dimitris Diakopoulos** stated: “whilst the global economy is going through a protracted period recession and high inflation, Greece, guided by its present leadership, projects messages of remarkable growth, positivity and advancement to the global community. This stands out against the prevailing backdrop of gloom and uncertainty in global affairs and the world economy. Exiting from a protracted financial crisis that lasted more than 8 years, Greece has recently regained its investment grade after 13 years without it. The positive prospects and outlook of the Greek economy is further enhanced by the implementation of reforms aimed at bolstering the economy’s competitiveness, coupled with the full utilization of the Recovery Fund’s resources, which create tremendous investment opportunities in Greece.”

**Mr. Themis Fiotakis** discussed Greece’s third economic megacycle ahead and its implications for assets.

**Mr. Filippo Taddei** covering Southern Europe for Goldman Sachs, pointed out in his presentation that Greece is set to outperform the rest of the Euro Area also in 2024. The 2024 outlook for Europe is likely to improve on the back of real disposable income growth, fading credit drag that will more than outweigh a rising fiscal drag and set for area-wide growth of 0.8% next year. In our view, the Greek economy will not only benefit from a continued consumption led recovery but will also experience the opportunity for a sizeable pick up in capital expenditure. With underlying European inflation set to normalise next year, we expect the ECB cutting cycle to start in the first half of next year contributing to a more investment friendly policy mix as we look at 2024 and beyond. Greece finds itself in a fairly unique spot to engage the early stage of the investment recovery thanks to the extraordinary fiscal support of European programmes. All it needs to do is to follow through its promise of steady implementation of the Recovery Fund while it maintains a cautious fiscal stance on the path toward debt reduction. The Euro Area at large needs to shift from a consumption led to an investment led recovery to close its investment gap with the US economy and Greece can be at the forefront of this transformation.”

**Mr. Michael Arghyrou** stated: “Over the last couple of years, the international economy has proved resilient in the face of consecutive major adverse shocks, monetary tightening, and fiscal consolidation. But forward-looking indicators suggest that the global growth momentum is now weakening. Within this challenging global environment, the Greek economy has been showing remarkable resilience. Since 2021 Greece has been strongly outperforming the European average growth rate. Unemployment has now fallen to its lowest level for more than a decade. Although inflation remains a challenge, it has declined significantly within 2023. Public finances are on a fast-improving path, with Greece having returned to primary surpluses (one year earlier than planned), achieving the fastest reduction in the public debt to GDP ratio recorded in the eurozone over a three-year period (from 206% in 2020 to c. 160% in 2023). There have also been positive developments in the banking system, including continued deposit inflows, improving asset quality and a strong rebound in bank profits bolstering capital adequacy. At the same time, Greece continues implementing ambitious reforms significantly improving its business environment, attracting record volumes of FDI, and increasing the share of investment and exports in GDP. As a result, Greece’s recovery is characterized by a clear upgrade of the Greek supply side. This progress has been recognized by markets, as evidenced by the significant reduction of Greek government bond yields and the regaining of Greece’s investment grade. As a result, Greece has been making an impressive comeback to the international economic scene. Our country now presents a unique combination of advantages as an international investment destination. These include high expected profitability; limited macro/fiscal/banking risk; strong political stability under a reform-oriented, business friendly administration; record-high inflows of European funds in forthcoming years; favorable market expectations; participation to the European single market and common currency; and a strong geopolitical alignment to the West. These advantages provide a very solid platform for Greece to achieve accelerated sustainable growth, underpinned by increased productivity and strong exporting performance. Smart-money investors have a lot to gain by buying-in Greece’s success story”.

**Mr. Roberto Sifon-Arevalo** stated: “Greece’s recent return to Investment Grade highlights the results of a remarkable process of fiscal consolidation and structural reforms that are providing the Greek a economy a robust footing for the future. That said, and while a lot has been achieved on the fiscal side, the overall stock of debt stock, at about 160% of GDP, continues to be quite heavy and requires the momentum on the fiscal efforts to remain. As we look ahead, Greece’s economic activity, supported by continued economic reforms and transfers from the Next Generation EU funds, should remain robust. This, in tandem with the continuation of the fiscal efforts should bode well for the future of Greece’s credit ratings.”



## PANEL DISCUSSION: THE GREEK CAPITAL MARKETS, THE ATHENS STOCK EXCHANGE & THE REOPENING OF THE GREEK EQUITY MARKET

**Moderator:** Ms Maria Nefeli Bernitsa, *Counsel* - Bernitsas Law

**Introductory Remarks:**

**Ms Vassiliki Lazarakou, JSD, Chair** – Hellenic Capital Market Commission (HCMC); *Member* - Management Board of ESMA; *Member* - Board of IOSCO; *Member* - Bureau of the OECD Corporate Governance Committee

**Panelists:**

- **Mr. Yianos Kontopoulos, CEO** – Athens Exchange Group
- **Mr. Anastasios Astyfidis, Founder & CEO** – Ambrosia Capital
- **Mr. Giuseppe Giano, Chairman** - Euroxx Securities S.A.
- **Mr. Dimitris Kofitsas, Head of Greece Investment Banking Coverage & Financing** – Goldman Sachs International
- **Mr. Konstantinos Kostopoulos, Head of Greece & Cyprus Investment Banking** - Morgan Stanley
- **Mr. Xenofon Damalas, Investor Relations Officer** - Piraeus Financial Holdings

**Ms Maria Nefeli Bernitsa** stated: “Over the last couple of years, and particularly during the course of 2023, the Greek capital market and the Athens stock exchange have had a wave of regulatory and investment initiatives signifying the commencement of a new era.

Following a difficult decade for the Athens stock exchange in terms of new entrants, there were a number of IPOs in 2023 while a promising lineup of IPOs is expected in 2024. The restoration of Greece’s investment grade is anticipated to further facilitate investment opportunities. The HFSF’s divestment process from Greece’s systemic banks has progressed substantially over the last few months; this transfer of shares from the HFSF to institutional and private investors has validated a change in the sector’s status quo, as well as the sector’s substantial appeal to global investment portfolios.

A key challenge for the new era is ensuring that the Athens stock exchange will grow both in terms of listed company members and investors, thereby increasing the market’s liquidity. Achieving significant growth has been difficult but the upcoming changes in the Athex Code are expected to steer the market in this direction. Another challenge is the necessary transformation of listed entities in light of fast-paced changes in ESG and AI.

Maria Nefeli Bernitsa conveyed an optimistic view for the new era. The Athens stock exchange has made substantial progress and lined up reforms. The Hellenic Capital Markets Commission’s role is complementary in ensuring that growth will be sustainable; the regulator has been open to discussions and has demonstrated a market-oriented stance.

**Ms Vassiliki Lazarakou, JSD**, stated: "Accelerating Investments for Sustainable Growth", is more relevant than ever, focusing on the major challenge for the future of the global economy, which is tackling climate crisis and enhancing sustainability. Given that the Greek economy continues to show not only remarkable resilience, but also strong growth potential, it is of great importance that businesses proceed to investments that promote sustainable development and adopt broader strategies in alignment with ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) criteria. The functioning of entrepreneurship according to these criteria is a modern form of a “social contract” between society, businesses and citizens, which will have multiple benefits by generating value for all stakeholders. The importance that investors now attach to these issues is nothing more than fulfilling both their own and consumers’ demand for socially and environmentally responsible companies, which operate with proper corporate governance rules and transparency in their procedures. In this direction, the Hellenic Capital Market Commission (HCMC) has placed the issues of sustainable finance, as well as good and transparent corporate governance, at the center of its action. With respect to corporate governance, it should be noted that, following the adoption of the corporate governance law a couple of years ago, the Greek listed companies currently operate under a new framework which is in alignment with international best practices. With respect to sustainability, it should be noted that HCMC plays a leading role in this field, both at national and international level, by contributing to the shaping of the relevant European regulatory framework, through, inter alia, its active participation in ESMA. In this respect, HCMC has initiated timely an intensive process of raising awareness of the regulatory framework and the ESG characteristics, among all market participants and the public. Our mission is to ensure transparency and compliance in alignment with EU legislation and at the same time support Greece’s financial profile in order to be fit for tomorrow’s challenges on the EU and international environment”.

**Mr. Yianos Kontopoulos**, stated: “We stand at the threshold of a new era for the Athens Stock Exchange, one marked by remarkable growth, sustainable practices, and increased international prominence. As we look back on our achievements in 2023, we see a bright future ahead. With a solid growth strategy, a growing pipeline of new listings, and strong partnerships, we are committed to re-establishing the Athens Stock Exchange as a Developed Market and a prominent regional financial institution in Europe. We are aligned with the National Strategy for the Development of the Greek Capital Market and are working diligently with various stakeholders to create an attractive environment for listings on our exchange. In 2024, we will continue our efforts to ensure that a robust capital market plays a pivotal role in the sustainable growth of the Greek economy. I am thrilled to be a part of this journey and collaborate with all our partners as we work towards achieving this goal.”

**Mr. Anastasios Astyfidis** stated: “The Greek economy continues to perform well despite the difficult international environment and will register one of the Eurozone’s highest growth rates this year and the next. The Ministry of Finance predicts expansion of 2.4% for 2023, accelerating to 2.9% in 2024. Encouragingly, much of the growth is led by capital investment, which rose by 8.1% yoy through the first half of 2023. Although concerns remain about Europe, there are few such reservations about Greece, as it is in a different stage of the business cycle, continues to demonstrate significant capacity to deploy Resilience and Recovery Funds, and momentum in the tourism sector is poised to persist.. In addition,

household consumption is supported by a buoyant labour market. It is noteworthy that this strong growth has taken place against the back of rapid disinflation with the HICP measure of inflation having risen by just 3.2% annually in the past three months. These encouraging fundamentals have been ratified by the major rating agencies, where Greece is now investment grade according to S&P, Fitch, Scope and DBRS Morningstar. Although the sovereign is not yet investment grade according to Moody's, it was upgraded two notches by it this September. Among other factors, they cited the significant efforts at debt reduction and predicted that this progress will continue through the medium term. In addition, most of the public debt is low interest and longer term thanks to a sterling job by the PDMA. Also note that a primary surplus equal to 2.1% of GDP is expected for 2024. Finally, results from the four major banks have consistently exceeded expectations on the back of strong profitability driven by solid NIM expansion and robust asset quality trends. This led to strong demand when the HFSF sold stakes in institutions such as Alpha Bank and National Bank of Greece. The banks have received seals of approval from rating agencies as well, both because of the sovereign upgrade and via industry specific developments."

**Mr. Giuseppe Giano** stated: "The trajectory of the Greek economy has exceeded expectations with the Greek equity market regaining investors' confidence. The upgrade of the sovereign rating to investment grade by S&P and DBRS came in as a vote of confidence on the successful execution of reforms by the government, while the absorption of Recovery and Resilience Facility Funds (RRF) by the economy should continue to support fixed capital formation and sustainable GDP growth in the years to come. The momentum of the Greek capital market remains strong, posting an impressive performance year to date. The successful placement of the 22% stake in National Bank of Greece is a confirmation that the Greek banking sector has not only recovered from the Greek financial crisis but also offers a clear visibility in fundamentals and the ability to grow the loan book supporting returns for shareholders. Valuations remain very appealing, offering discounts relative to European peers, despite the higher growth prospects and the superior capital ratios. Outside the banking space, Greek equities have also outperformed expectations in terms of both performance and profitability, paving the way for further earnings upgrades. The increased activity in the Greek capital market space highlights the strong interest of foreign investors in Greek equities and we are confident that the Athens Stock Exchange is ready to welcome the new era of investment banking in Greece. In Euroxx Securities we support such initiatives, and we are determined to unlock domestic opportunities for international investors."

**Mr. Dimitris Kofitsas**, stated: "From the recent Greek equity offerings we have witnessed a sea change in investor sentiment towards Greek equities. After the jumbo deals of 2021 by Piraeus Bank, Alpha Bank and PPC the equity activity in the Greek market was muted, impacted also by the general challenging market and macro environment. The NBG placement in November 2023 by the Hellenic Financial Stability Fund was the largest fully market offering (FMO) in Greece since 2013 and was the catalyst of the reopening of the equity market. Besides the sheer size of the demand at 8.5 billion euros, the quality of the book skewed towards the most important fundamental and long only investors was the highest we have seen recently not only at Greek but at European level.

This transaction also paved the way for another successful deal of Helleniq Energy that priced last week. A secondary ABO by the two major shareholders of 11% of the share capital represents the largest secondary ABO in the energy sector in South Europe since 2021 and the largest secondary ABO in Greece since 2013. Transaction was c3x covered and the placement of EUR 235m size represented approx. 60% of the free float of the company before the transaction, to large extend the investors participated in the offering were all new investors.

Clearly the outperformance of the Greek economy, the political stability and the recent rating upgrades of the Greek sovereign debt have played a big role in these results. However the right preparation and impeccable execution are equally important. During the preparation phase the importance to decide on the right structure of the equity offering (FMO, ABO, marketed ABO), the early engagement with the investor community (via non-deal roadshow meetings), the appropriate time spent on crafting the equity story of the target company are of paramount importance. Deciding on the right execution window and structuring the right pricing and allocation of the book of demand are key ingredients for the successful placement of the offering and the aftermarket share price performance."

**Mr. Konstantinos Kostopoulos** stated: "Greece has made a very strong come back over the past years, re-gaining the confidence of the investor community. In this context, the Athens Stock Exchange ("ATHEX") plays a pivotal role in supporting the financing needs of the listed companies and being a strong reference point for inward investment in the country. Morgan Stanley is proud to support ATHEX, but also Capital Link during this event and being an integral part of the Greek Capital Markets ecosystem."

**Mr. Xenofon Damalas** stated: “We are very satisfied with our progress in the last few years. We have accomplished the largest turnaround in the European banking sector, lowering our non-performing exposures from 45% to 5% in record time. We have also increased our capital base, boosted our profitability and efficiency, and improved our digital capabilities.

We are getting very good feedback from investors, who have acknowledged Piraeus’ achievements and back our goals. The growing investor interest in Piraeus’ investment case has been reflected in the significant rise of Piraeus share price, which has more than doubled year to date. Importantly, the Piraeus investor base is expanding, as new accounts from jurisdictions that had not invested in Greek assets for many years, have re-entered the Piraeus registry, resulting in higher trading volumes, better liquidity and lower stock price volatility, which are all key factors for attracting high quality, long-term oriented funds.

The solid economic prospects of Greece, which is expected to grow with the second highest growth rate in the Eurozone this year, along with the Greek sovereign regaining its investment grade status, mark important milestones for the country and the banking sector in their journey of convergence with the EU counterparts.

For Piraeus, we are confident that we will meet or surpass our 2023 targets given the positive momentum, which we also expect to continue into 2024, as we ensure Piraeus continues to support its customers and the broader Greek economy.”

## THE FORUM WAS ORGANIZED:

**IN COOPERATION WITH:** New York Stock Exchange – NYSE & Athens Exchange Group (ATHEX Group)

**UNDER THE AUSPICES:** of the Consulate General of Greece in New York, which hosted a welcome reception for all speakers

The Forum, through its 25 years record of success, has been engaged in a systematic effort to highlight Greece’s profile to a global business and investment audience. This year’s forum was particularly significant as Greece is heralding a new dawn of investments and entrepreneurship, despite global challenges. The country’s political stability, strong economic dynamics, and attractive valuations have boosted investor confidence in the Greek market. The upgrade of the Greek economy by Fitch formalizes the emergence of Greece in the investment category in terms of credit rating. Fitch is the third - out of four recognized by the ECB - rating agency to award our country investment grade status in recent months. This certifies the progress of the Greek economy and the even more positive prospects opened up by the implementation of the country’s policy. At the same time, it creates the conditions for further strengthening investment inflows, better financing conditions for the economy, growth and increased employment.

The Prime Minister of Greece, H.E. **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** addressed international investors via written message.

**Keynote Remarks by Greek Ministers:** Minister of Economy & Finance, H.E. Kostis Hatzidakis, Minister of Infrastructure & Transport, H.E. Christos Staikouras, Minister of Environment & Energy, H.E. Theodore Skylakakis, Alternate Minister of Economy & Finance, H.E. Nikolaos Papathanasis.

**Greek Government Officials:** Ms. **Maria (Maira) Myrogianni**, Secretary General for International Economic Affairs - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. **Orestis Kavalakis**, Governor of Recovery and Resilience Facility Coordination Agency - Ministry of Economy and Finance, Mr. **Dimitrios Tsakonas**, Director General - Public Debt Management Agency, Mr. **Michael Arghyrou**, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, Mr. **George Pitsilis**, Governor – Independent Authority for Public Revenue, Mr. **Vassilis Kontozamanis**, Former Alternate Minister of Health, Mr. **Gregory D. Dimitriadis**, CEO & Executive Member of the BoD - Growthfund, the National Fund of Greece, Dr. **Marinos Giannopoulos**, CEO - ENTERPRISE GREECE.

**US Government (US Department of State) Representatives:** • Mr. **Geoffrey R. Pyatt**, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Energy Resources, and • Mr. **Joshua Huck**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Southern Europe and the Caucasus.

**European Central Bank** was represented by Ms. **Elizabeth McCaul**, Member of the Supervisory Board.

**The Athens Exchange Group** was represented by Mr. **Yianos Kontopoulos**, CEO - Athens Exchange Group, and the **Hellenic Capital Market Commission**, by Dr. **Vassiliki Lazarakou JSD**, Chair - Hellenic Capital Market Commission.

The Forum featured the important participation of representatives from ❖ **the biggest Greek Banks: 1) Four Systemic Banks, Alpha Bank - Eurobank - National Bank - Piraeus Bank, 2) Attica Bank and Hellenic Development Bank**, and from ❖ **the most important Global Investment Banks • Barclays • BNP Paribas • Goldman Sachs International • Morgan Stanley • Nomura • AXIA Ventures Group Ltd.**

**Participating speakers in investor panel: John Paulson and representatives from: BC Partners - Brookstreet Equity Partners • CVC • Hotel Investment Partners (HIP) • RWE Energy Transition Investments • Thrivest Holding.**

**23 Listed Companies participated in a series of meetings with multiple foreign investors :** Athens Exchange Group - Alpha Bank - Athens Water Supply & Sewage Company SA (EYDAP) - Attica Bank - AUTO HELLAS - AVAX Group - Cosmos Health, Inc. (NASDAQ: COSM) - Dimand S.A. - ELLAKTOR S.A. – Eurobank - GEK Terna Group - HELLENiQ ENERGY Holdings - Intrakat S.A. - LAMDA Development - MOTOR OIL Group - MYTILINEOS - National Bank of Greece - Opap - OTE Group of Companies - Piraeus Bank - PRODEA Investments - Public Power Corporation – PPC - Trastor REIC.

**During the Official Luncheon the Greek Minister of Economy & Finance, H.E. Kostis Hatzidakis, and Mr. Evan Kotsovinos, Vice President and General Manager – Google, delivered Keynote Remarks. Mr. John Tuttle, Vice Chairman – NYSE; President - NYSE Institute, Dr. Nikolas P. Tsakos, Founder & CEO - TEN Ltd, and Ms. Beth Hammack, Co-Head Global Financing Group - Goldman Sachs, delivered Welcome Remarks.**

**Nicolas Bornozis, President of Capital Link gratefully presented “THE CAPITAL LINK HELLENIC APPRECIATION AWARD” to Mr. John Tuttle, Vice Chairman - NYSE ; President - NYSE Institute, for NYSE’s and his own longstanding support & contribution to Greece, Greek Entrepreneurs, the Greek Maritime Community & the Greek-American Diaspora.**

**The Forum concluded with an Official Dinner** during which the **"2023 Capital Link Hellenic Leadership Award"** was presented to **Mr. Nikos Stathopoulos**, Chairman of Europe & Member of the Management Committee - **BC Partners**, for his outstanding contribution to Greece: his significant involvement and positive impact on Greece and the Greek economy with his active investment participation. **Nicolas Bornozis, President of Capital Link**, read the **Greek Minister of Economy & Finance, H.E. Kostis Hatzidakis’** Keynote Address, since the Minister had to urgently return to Greece. **The Ambassador of Greece to the USA, H.E. Ekaterini Nassika**, and **Mr. Joshua Huck**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Southern Europe and the Caucasus - **U.S. Department of State**, delivered **Keynote Remarks**. Ms **Nicole Petalides**, Host - **Schwab Network** ; Former Anchor - **FOX Business Network**, was the **Master of Ceremonies**.

On **Tuesday, December, 12, 2023**, within the context of the **“25<sup>th</sup> Annual Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum”**, the **New York Stock Exchange** in cooperation with **Capital Link** organized a special ceremony honoring the **"Greek American Issuer Day at NYSE"**, during which Greek & Greek American companies listed on the New York Stock Exchange rang the **“Closing Bell”** - at **NYSE-New York Stock Exchange**.

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#### **ABOUT CAPITAL LINK**

*Founded in 1995, Capital Link is a New York based investor relations, financial communications and advisory firm with a strategic focus on the maritime, commodities and energy sectors, MLPs, as well as Closed-End Funds and ETFs. In addition, Capital Link organizes 18 high quality Investment Forums, webinars and podcasts, focusing on maritime transportation and U.S. investment products in 10 countries in the United States, Europe and Asia, in key industry centers, such as New York, London, Oslo, Hamburg, Athens, Limassol, Shanghai, Singapore, Tokyo and Hong Kong all of which are known for combining rich educational and informational content with unique marketing and networking opportunities. Capital Link is a member of the Baltic Exchange. Based in New York City, Capital Link has presence in London, Athens & Oslo.*