



THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER for LEADING STUDIES
of the
GREEK ASSOCIATION for ATLANTIC and EUROPEAN COOPERATION

Chania – Med Forum 2015 Report

The 3rd Chania – Med Forum on “Economy, Energy, Politics and Power” of the International Center for Leading Studies was held under the auspices of the Municipality of Chania, 23-26 July 2015, in cooperation with the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania MAICH, to discuss the recent international, economic and geopolitical developments that affect in multiple ways the life of every citizen across the globe.

The Forum featured expert Speakers and Participants from over 15 countries, including, Ambassadors, Academicians, Representatives of the Business world, Representatives of National Organizations and the Military, Heads of Think Tanks and Analysts, but also citizens from Athens, Crete and abroad, since the Forum serves as an open dialogue platform for anyone interested in these issues.

The opening remarks, given by **Dr. Alik Mitsakos** and **Mr. Theodossis Georgiou**, highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary education and briefly explained the history of The Greek Association for Atlantic and European Cooperation, and the International Center for Leading Studies, its vision and aims. The organizers stressed out the importance of events like the Chania – Med Forum on making a vital contribution to the dialogue on economy, international affairs and politics. Congratulations to the Organizers of the event were given by **Dr. George Baourakis**, the Director of the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute, who stressed out, one more time, the significant contribution to the next generation’s education, of programs like The International Academy for Advanced Studies and the Chania-Med Forum. **Dr. George Baourakis** also made a brief presentation of the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute, its work and accomplishments during the year and its vision for the future.

As the Forum came after a period of major political developments in Greece, the referendum, the sudden closing of the bank sector, the demonstrations and the heated political discussions in the Parliament and everywhere else, it is needless to say that a big part of the Forum was dedicated to the present economic crisis in Europe, and Greece and the effect of all these changes to the geopolitical relationships and the new dynamics that have emerged in the Mediterranean area.

The first day opened with the “**Power and Visions in Politics Today**” Session where discussants **Mr. Alex Pattakos**, Political Scientist, Founder of the Global Meaning Institute, the OPA WAY, and **Professor Rene Repasi**, Scientific Coordinator of the European Research Centre for Economic and Financial Governance (EURO-CEFG), University of Rotterdam, discussed about the current issues of politics and power in the European Union especially in a time of crisis, as well as possible suggestions out of the crisis that concerns all the countries in the European Union.

Professor Rene Repasi contributed to the discussion with his expertise on the European laws that govern the Eurozone and gave us valuable insights on the current role of the European Parliament in the economic governance framework of Europe. **Mr, Alex Pattakos**, a pioneer in transformational thinking, talked about his book “The OPA! Way”, utilizing the acronym he writes about in the book: O+P+A or OPA!, the formula for finding joy and meaning in our everyday lives and work. **Mr. Alex Pattakos** talked about “Greece’s



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Meaningful Innovation Growth Vision and Strategy”, about the the concept of creative tourism, that is how tourism can best be organized and practiced to enhance economic benefits to cities, provinces, and countries globally. During the times of crisis for Greece and Europe, the important role of tourism was stressed out in bringing back Greece into development.

The next day began with the “**Politics – Energy- Security**” Session coordinated by **Professor Fabrizio Luciolli**, President of the Atlantic Treaty Association. Discussants **Mrs. Barbora Maronkova**, Program Officer at the Engagement Section of the Public Diplomacy Division of NATO, **Professor Petros Vamvakas** at the Emmanuel College in Boston and **Professor Stefano Pilotto** at the Trieste University talked about transatlantic relations in the new era and the current course of the International relationships in the European Union.

The next two-hour session was dedicated to issues in security in the Mediterranean area, and the new threats, the role of Syria, Libya and ISIS, but also the possible roles of the major international players, as they have been transformed due to the economic crisis. This session was moderated by **Professor Panayotis Tsakonas**, from the University of the Aegean, and **Professor Fabrizio Luciolli**, President of the Atlantic Treaty Association. **HE Mr. Marwan Emil Toubassi**, Ambassador of the State of Palestine, also made valuable contributions to the discussions, presenting and discussing issues of the State of Palestine in relation to security, NATO and the Middle East area.

During the afternoon session the geopolitics of energy were discussed. **Professor Petros Vamvakas** (Emmanuel College, Boston) moderated the discussion, and **Professor Antonis Foscolos** from the Technical University of Crete provided our audience with valuable insights about energy supply and security issues in the Mediterranean area and more.

A very important contribution to the geopolitics discussion of the Forum was made through teleconference by the internationally acknowledged analyst **Dr. George Friedman**, Head of the American Think Tank «Stratfor Global Intelligence». Stratfor is the world’s premier geopolitical intelligence firm that provides strategic analysis and forecasting to individuals and organizations around the world. Stratfor is publishing many articles on the Greek and European economic crisis in relation to the geopolitical developments in the area. Therefore, it is needless to say that the Q&A session that followed was exciting and enthusiastic.

The next day began with the “**Economy and Economic Crisis**” section that was coordinated by **HE Ambassador a.h. Mr. Eleftherios Anghelopoulos**.

Professors Georgios Atsalakis from the Technical University of Crete, **Dr. Georgios Panos**, Reader in Finance from the University of Glasgow, **Professor Rene Repasi**, Scientific Coordinator from the European Research Centre for Economic and Financial Governance (EURO-CEFG) and the University of Rotterdam, and **Mrs.Elaine Dundon**, Co-Founder of the Global Meaning Institute, The OPA! Way, Professor, Innovation Management at University of Toronto, discussed the economic crisis in Europe, the recent political and economic developments after the referendum, and the current economic policies in Europe and the Eurozone.

Dr. Georgios Panos from the University of Glasgow described some stylized facts and thoughts around the current state of the Greek economy and the global environment of recent times. The discussion departed from



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the observation that the potential for illiquidity has been at the centre of most recent crises, and that short-term debt is a crucial ingredient of illiquidity. A primer into the recent Greek crisis was attempted with an inquiry involving six of the fundamental questions to the Greek economy's situation at the moment. Some of the myths and potential solutions for the Greek economy were explored. A special intervention was made by **Mrs. Elaine Dundon**, on Innovation and Management in business and how the Greek state could benefit by new ways of approaching the profitable sections of the economy like tourism. **Mrs. Elaine Dundon**, also discussed the shift of thinking that is needed in Greece in terms of institutions, government, the public and private sector, in order for Greece to be able to make a step forward out of the recession.

The next section “**Track II Diplomacy, Ethics and Corruption, War of Words**” was coordinated by **Dr. Alik Mitsakos**, Dean and Founder of the International Center for Leading Studies. The discussants, **Mr. Alex Pattakos**, Political Scientist and Founder of the Global Meaning Institute, The OPA WAY, **Professor Theodore Johnson**, Rector of the University of Kansas, **Mrs. Jessica Townsend-Teague**, Educator, Entrepreneur, and President of Imagi-Nation, LLC, **Mrs. Mary Greenwood Johnson**, Professor at the Bishop Seabury Academy Kansas, and **Mrs. Antonia Oana Colibasanu**, Vice-President and Partner for Eurasia and International Marketing at Stratfor discussed about media, ethics in International Affairs, corruption, the role of multinational companies, NGOs, lobbies and pressure groups, and about economic, military and educational diplomacy.

During the closing ceremony, GAAEC’s Partners for 20 years were honored. Certificates of appreciation and gifts were given to the Chairman of the Fund for American Studies and one of the pioneers and visionaries of our program **Mr. Randal Teague**, as well as the Vice President of International and Alumni Programs **Mrs. Michelle Le**. Moreover, the President of the Atlantic Treaty Association, **Professor Fabrizio Luciolli**, was honored for his long-standing contribution and cooperation in the Atlantic Treaty Association.

Finally greeting messages were given at the end of the Forum by the President of Croatia, **Mrs. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic**, which has been an enthusiastic supporter of our programs for years and the General Secretary of Tourism **Mr. Panos Livadas**, a strong supporter of TICLS as well.

Detailed reviews of the keynote speakers’ speeches will be uploaded on our sites soon.

In the context of the present difficult times for Greece, we believe that initiatives like this are necessary in order to reflect, examine and discuss about the causes of the European economic and political crisis, and to study in depth possible solutions and ways out of the crisis.

The International Center for Leading Studies has already started to design the program for next year’s summer school.

We believe such programs contribute to the global discussion on the big topics like economy, geopolitics, energy and many more and should be continued, especially in Greece, a country that plays such a key role in the Mediterranean area.

The 3rd Chania-Med Forum is now considered a vital contributor to the wider discussion on the major topics of



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politics, economy, energy, security and international relations, in the area. Our aim is to make it bigger year after year, bringing together Experts, Academics, Students and Knowledgeable Citizens and to serve as a meeting point for dialogue, at the heartland of the Mediterranean area, the island of Crete.

-the report was written by Sofia Kontou Programs Assistant at the International Center for Leading Studies-