

**Inauguration Speech by**  
**H.E. AHN Young-jip, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea**  
**2017 Korean-Hellenic Cooperation Forum**  
**(LAED, 1 June 2017)**

H.E. Olga Gerovasili, Minister of Administrative Reconstruction,  
Mr. Panayotis Thomopoulos, Chairman of the National Bank of Greece and Vice  
Chairman of the IOBE  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

***Kalimera.***

It is my great pleasure and honour to be here. I extend to all of you a very warm welcome to the Korean-Hellenic Cooperation Forum. My sincere gratitude goes to the eminent Greek and Korean speakers. We are delighted that you are here – and some of you from a very great distance - to share your expertise and experience with us today. These will be invaluable. And I wish also to deeply thank Mr. Thomopoulos, Dr. Vettas and other IOBE colleagues for their excellent partnership.

The IOBE and our Embassy, organizing cooperation forums every year from 2015, have continued to foster invaluable ties of cooperation. The conference in December 2015 served as a good opportunity to share our insights on strategies and measures to overcome economic crises that Korea and Greece have experienced at different times. It was a chance for us to share with each other the wisdom we have gained from adversity over the years. And we co-organized again at the maritime cooperation forum in June last year. This was yet another meaningful occasion where we saw the traditionally strong bonds of cooperation further consolidated in the shipping and shipbuilding industries. In ways such as these the synergy between us is ever growing.

This year's forum will focus on more specific areas of collaboration. We will be pooling our wisdom on such key matters as e-Government, ICT, smart transportation, waste management, and smart grids. I look forward to eminent experts and entrepreneurs from both our countries sharing their experience, their expertise, and their views. I believe in this way we can indeed find ways to further deepen cooperation between Greece and Korea.

## **(Potential Areas of Cooperation between Korea and Greece)**

With regard to e-Government, Korea was ranked No. 1 among 193 countries in the UN e-Government Development Index from 2010 until recently. The Korean Government has built up extensive e-Government systems in a whole range of areas such as taxation, customs, land registration and a one-stop service for administration, accumulating know-how to make public administration more transparent and efficient.

I am aware that the Hellenic Government also fully recognizes the importance of e-Government and is exerting efforts to build its system. I therefore believe that there is yet more great potential to further expand combined efforts between Korea and Greece in the fields of e-Government and ICT.

Another promising area for cooperation is environment and energy efficiency. As the Paris Agreement on climate change and EU environment and energy strategies clearly show, there are growing calls in the international community to achieve a cleaner environment and to maximize energy efficiency.

In the past Korea mainly relied on landfill and faced huge waste management problems. The Korean Government took drastic measures. These included a volume-rate garbage disposal system, and separate collection of food waste. It also actively introduced incinerators, which has significantly reduced the volume of waste. A massive landfill area near Seoul was turned into a World Cup stadium and ecological park - and this is now widely appreciated as a success story.

## **(Introduction of Speakers)**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would now like to briefly introduce the eminent speakers at this forum. In the first panel session on “ICT and Smart Government”, Dr. Kim Jae-jin of the Korea Institute of Public Finance will make a presentation on the Korean e-Tax administration which contributed to a drastic increase in tax revenues and a significant reduction in cases of tax evasion.

Mr. Kim Taesang of LG CNS will provide a briefing on smart transportation systems and e-government projects based on the experience of establishing an e-ticketing system for mass transportation in Athens. Mr. Kim Doo-sik, who is the Director of KOTRA Athens Office, will explain about the Korean ICT industry and the ways forward to strengthen cooperation between our two countries.

Dr. Michalopoulos, Director General of the Ministry of Administrative Reconstruction and Dr. Spinellis, Professor of Athens University of Economics and Business, will share with us presentations on the Greek e-Government policies and plans.

In the second panel session on the theme of “Eco-Friendly and Smart City”, Mr. Liogkas of the Ministry of Environment will provide a briefing on the situation in the Hellenic Republic regarding waste management and future plans in this regard. Then Dr. Jang Ha-na of Yonsei University and Mr. Kim Young-ki, Head of the Hanwha Athens Office, will make presentations on the Korean Government’s waste management policies and possible solutions such as the “Waste-to-Energy” scheme.

Furthermore, Mr. Margaritis, Vice Chairman of HEDNO, and Mr. Won Tai-seung of the Korea Electric Power Corporation will provide an overview of the plans for enhancing energy efficiencies including the smart grids of their respective countries.

Between the two panel sessions, we are delighted to have a special guest from London. Mr. Park Soo-min, Alternate Director of the EBRD, who will make a presentation on how the EBRD plans to work together with Korean and Greek companies which I am sure will be of great interest. I trust that the entrepreneurs and experts here will find his briefing really valuable.

In conclusion, I look forward to lively discussions and fruitful networking among the participants in today’s forum. It is my sincere hope that this forum will prove to be an important step towards fostering even deeper, more concrete cooperation between our two countries. I trust that this meeting will be really fruitful, yielding results seen in tangible ways. Thank you very much for your kind attention.