

**The Fraternity of the Athenian Hydriots
Established in 1890**

7th Hydra Shipping Conference

From the "brig"* to the autonomous ship

**Saturday, September 17th, 2016
Conference Hall of the Hydra Holy Cathedral**

Mr. John Sahinis greeting speech

Mr. Mayor of Hydra,
Your Eminence Father Akindyne,
Mr. Secretary General of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy,
Mr. President of the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the seventh Shipping Conference of the Fraternity of the Athenian Hydriots.

The Fraternity was established in 1890, by the historical Hydriot shipping families that led the sea battle during the 1821 fight against the Turks, offering their 186 ships and all their fortune for that cause.

They were aiming at the preservation and promotion of Hydras' contribution to the liberation from the Turkish occupancy, the development of significant charity activity, and attracting the young people to the maritime professions.

The Ship Owner and Member of the Hellenic Parliament Gkikas Koulouras, who was the Fraternity's President from 1938 to 1954, was the initiator and co-founder of the "Union of Greek Shipowners." This year, the Union of Greek Shipowners celebrates 100 years of operation.

The Conference is hosted for the first time in the Conference Hall of the Hydra Holy Cathedral. Hydra's Ecclesiastical Museum is also hosted here. In the courtyard you can see the busts of eminent Hydriots, such as Lazaros Kountouriotis and Andreas Miaoulis. The Conference Hall was renovated in 2011 and is audio-visually fully equipped.

The Subject of this year's Conference is "From the "brig" to the autonomous ship" and we focus on the digital transformation of the shipping industry. Our distinguished speakers will try to answer crucial questions that concern the maritime community, they will develop their views in a productive dialogue and they will guide us in a tour from Admiral's Sahinis brig "Miltiadis", to the autonomous ship, which is now a reality.

We are thankful for your participation and continuous support of our Fraternity's efforts, towards the realization of our goals.

Firstly we very much thank our distinguished speakers, who willingly accepted our invitation, even travelled from abroad, to share their valuable expertise and experience with us.

Great thanks to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy and the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping, under the Auspices of which this conference was organized. We also thank all the Supporting organizations, the Hellenic Institute of Marine Technology, the Association of Banking and Financial Executives of Hellenic Shipping, the International Propeller Club of the United States – International Port of Piraeus and Wista Hellas.

Sincere thanks should be addressed to our Premiere Sponsors: Mobile Technology and Honeywell sensing and productivity solutions, our Associate Sponsor LAROS by Prisma Electronics, our Sponsors: Antaeus Travel & Tourism and AS Marine, our Wine Sponsor: Rira Vineyards, our Supporters: Baluco, Hellenic Seaways, IRI – The Marshall Islands Registry and rt group events and our Participating Company: Chartworld Shipping Corporation.

Last but not least, we thank our Media Sponsors who contributed to the communication of the conference to the total of the Greek maritime community and will continue their contribution by wide-spreading the minutes and the concluding remarks.

Now, I would like to call the Conference Chairman, Mr. Xiradakis, to take over the conference moderation. Thank you.