



ΑΔΕΛΦΟΤΗΣ ΥΔΡΑΙΩΝ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ
ΕΤΟΣ ΙΔΡΥΣΕΩΣ 1890

11th Hydra Shipping Conference, Hydra island 05/09/2020

“Greek Shipping, a Factor of International Influence & National Defense of Greece”

The 11th Hydra Shipping Conference, organized by the Fraternity of the Athenian Hydriots (www.aya.com.gr) was successfully concluded on **Saturday , September 5th, 2020** at the open space of **Sunset Restaurant** near the landmark cannons, under the auspices of the Ministry of Shipping, the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping, the Hellenic Marine Environment Association (HELMEPA), the Hellenic Shipbrokers Association (HSA), the Association of Banking and Financial Executives of Hellenic Shipping, the Piraeus Marine Club, The Yacht Club of Greece , the International Propeller Club of the United States, Project Connect with the program Adopt A Ship, AIGEAS AMKE Thanassis & Marina Martinos Foundation, British Hellenic Chamber of Commerce. Sponsors were: Laros - Prisma Electronics, Hellenic Seaways, KPMG, Tototheo Maritime, Metropolitan College - Maritime Academy, DNV-GL, Moore, Malihin-Chryssos Wine, NISOS Beer, To Pagoto ice-cream. Media sponsors were: AllAboutShipping.co.uk, Maritimes.gr, Mononews, All4Yachting.com, Nafsgreen.gr, Capital.gr, Naftemporiki.gr, Careernet.gr, Newsfront Naftiliaki, ClickAtLife, Crisis Monitor, Oikonomiki – BusinessFile, ONDECK Yachting & Sailing Magazine, GoodNews, Piraeus365.gr, In2Life.gr, Real.gr, Realnews, realfm97.8, ICTplus, TheVoiceofHydra and Saronic Magazine.

Mr John Sahinis, the President of the Fraternity of the Athenian Hydriots, welcomed esteemed guests and inaugurated the work of the conference and the aim of the Fraternity since its foundation in the late 19th century, which are: interventions on national issues, preservation of Hydra’s contribution to the country, the island’s promotion via various activities every year – such as keeping in touch with philhellenes, charitable donations, protection of the environmental and architectural heritage, and attracting Greece’s youth to the nautical profession.

The **Mayor of Hydra, Mr Yiorgos Koukoudakis**, welcomed guests and acknowledged Mr Sahinis’ efforts in organizing the successful Hydra Conference for the past eleven consecutive years and contributing to the island’s cultural heritage. Mr Koukoudakis stressed the vital importance of the Hellenic Navy and that Greek shipping must maintain its competitive advantage and always strive to advance it. **Mrs Vaso Bogri, representing Attica Regional Governor, Mr George Patoulis**, congratulated Mr Sahinis and stressed the struggles for freedom our country has endured. Mrs Bogri also commented on **Mr Panos Laskaridis** for his contribution to the Hellenic Navy – his actions said Ms Bogri, “set the example for others to follow”.

Mr George Tsavlis, Principal of Tsavlis Salvage Group, Chairman and Moderator of the 11th Annual Hydra Shipping Conference, introduced the conference, themed “**Greek Shipping, a factor of International Influence & National Defense of Greece**”, welcomed guests and affirmed to the audience his own personal belief, that we never stop learning and that after every conference, we depart more enriched. Mr Tsavlis introduced speakers at this year’s Shipping conference, **Dr George Prevelakis, Emeritus Professor of**

Geopolitics at Sorbonne University, Dr George D. Pateras, President of the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping and Vice President of Contships Management Inc, Mr Dinos Arcoumanis, President of the Academic Council of the Metropolitan College, Mr Costis Stambolis, Executive Director, Institute of Energy for South East Europe (IENE) and Mr John Patiniotis, Finance Director of Carras Hellas SA.

The conference consisted of two main areas of discussion: **PANEL I. Geopolitics & Shipping [Post-Pandemic and Mid-Pandemic]** and **PANEL II. Decarbonization.**

Dr George Prevelakis, Emeritus Professor of Geopolitics at Sorbonne University and author of numerous books on the Geopolitics of Greece, among which *Τα Ξύλινα Τείχη (The Wooden Walls)*, opened the conference and set the stage for discussion with his thought provoking key note address. Dr Prevelakis asked the question, “What is Turkey?” Turkey said Dr Prevelakis is not the same enemy we have known throughout the centuries. Today’s Turkey is looking to formulate its new “character”. Their plan (Turkey’s) is to create instability in our own borders in order to reign over the Eastern Mediterranean. President of the Turkish Republic, Mr Erdogan is aiming to “sell” his “vision” internally but he needs certain “symbolic tools” or “weapons’ to do so. It is these “weapons” that Erdogan wants from us, said Dr Prevelakis; Erdogan wants the relationship we have with the sea. According to Erdogan, Turkey cannot rule over the new Ottoman Empire without having control of the sea. In history, Turkey sacrificed the Aegean Sea for land – now they realize that the future of humanity is the sea. Dr Prevelakis voiced his concern over the serious threat we are currently faced with. We survived the first phase, said the professor, but the second phase does not leave any space for compromise. The ‘centre’ of other countries in the EU is land, not the sea. In contrast, the ‘centre’ of Greece is the Aegean Sea. We have seriously underestimated the power of our ‘weapon’. Our seamanship is above in other peoples’ said Dr Prevelakis and stressed that each and every one of us has the responsibility to help with this current crisis situation. **Mr Tsavlis** agreed and stressed how important lateral thinking actually is! On a humorous note, Mr Tsavlis thanked Dr Prevelakis for surmounting the challenge of getting to the island of Hydra to share with us his most enlightening thought process – like Edwin Land who invented the Polaroid camera and said “never undertake a project in life unless it is manifestly important and virtually impossible”, Dr Prevelakis made the impossible happen and was there to enlighten and inspire us all.

Dr George D. Pateras, President of the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping and Vice President of Contships Management Inc, who is a valued supporter and committed voice of wisdom at the Hydra Shipping Conference for years, spoke about the significant impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the shipping industry and on seafarers and their families. Travel restrictions imposed by governments around the world have created significant challenges to crew changes and repatriation of seafarers, which has led to a growing humanitarian crisis as well as significant concerns for the safety of seafarers and shipping. IMO urged its Member States to designate seafarers as ‘key workers’, so they can travel between the ships that constitute their workplace, and their countries of residence. Dr Pateras explained the difficulties incurred to designate seafarers as ‘key workers’. Seafarers were unable to return home, creating serious commercial and immigration problems. “Cruise ships have suffered the greatest problems”, said Dr Pateras, “We were able to find a protocol for seafarers to be repatriated, tested and crew changes made but the problem is still with airplanes, masks etc”. China incurred a total lockdown said Dr Pateras, but the “silk road” destined to spur China's growth to a superpower – is very much alive again.

Mr Costis Stambolis, Executive Director, Institute of Energy for South East Europe (IENE) stressed the important political development of Sept 4th, 2020, namely the meeting of our Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis with China's foreign policy chief, Yang Jiechi, in Athens that centered mainly on recent Turkish transgressions in the Eastern Mediterranean. Mr Stambolis stressed the concern raised by Yang Jiechi and how peace and stability in the Mediterranean region and the world are critical to China. Furthermore, our ongoing economic collaboration with China for our mutual benefit was emphasized, reference Cosco and in general; how Greek ship owners secure competitive prices at Chinese shipyards while the Chinese benefit from our seamanship and the quality of our equipment. Greek seafarers have an open passport diplomatically and politically to go everywhere pointed out **Dr Pateras**, this gives us a huge competitive advantage.

On the topic of Geopolitics, **Mrs Antigoni Vafeidou of A.Vafeidou Law Offices**, voiced her own concerns on the issues of International Legality and the role of NATO. Turkish provocation is a known common tactic for decades said Mrs Vafeidou. However, since Turkey's European perspective is no longer visible but overshadowed by the trend of Neo-Ottomanism, its expansionist aspirations in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, have been expressed aggressively. "Greece is the wall between Europe and the Muslim world, said Mrs Vafeidou, "let the Europeans appreciate its true value and what its possible collapse will mean for the future of Europe". **Dr Prevelakis** responded to Mrs Vafeidou's comments by saying that the sea is starting to adopt characteristics of land. "Technology allows us to take advantage of the sea in a very different way". This is the reason we have the current battle with Turkey and China's concerns for the pending trouble in the region. The future of humanity said Dr Prevelakis is the sea; Greek shipping has the competitive advantage. The French have the 2nd largest sea space – Greeks have the seamanship. No other people have this ability to adapt to unpredictable circumstances on the sea as do the Greeks. **Dr Pateras** pointed out that our connectivity in Greece is highly dependent on our 'free lanes'. Unfortunately, remarked Dr Pateras, NATO lost its direction when it became 'supervisor' of the EU.

Mr Nikos Marmatsouris, Group Senior Marketing Manager of GAC Shipping SA spoke to our valued audience about **Project Connect**, a voluntary initiative started by **Irene Notias**, to help young shipping graduates prepare for their first experience in a shipping company. In addition, Mr Marmatsouris shared the great success of **Adopt-A-Ship** in Greece, which has now been introduced in 33 classes from 16 schools including Athens College and 2 schools in Hydra, planting the seed of shipping in the hearts and minds of elementary school students by connecting a classroom of young children to a vessel with her Captain and crew.

Mr Dinos Arcoumanis, President of the Academic Council of the Metropolitan College raised the issue of the IMO's directive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from shipping by at least 50% by 2050. While the sector currently represents 2-3% of global CO₂ emissions, Mr Arcoumanis said that 10-15 billion were spent by shipowners to put scrubbers on their vessels which will be obsolete in 10 years. Studies have shown that shipping is a long way away from meeting our 2050 target. Most companies do not have a strategy for decarbonization, because there is uncertainty and opinions differ. Mr Arcoumanis spoke of the possibility of developing ammonia as a fuel (zero CO₂) and said that shipowners need to ensure that their engines will be able to burn zero CO₂ emission fuel. Professor Arcoumanis spoke of the importance of having one Ministry in the future associated with Shipping, Energy and the Environment. Greeks will rise to the challenge said Mr Arcoumanis as we have the unique quality of 'filotimo' and clever intelligence.

Mrs Antigoni Vafeidou shared with the audience the thoughts of **Mrs Elissavet Vozemberg, Member of the European Parliament**, who was unable to join us due to her commitments in Brussels. Mrs Vozemberg thanked Mr Sahinis and Mr Tsavlis and stressed the importance of Greek Shipping as a pillar of our economy and the development of our country. Mrs Vozemberg made special reference to **Honoree of the conference, Shipowner, Mr Panos Laskaridis**, as one of the most distinguished representatives of Greek Shipping who has been included in Lloyd's List top 100 key personalities of the global shipping community. Mrs Vozemberg emphasized Mr Laskaridis presidency at ECSA and how he worked to ensure that the shipping industry is a basic driver of the European economy. Mr Laskaridis' donation of vessels to the Hellenic Navy is especially important, voiced Mrs Vozemberg, especially given the difficult period our country is currently facing.

Mr Sahinis noted that: "the Fraternity is celebrating ten years of the **Hydra Shipping Conference**. At the first conference, **Mr Panos Laskaridis'** presence and inspirational speech gave us the courage to continue and establish this annual tradition; At the time, Mr Laskaridis was the Secretary General of the Union of Greek Shipowners. Mr Laskaridis' intervention through articles published in newspapers this year, has given all Greeks the strength and hope that with the appropriate adjustments to the management of our forces, we can face the expansionist aspirations of our eternal enemy. At the same time, Mr Laskaridis performed his patriotic duty, covering the cost of upgrading the electronic engines of various navy ships amidst other requirements. Mr Laskaridis, said Mr Sahinis, "donated 2 ships of general support and multiple capabilities, the **Hercules** and the **Atlas I**. Seamanship is a quality inherent to the Greek seafarer; Greeks more than any other people in the world have remained during their entire history, mariners without interruption, voiced Mr Sahinis and Mr Laskaridis has this powerful seamanship virtue. We hope that he will continue to give his «**Μεθ'ορμής ακαθέκτου**» (relentless force) and that his gesture of generosity will be an example to follow for all Greeks, shipowners and non-shipowners alike". **Ambassador Mr Alexios Pavlos Stephanou, Senior Board Member of the Fraternity of the Athenian Hydriots** and great grandson of the **Admiral Pavlos Kountouriotis**, voiced immense gratitude for Mr Laskaridis' donation on behalf of Hydra's historical shipping families. In addition to their military and diplomatic aggression, Turkey enforces aggressive foreign policy, whether this involves investments or high stake commercial exhibits. A clear example of this, said Mr Stefanou, are the important investments in Libya and the commercial exhibits in Odessa and Stockholm.

Mr John Patiniotis, Finance Director of Carras Hellas SA, commented that we will find a way for our ships to travel with 'adaptable' engines. Mr Patiniotis stressed however the concept of time as a key criterion. Who will be present in 10-30 years? Erdogan? Trump? Will there be a Europe? Will there be COVID-19 or another pandemic to face? We need to raise our awareness stressed Mr Patiniotis; what could cause more damage in the long run are security issues and the people factor. **Mr Tsavlis** said that 'half the world will freeze and other half will starve without shipping. "We need to be resilient and proactive. It always comes down to money", said Mr Tsavlis and mentioned how he had compared scrubbers to the Bloody Mary in one of his presentations. In the Bloody Mary, the ingredients are vodka and tomato juice said Mr Tsavlis; whereas 'ignorance and hypocrisy' are the ingredients for scrubbers.

Mr Nicholas Kampanis Technical Director, Nautilus a former student of Professor Arcoumanis, commented that it is good to talk about zero carbon emissions but we need to look at the big picture. Mr Kampanis stressed our unique seamanship and closed the conference by stating that we WILL find a solution, because we are "McGivers" !

All of the protective measures for COVID-19 were taken and masks provided to all guests and participants thanks to the kind support of **Mrs Irene Notias, Founder & Director of Prime Petroleum and Project Connect**. We wish to thank all of our esteemed participants and guests who joined us despite the pandemic situation and at times, challenging weather conditions, for their perseverance and commitment. Without you this massive achievement would not have been possible and we hope to have you with us next year! Conference Honoree was shipowner **Mr Panos Laskaridis** for his significant contribution and donation to the Hellenic Navy.