

**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING
AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Address of Nikolaos Bakatselos, President
June 27, 2024**

Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear members,

As I stand before you today, reflecting on my tenure thus far as President of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the journey we began together five years ago. During these years, we achieved important milestones that strengthened the fabric of our Chamber, maintaining its momentum and prestige, shielding cohesion among members and strengthening critical relationships with the United States Embassy in Greece, and other governmental bodies on both sides of the Atlantic.

Of course, no journey is without its challenges. The transition to a digital environment amid the COVID-19 pandemic stands out as the most pivotal moment. However, with determination, creativity and the unwavering support of our experienced Chamber Team, we not only adapted, but thrived in the face of adversity.

During my tenure, the positive development of the relationship between the American and Greek business communities is evident. We have deepened ties and laid the foundations for even stronger cooperation in the coming years. Initiatives such as strengthening our Chamber's position within the AmChams in Europe community and our effort to further strengthen the extroversion of our organization have yielded unexpectedly positive results, further demonstrating our commitment to growth and collaboration.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Economically, Greece has made significant strides. Going into 2024, our economic recovery positions us favorably for bilateral trade with the United States. While challenges remain – and of course there are always equal risks and opportunities – strategic reforms and continued investment will be vital to foster a more favorable business environment.

Global economic trends have undoubtedly shaped our landscape, affecting sectors such as tourism, energy and technology. Embracing digital transformation and sustainability, both across the country and for our Chamber, is key to ensuring we remain agile and on top of things.

Friends,
Dear members,

On the cusp of my final year as president of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, I reflect with emotion on our collective accomplishments—from our innovative initiatives to expanding our membership base and fostering partnerships that have had a real impact on domestic business. It is important to maintain our momentum.

Perhaps I am in a hurry, but as I prepare to pass the baton – and while I am confident in the resilience and ability of our Chamber to rise to the challenges – I cannot help but outline my priorities for the final year of my term. And although many of the interventions and changes we have in the works are not immediately visible but further seal the future of the Chamber, I can announce my intention to proceed with actions that will ensure our physical presence in the United States, as well as a trade mission and a first conference in the US.

The best interface with the USA, and even greater extroversion, ensuring the effectiveness of our initiatives and the correct transmission of our message, the creation of a committee dedicated to defense industry, but also the establishment of new regional committees are at the heart of my strategy.

Finally, in collaboration with the members of the Executive Committee – whom I thank in advance for their contribution – we will proceed to forge the Chamber's strategy for the coming years.

And as I will continue to strive, embracing the future with optimism and a firm commitment to our mission, I leave a similar legacy to my successor. To ensure the continued growth of the Chamber, we must continue to increase the value of our members' participation, further utilize the dynamics of our committees, increase extroversion, build foundations for medium-sized American entrepreneurship in Greece and, respectively, for the medium-sized Greek entrepreneurship in America, to shed more light on the prospects of the Greek economy and strive to create strong alliances to continue the effort to improve the economic model in our country.

We must not forget. Greece is the entrance to the European Union, in Southeast Europe. We have vast prospects if we focus on our goal. By remaining committed to our core values of integrity, innovation and inclusion, we will ensure a sustainable, enabling business environment for all.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The full, detailed account of my progress as President of our organization will have to wait until next year in June. Until then, I want to say that I am grateful for the support and dedication of my members and colleagues here at the Chamber. I am grateful for our partnership and collective effort to bring about the positive change the country needs. Together, we have accomplished great things, and I look forward to seeing the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce continue to thrive in the future.

Thank you for your presence and attention.