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Dear Secretary Rubio:

On behalf of the American Hellenic Institute (AHI), I write to commend you for leading the United States delegation to the Sixth U.S.-Greece Strategic Dialogue in Athens, and to welcome your first visit to Greece as Secretary of State. Since its launch in December 2018, the Strategic Dialogue has become the principal framework through which our two nations coordinate on defense, energy, trade, and regional security. Your personal commitment to continuing this Dialogue sends a clear message that the United States values Greece as a strategic partner and a pillar of stability in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Gene Rossides, Esq.
(1927-2020)

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Greece has proven time and again to be a faithful, reliable, and steadfast ally of the United States. Today, it is a NATO ally that consistently exceeds the Alliance's defense spending commitments, a democracy that shares our values and respect for the rule of law, and a partner that faithfully fulfills its obligations under the U.S.-Greece Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement (MDCA).

The value of this partnership has never been more evident than during the current conflict in the Middle East. Naval Support Activity Souda Bay on Crete, with its deep-water port and airfield, has served as an indispensable hub for U.S. forces, as it sustains U.S. operations and force posture across the region. Since hostilities with Iran began in February, U.S. fighter, tanker, transport, and special operations aircraft have staged through Souda Bay in significant numbers. Greece, in turn, has taken concrete steps to protect these shared assets, including relocating a Patriot air defense battery to Crete to reinforce the defense of Souda Bay. Greece has done so while fully aware of the risks this support entails.

We understand that energy will be high on the agenda during your visit. Greece has emerged as a vital energy gateway for Europe, importing U.S. liquefied natural gas through its terminals at Revithoussa and Alexandroupolis and moving it north through the Vertical Corridor to Central and Eastern Europe and Ukraine. These efforts directly advance U.S. interests by reducing Europe's dependence on Russian energy. They also build on the 3+1 format among the United States, Greece, the Republic of Cyprus, and Israel. AHI welcomes the launch of the U.S.-Eastern Mediterranean Energy Center this June, a long-standing goal of the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act of 2019, and encourages the Administration to ensure it is fully resourced.

It must be remembered, however, that efforts to ensure energy security in the region continue to be challenged by Türkiye, which seeks to block them. The clearest example is the Great Sea Interconnector (GSI), an EU Project of Common Interest backed by a €657 million European Commission grant, which would link the electricity grids of Greece, the Republic of Cyprus, and Israel and end Cyprus's energy isolation. Türkiye claims that its consent is required for work in waters between Crete and Cyprus. In 2024, Turkish warships disrupted survey operations off Kasos, and Ankara has since demanded advance notice of new surveys and declared a marine park near Kastellorizo, close to the cable's planned route. These actions reflect Türkiye's revisionist "Blue Homeland" doctrine and its long-standing *casus belli* against Greece, and they run counter to international law and U.S. interests.

Türkiye's conduct in the Aegean reinforces this concern. Turkish military aircraft and drones have repeatedly violated Greek airspace in 2026, including flights by armed F-16s. In light of this record, AHI urges the Administration to uphold the CAATSA sanctions imposed on Türkiye for its purchase of the Russian S-400 system. Türkiye should not be readmitted to the F-35 program or sold advanced U.S. weapons while it continues to threaten a NATO ally and to challenge the sovereignty of Greece and the Republic of Cyprus.

In the face of these challenges, AHI respectfully urges you to reaffirm during your visit that the United States stands firmly with Greece and the Republic of Cyprus in defense of their sovereignty and their sovereign rights under international law. The United States should make clear that it will not tolerate Turkish efforts to obstruct lawful energy development, intimidate NATO allies, or redraw the map of the Eastern Mediterranean through threats and force.

Your visit comes at a pivotal moment for the Eastern Mediterranean. AHI thanks you for your leadership in strengthening the U.S.-Greece strategic partnership, and we stand ready to support your efforts to advance it in the best interests of the United States. We wish you a productive and successful visit to Athens.

Warmest regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Larigakis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nick" and last name "Larigakis" clearly distinguishable.

Nick Larigakis