

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Vyron Polydoros, Minister of Public Order of Greece
at the Summit of the Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership
Bucharest, 5th June 2006**

Thank you, Minister. Your Excellency, President Mr. Basescu, Mr. Prime-Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I'd like to convey to all distinguished Heads of States and Governments, as well as the ministers participating in this august Forum, the warmest greetings of Mr. Costas Karamanlis, the Prime Minister of Greece and to express my Government's congratulations to the Romanian authorities for the organization of this Forum. As well as my thanks for the warm hospitality they offered to us. I'd like to make two introductory notes, if you permit me.

First it is somehow mentioned already by the Vice-President of Bulgaria. I'd like to think with you that in this place in the region we study upon it that is the Black Sea through history or more precisely the years of Mythology, the ages of Mythology occurred the first commercial and cultural expeditions ever done in the history of human being. That is the Argonaut expedition which was aimed for the Golden Fleece and for what has remained in our contemporary time as a symbol of the Black Sea. The definition in my conception of the Black Sea region seems to be a synonymous of wealth, prosperity, water/bridge, and an underground, a background of a common culture. Even between diversified people. This is the definition of Black Sea to my conception as it derives from those Ancient years.

A second academic remark I'd also like to mention, deals with the name of the Black Sea. In this antique map, you have in your hands, you can realize that the Black Sea, the ocean and the are is entitled as Pontus Euxinus, which means sea, ocean Pontus welcoming the strangers, the foreigners. We can say in other words or we can reconfirm nowadays that this place, this region is the Metropolis of hospitality. From this point of view, I distinguished the importance of this Forum and I can say that the additional, contributing factor of this Forum is the dialogue and the partnership, as well as the charting bright ideas. Ideas for what? Ideas for solidarity, friendship, security and development of the countries of this region. I'd like to accentuate again, the presence in this Forum of important entities of the Universal contemporary world, such as the representative of the United Nations, the representative of the United Nations, the representative of NATO, the representative of the European Union, as well, another important entities and states.

Excellencies, permit me to mention that Greece's diplomatic history strongly attests our support and efforts to promote political sustainability in an economic development and welfare for all the people of the area. Greece for the time being is the only country of the region which participates simultaneously in the Black Sea economic cooperation. In the European Union and NATO while earnestly looking forward to warmly welcoming our host Romania, as well as Bulgaria to the European Union as full members. Actually, Mr. President of Romania and Vice-President of Bulgaria, I remind you that we were among the first member states of the European Union that we ratified the agreement of accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the European Union. We also support the European orientation of Turkey, our neighbor country as well as the countries of the Western Balkans. The important thing is that in this Forum, I watched the full interest of Europe and Euro/Atlantic countries and States, and people's same policies and interest of promoting the development, the democracy, the common values and the stability in this area. It is really a beneficial element for the future of these countries. It is already mentioned by the

majority of the speakers. It is also mentionable, that the vision of the European Union, which is very much our own vision, vision of our country, of Greece, is to make the Black Sea region an area which reach natural and human - especially human - resources to make a zone of security, stability and prosperity. The European Neighborhood Policy, which aims at bringing closer the region to the European Union, has been proved to be a significant tool to this end. Greece's aim is to set qualitative priorities, in important sectors for the whole region making use of existing institutions and resources in order to improve coordination among donors and other regional sectors. Important sectors in our view are: energy, oil, gas, electricity, transport, environment, trade, tourism, health and good governments. Speaking of the environment, I want to contribute to this discussion the necessity, the priority of keeping the water of Black Sea clean. It is, it must always be a matter of priority for the region and the Mediterranean. Furthermore, I can say that by keeping the water of Black Sea clean, we preserve life in the area. This is the fundamental law of ecology.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'd like to say, additionally, that in my capacity, as Minister of Public Order of Greece, I work in the steady framework of European Union for securing the area of the Balkans and furthermore of this region as an area of peace, stability and released from criminality. The latter is not a matter of moral issue, it is affiliated directly to the rules of economic development. If there is an uncertainty of security matters in an area you cannot foresee or pursue economic development. For an area being safe and secure, released from criminality, it is a prerequisite from economic development. We pursue three matters: security and development – economic development – and human rights. I think that the good government, the matter of offering some framework of welfare to our people, is our obligation as statesmen as well as a whole regional approach. We must serve the Black Sea countries and people on three levels: firstly, prosperity and welfare. Secondly, peace and democratic values (human rights, rule of law), and thirdly, the cultural identity of people, as well as or along with the cultural integration to the level or to the field of modernization. We have to work systematically to confront the organized crime. The trafficking of firstly human beings, secondly, drugs and thirdly, weapons. We have to join our efforts in order to confront the terrorism, the asymmetric threats and the illegal immigration.

I conclude this introduction, that I had the honor to present you, by saying that friendship should be the final aim. Friendship among the countries and the people of the region and through this sentimental factor will find ways and methods of developing other aspects such as economy, culture and participation on equal terms in the international organizations and especially, cultivating relations of good neighborhood. These are the intentions of Greece in this Forum and this is the decision of contributing to this direction. Thank you very much.