

# NATIONAL HELLENIC

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## Greece: Papandreou picks Venizelos as finance minister

*Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou has changed his finance minister in an attempt to push through unpopular austerity measures demanded by the EU.*

*Evangelos Venizelos has been promoted to the finance ministry and tasked with tackling a crippling debt crisis.*



*The proposed reforms have sparked riots in Athens and nationwide strikes, while rattling global markets.*

*The French and German leaders have called for swift agreement on a new rescue package for Greece.*

*Athens is seeking to make budget cuts worth 28bn euros (£24.6bn; \$40.5bn) over the next four years. The policies are required for the release of the next tranche of aid - 12bn euros - from the European Union and International Monetary Fund.*

*Mr Venizelos' promotion came as part of a cabinet reshuffle that will be put to a vote of confidence in parliament.*

*The former defence minister replaces George Papaconstantinou, who has been moved to the environment ministry.*

*Evangelos Venizelos represents the old guard of the Socialist Party and may be able to finesse aspects of the austerity programme to rebellious MPs.*

*A law professor and a fluent French speaker, he'll easily be able to communicate Athens' case to President Sarkozy and French-speaking Eurocrats in Brussels.*

*Intriguingly, he is a one-time political adversary of the prime minister who staged a hot-headed, ill-timed and ultimately unsuccessful leadership coup against Mr Papandreou after a general election defeat in 2007.*

*Other appointments, which were confirmed at a swearing-in ceremony included:*

*\* Stavros Lambrinidis, formerly head of the ruling Socialist Party's group of deputies at the European Parliament, has been promoted to foreign minister*

*\* Deputy Defence Minister Panos Beglitis and deputy Labour Minister George Koutroumanis have been given ministerial posts*

*\* Health Minister Andreas Loverdos has been given extra responsibilities*

*\* Former Foreign Minister Dimitris Droutsas and former Environment Minister Tina Birbili have been dropped from the cabinet*

*Critics will say Mr Papandreou has just reshuffled the same old names, says the BBC's Malcolm Brabant in Athens.*

*Our correspondent adds that the key questions remain: Will this new cabinet pass the parliamentary vote of confidence? Will it be able to force through the next batch of austerity measures? And will the new administration satisfy Greece's creditors, the IMF and the EU?*

#### Financial lifeline

*At a press conference in Berlin on Friday, Mrs Merkel and Mr Sarkozy presented a united front, welcoming private involvement in a new Greek rescue - although they said this would be voluntary and provided no details as to how it would work.*

*French and German banks have the most exposure to Greek debt, holding, between them, 55% of Europe's total exposure.*

*Berlin and Paris have differed over the handling of the Greek crisis - Mrs Merkel has been insistent that banks and private creditors holding Greek debt should accept losses as part of the rescue plan, in the face of domestic opposition to Ger-*

*man taxpayers underwriting more of Greece's debt burden.*

*France, meanwhile, is reluctant to accept those terms as three major French banks are heavily exposed to Greek debt and risk considerable losses if it is restructured.*

*Similarly, the European Central bank is worried any changes in terms of the bail-out deal will set a bad precedent for nations in similar financial straits such as Portugal, Ireland and Spain.*

*The EU's top financial official Olli Rehn has indicated Greece is likely to get its next financial lifeline in July, even though EU finance ministers have yet to agree on a new bail-out package.*

*\* May 2010: EU and IMF agree bail-out package to prevent Greece defaulting on its debts; in return, Greece agrees to make 30bn euros of budget cuts over the next three years*

*\* February 2011: EU and IMF experts tell Greece it must make further cuts to keep recovery on track*

*\* April 2011: EU figures reveal Greek deficit revised up to 10.5%, worse than previously thought*

*\* May 2011: Greece begins privatisation programme but is warned the IMF may not release more funds as Athens cannot guarantee it will remain solvent for next 12 months*

*\* 29 June 2011: Deadline for Greece to agree new austerity package*

*Three deputies have left Mr Papandreou's Pasok party in as many days in protest against the austerity package but, on Thursday, Mr Papandreou vowed to fight on.*

*The resignations do not affect the party's five-seat parliamentary majority as the seats are automatically allocated to the next Socialists in line, but they are an indication of the difficulties Mr Papandreou faces in winning confidence in his leadership, correspondents say.*

*On Wednesday, Greece witnessed some of the most violent protests in more than a year, as tens of thousands of activists and unionists gathered in Syntagma square in Athens, near parliament, while a further 20,000 demonstrated in Thessaloniki.*

## Understanding what is happening in Greece

Dear friends,

To understand what is happening in Greece and why it's in the center of world attention, and why it should concern everyone personally irrespective of nationality, you need to watch the interview of D Kazakis, an independent economist/analyst, given in Radio Crete in March. It lasts 111 minutes and it's in Greek. But if you haven't got the time or the language, below is a summary I wrote.

Cheers,

Tony Vasilopoulos

#### WHAT CAN LENDER BANKS DO IF A SOVEREIGN NATION DEFAULTS?

Basically nothing. A sovereign nation with sovereign rights on its territory (ethniki kyriarchia) is untouchable. They could sue the Greek government in Greek courts, which would be ineffective. And there is no precedent in international law of lenders suing governments. What lenders can do is suspend lending to the defaulting nation for capital investment and spending. But lending to buy commercial goods "emporevmata" like wheat and oil will continue. It has never been interrupted, most recent example is Ecuador.

#### WHY IS LITTLE GREECE IN THE CENTER OF INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION DAILY?

Because it constitutes a unique first experiment of the banking establishment and the globalizers. It's the first nation in history to rescinded sovereign rights on its territory (ethniki kyriarchia) to borrow. When Papandreou signed the Memorandum of Understanding (Mnimonio) with the troika of IMF, EU, and ECB in exchange for 110 Billion euros to pay old loans he did just that. If you or I cannot pay a loan installment to the bank, we are given a 3-month grace and then the bank negotiates with us a repayment plan based on our circumstances. The Mnimonio has a paragraph that if Greece delays a payment by 30 days, the troika has rights on Greece property, including military equipment.

For instance on the tanks, warplanes and ships. Example: if Greece cannot make a payment, the German lenders can call their rights on the planes. Then they can sell those rights to anyone, for instance Turks. Then the Turks can declare war (casus belli) with Greece in the Aegean and order all Greek planes grounded, as they now belong to Turks.

BUT DID THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAVE A CHOICE VIS A VIS THE TROIKA? IT COULDN'T PAY SALARIES AND PENSIONS

That's false. The Greek tax revenue, however small, can cover day to day expenses including salaries and pensions. What it can't cover is debt payments. The government could have declared default early on and start negotiations with the lenders. But specific individuals put their signature on the Mnimonio giving away sovereign rights.

#### HOW DID IT HAPPEN? WAS THERE STUPIDITY AT PLAY OR SOMETHING ELSE?

Papandreou knew of Greece's debt problem at least since early 2009, while Karamanlis run the government. There was a meeting then when both he and Karamanlis talked with the Europeans. The essence was that the Europeans wanted to impose tough austerity measures on Greeks, but the Karamanlis government was weak. It only have a one-seat majority. The Europeans felt that a strong majority government was needed to drive those austerity measures. So they all agreed that Karamanlis would call elections that he would lose. Papandreou would lie that "there is money" and that would elect him with a strong majority. That's

exactly what happened.

PAPANDREOU'S FUTURE IS TIED TO ELECTORATE, WHY WOULD HE DO IT?

To him Greece is just a stepping stone, he is eyeing the post of the UN Secretary General and he is campaigning for it, like during his recent visit to New York.

**THERE ARE MORE WAYS TO LOSE SOVEREIGNTY, FOR INSTANCE THROUGH THE SELLING NATIONAL PROPERTY. IT'S NOW ON THE TABLE BUT GREECE HAS NO LAND REGISTRY TO SPEAK OF, MOST PUBLIC PROPERTIES ARE IN DISPUTE WITH OTHER PARTIES.**

Foreign investors don't care about property rights, they want the right to exploit the lands, they want the use of the properties and then to walk away once the investment runs it's course. For instance, they want to build tourist resorts, to buy the rights to water and waterways (the next oil and gold), to build hydro-electric plants, to drill for oil and natural gas. Greece also has commercial grade deposits of gold, silver, zink, antimony, osmium and many valuable metals. That's what they want from Greece, they do not care particularly if people become poor and cannot buy as much.

There is also one other strange matter relating to Greece becoming the test case for willingly giving away sovereignty. The Europeans persuaded the Karamanlis and Papandreou governments to inject a particular paragraph in the Kallikratis plan (that is, the plan to join municipalities together into larger ones) that creates a new capability. The new "Kallikratis" municipalities now have the right to enter into "inter-territorial" agreements ("diedaphikes symphonies"). That means that they can make local deals with neighboring countries like Albania, Turkey, etc. Example: if a foreign corporation is awarded part of Dodekannisa to build resorts, it has the legal right to join them with the Turkish coast into a single operation. Conventional border rules would not apply, the jurisdiction of the corporation would take precedence.

**THE MNIMONIO THAT GIVES AWAY SOVEREIGNTY IN CASE OF EVEN A SINGLE NON PAYMENT ON THE LOAN WAS SIGNED BY INDIVIDUALS, IT WAS NOT PASSED BY PARLIAMENT. CAN IT BE CONTESTED IF IT COMES TO BANKERS ACTUALLY DEMANDING APPLICATION OF THAT CLAUSE?**

Yes, it can be contested but only by a new revolutionary government. People would have to revolt, get rid of the current bunch that signed the Mnimonio with the troika, and then have a new crowd of parliamentarians who will say that they do not recognize the agreement.

**LET'S SAY GREECE RETURN TO THE DRACHMA. HOW COULD IT LIVE?**

It should create new alliances with the Russians and Chinese. In fact the Russians appear puzzled and insulted that Papandreou did not seek cooperation during his recent visit in Moscow. Also Greeks should restart cultivating the land. Food and water are becoming the new gold. Garden products (kipeftika) are sought after internationally, prices are increasing and Greece can produce them 12 months a year ("proima") if farmers want. Then it could enter direct deals with oil producing nations like

(Continued on p.2)



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- 1.To applaud the achievements of our ethnic group
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- 4.To encourage all worthy Community causes
- 5 To assist all the Greek-American fraternal, cultural patriotic and religious organizations
- 6.To install Americanism in the Greek-American community
- 7.To advance the just causes of Hellenism.
8. To promote the ideals Greece has given to humanity.

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## Understanding what is happening in Greece

( From page 1)

Nigeria. Pound for pound, food is more valuable to Nigeria than oil. Advice to folks: take your money out of Greek banks.

### OTHER POINTS MADE DURING THE INTERVIEW:

The Bank of Greece is a private entity, the owners are unknown, the Greek government owns only 8%. Blame Andreas Papandreou who had a chance to nationalize it in the 80's but chose the present structure.

Greek debt is unknown, it's in numerous hands, they only show up at maturity to collect.

Since Greece joined the EU it saw little benefit. Its border continues being threatened and the country suffered Euroflation. But there have been 65,000 individual winners who have amassed over 300Billion euros and have stored them in Switzerland. There is more in other tax havens.

Greece practically defaulted in year 2000

but bankers and governments have been using various tricks to keep it from becoming apparent. It's consistent with today's economic system which is based on perception of health, not on actual health.

Bankers have dumped on governments/tax-payers their debts, the nationalization of debt is done when a bank becomes insolvent and asks the government to guarantee its health. Governments always oblige. Stress tests of banks by governments are a sham; invariably they end up with statements to the public that the bank is OK; it's because the terms of reference of the assessors call on them to ignore most of the bank liabilities. So by definition the bank comes out smelling roses.

When the Bank of Greece does its annual report it always comes out smelling roses too. Reason is that in the early 2000s, its owners and the Greek government agreed to ignore most of the bank's liabilities. So the statement always appears positive.



*Duck! Thrill-seeking people are heading to a beach on the Caribbean island of St. Maarten, where Boeing 747s fly so low that they darken the skies. A perfect and unique way to start your day in St. Maarten, without coffee. (Photo: Fabi Fliervoet/Flickr).*



Democrat Anthony Weiner's immediate future may be uncertain, but thanks to congressional rules and the salaciousness of his scandal, things are already looking up for the disgraced New York congressman. Upon his official resignation in the wake of a monthlong scandal involving Weiner's risque online communications with multiple women, Weiner will still be eligible for many congressional perks, including access to a sizable pension fund. (House staff have yet to announce they've actually received his resignation letter.)

The conservative National Taxpayers Union (NTU) estimates the 46-year-old congressman's pension to be worth \$1.28 million if he retires at age 62 or \$1.12 million at age 56. The group's computations assume that Weiner started his pension when he served as a congressional staffer for Sen. Chuck Schumer.

In addition, NTU notes that members also participate in a Thrift Savings Plan, which allows lawmakers to rake in matching contributions from taxpayers. "NTU estimates he may have as much as \$216,011.96 in accumulated TSP assets," the organization reported.

It's a rule that all former members, even those convicted of felonies, may receive their pension funds. That's right--and the plum pension will go out to all members of Congress, even those who opposed the payments in the first place.

That reform failed to pass. But as things turned out, Ney would soon be the beneficiary of Congress' failure. Ney pled guilty in 2006 to to conspiracy and making false statements in connection to the Jack Abramoff lobbying scandal. He served 17 months of his 30 month sentence--and today, he's eligible to draw from his pension fund.

For the moment, Weiner's employment future is unknown. The congressman has not announced any specific job plans. Several news analysts have noted this week that Weiner, who has spent his entire adult working life in and around Capitol Hill, may have trouble finding a job. But financial disclosures indicate Weiner has a large stock portfolio and other assets to lean on. And it appears that Weiner's salacious scandal is even attracting some potential employers. Hustler founder Larry Flynt on Thursday in an open letter offered Weiner an unspecified job at Flynt Management Group, LLC and a 20 percent raise. Weiner had reportedly been offered a cameo role in HBO's "Entourage, but executive producer Doug Ellin said Friday that he was just kidding-- no role has actually been offered to the former congressman.





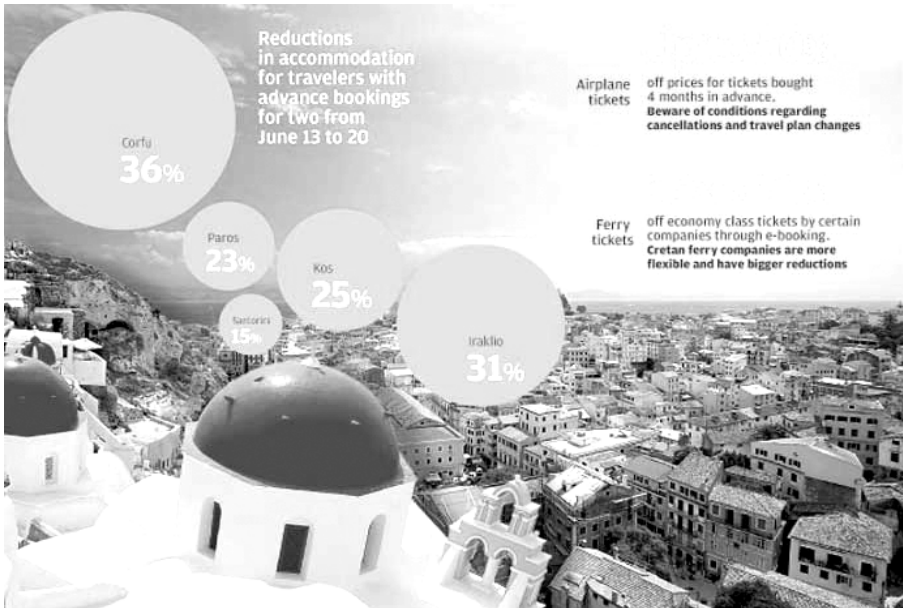
**Obama says no more children for First Family, doesn't miss his father**

In a pre-Father's Day interview for ABC's "Good Morning America," President Obama opened up about fatherhood, experiencing "love at first sight" when seeing his eldest daughter for the first time, and why the Secret Service could come in handy during his daughters' teenage years. Obama offered nothing but praise for his daughters, saying he believes that-much to his wife's credit--his daughters are turning out to be wonderful kids. They are "responsible" and "well-behaved" the president said, adding that he doesn't predict "complete mayhem" for their teenage years. But, the president joked: "I should also point out that I have men with guns that surround them, often ...," adding that security helps make certain his daughters "never get in a car with a boy who had a beer. And that's a pretty good thing." The president added that he might go so far as to invite a potential suitor to his Oval Office, knowing full well the intimidation factor. "Malia and Sasha, if you're watching this, I'm just jokin'," he added.



**Venizelos says he is joining 'a real battle'**

New finance minister takes over after first meeting of revamped Cabinet. Greece's new finance minister, Evangelos Venizelos, said he is joining "a real battle" after being given his new post in Friday morning's reshuffle. The changes to the Cabinet saw nine new faces join Prime Minister George Papandreou's team. The total number of ministers and deputy ministers fell to 42. The new Cabinet held its first meeting on Friday afternoon, when unemployment was meant to be top of the agenda. All eyes were on Venizelos, who is charged with taking over the tough task of rescuing the Greek economy from its current crisis. Speaking later in the afternoon at the Finance Ministry, where he took over from outgoing Giorgos Papaconstantinou, Venizelos praised his predecessor and summed up the size of the challenge facing him. "Giorgos Papaconstantinou has had to lift a huge weight," said the new finance minister. "I accepted the prime minister's offer, which was an honor and a challenge and I will carry out his duty without reservations. "I am joining a real battle." Venizelos suggested that he would be open to suggestions about economic policy from other parties and Greek citizens. "We are not asking for consensus for self-serving reasons but because we want to rediscover social consensus," he said. The new Cabinet, which you can see here, is due to face a vote of confidence in Parliament on Tuesday.



**When it comes to holiday planning, the sooner the better.** But have you booked in advance? When you're on a tight budget, planning ahead is vital, even if this planning only concerns a few days of relaxation. The president of the Hellenic Hotel Federation, Yiannis Retzos, stressed the importance of booking early: The sooner ahead you plan, the better financial deal you'll get. The conclusion reached? Travelers who had planned in advance and had made early bookings for the recent bank holiday weekend ended up spending 15 to 35 percent less than those who left their arrangements until the last minute.



**Asteras Tripolis hires Oscar Fernandez**

Asteras Tripolis announced on June 15 that its new manager is Oscar Fernandez. The Spaniard has been hired for the next two years and is taking over from Pavlos Dermizakis, as talks with Makis Havos had fallen through. Fernandez was the coach of Valencia's B team for the last five years, and even had a spell coaching the main Valencia side in the Primera Division when Quique Sanchez Flores left. His assistant will be countryman Jesus Casas, who has worked with Barcelona's B team. Greece is rapidly turning into something of a destination for Spanish coaches, as Asteras Tripolis's action comes after Olympiakos, AEK and Olympiakos Volou also turned to the Iberian country for their managers.



**European Council president pleads for unity**

Van Rompuy asks politicians to put aside their differences and unite to save economy 'This is no time for party politics. Too much is at stake,' the European Council President said in a statement directed at Greek party leaders. The president of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, asked for Greek politicians to put aside their differences and unite for the good of the country. "I call on the Greek government and all Greek political and economic leaders to take their responsibility," he said during a speech in Brussels on Thursday. "This is no time for party politics. Too much is at stake, and Greek citizens know this. "They ask, and so do the fellow members of the eurozone, that those responsible now take the economic future of Greece firmly in hand. This is a time, not to stand divided, but for unity in action."However, Aleka Papariga, the leader of the Communist Party (KKE), Greece's third-largest party, repeated her calls on Thursday for elections to be held. The chief of the right-wing Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS), Giorgos Karatzaferis, also warned his party to be prepared for elections. Karatzaferis said that Prime Minister George Papandreou's reshuffle would only lead to the creation of a "caretaker" government.



**Syria crisis: Troops move into towns in north**

Mobile phone image reportedly showing an army tank deployed in the eastern province of Deir al-Zour, Syria, 14 June 2011 Security forces, seen here in the eastern province of Deir al-Zour, have used tanks to enter towns. Syrian troops travelling on tanks, armoured personnel carriers and buses have moved into two northern towns. They have gathered in Maarat al-Numan and Khan Sheikhoun, which sit on the road linking Damascus and Aleppo.UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has urged Syria to halt the bloodshed and "stop killing people". The UN says that at least 1,100 people have died as the government has violently sought to quash protests over the past three months.State television said late on Thursday that President Bashar al-Assad's cousin, Rami Makhlouf, intends to give up his business interests - which span telecommunications, construction and oil - and donate his profits to charity.



# WORLD NEWS



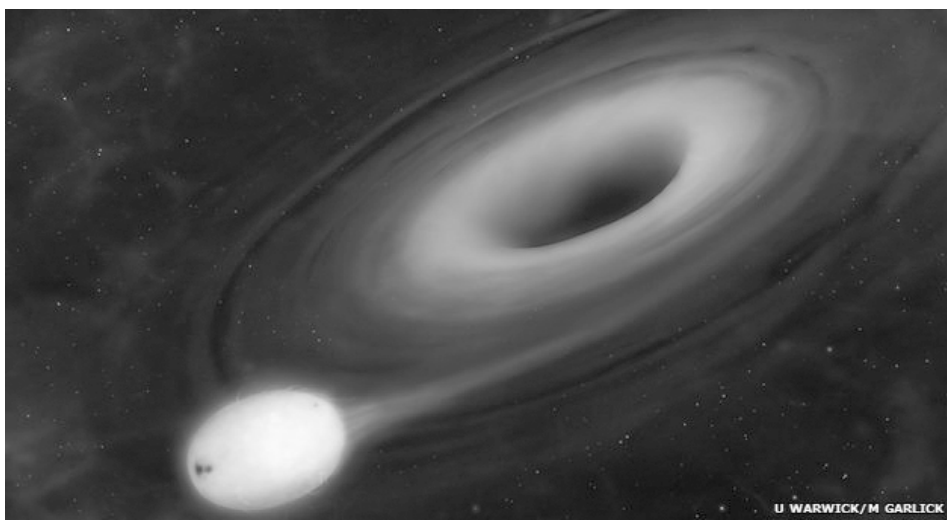
## Vancouver riots: A kiss amid the chaos?

In the aftermath of the ice hockey riots which broke out in Vancouver on Wednesday night, the Canadian public have been left asking two questions. Firstly, how did their city, considered by many to be one of the world's most pleasant to live in, come to be the scene of such wanton violence? And secondly, was that really a photograph of a couple locked in a passionate embrace lying in the street between rioters and police? Amid images of burning cars, furious faces and smashed shop windows, the couple seem almost serene - he romantically leaning over, her arm on his neck and her skirt raised.



## Living in the shadow of the 'Strauss-Kahn circus'

Dominique Strauss-Kahn's move into a relatively quiet street in lower Manhattan was a lot like the circus coming to town, as one of his neighbours. The former IMF chief, accused of sexually assaulting a hotel chambermaid, has taken up residence directly across the road from me on Franklin Street in New York's TriBeCa district. With him has come not a troupe of harlequins, trapeze artists and lion tamers but a just-as-colourful collection of retainers, sightseers and journalists. All that is missing is a circus barker: "Step right up! Step right up! The most sensational show in town! Sex, power, and a monumental fall from the big top. See it all at Le Cirque DSK!"



## Powerful cosmic blast as black hole shreds star

Astronomers have spied a star's swan song as it is shredded by a black hole. Researchers suspect that the star wandered too close to the black hole and got sucked in by the huge gravitational forces. The star's final moments sent a flash of radiation hurtling towards Earth. The energy burst is still visible by telescope more than two-and-a-half months later, the researchers report in the journal Science.

The Swift spacecraft constantly scans the skies for bursts of radiation, notifying astronomers when it locates a potential flare. These bursts usually indicate the implosion of an ageing star, which produces a single, quick blast of energy.

But this event, first spotted on 28 March 2011 and designated Sw 1644+57, does not have the marks of an imploding sun. What intrigued the researchers about this gamma ray burst is that it flared up four times over a period of four hours. Astrophysicist Dr Andrew Levan from the University of Warwick, and his colleagues suspected that they were looking at a very different sort of galactic event; one where a passing star got sucked into a black hole.

The energy bursts matched nicely with what you might expect when you "throw a star into a black hole", Dr Levan told BBC News. Black holes are thought to reside at the centres of most major galaxies. Some black holes are surrounded by matter in the form of gas; light is emitted when the gas is dragged into the hole. However, the centres of most galaxies are devoid of gas and so are invisible from Earth. These black holes only become visible when an object such as a star is pulled in. If this happens, the star becomes elongated, first spreading out to form a "banana shape" before its inner edge - orbiting faster than the outer edge - pulls the star into a disc-shape that wraps itself around the hole.



## Argentine leader says UK 'arrogant' over Falklands

The president of Argentina, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, has called Britain "arrogant" for refusing to negotiate on the Falklands. She was speaking a day after UK Prime Minister David Cameron said the issue of sovereignty was non-negotiable. President Fernandez called his refusal to hold talks on the sovereignty of the Falklands, or Malvinas, arrogant and bordering on stupidity. Britain defeated an Argentine invasion of the islands in 1982. The Falklands are at the centre of a territorial dispute dating back to the 19th Century. Argentina has repeatedly requested talks on the islands' future sovereignty. But most Falkland islanders wish to retain British sovereignty and 14 June is marked as Liberation Day in the capital, Port Stanley. Last week Washington called on Britain and Argentina to negotiate over the Falklands' sovereignty. But during Wednesday's Prime Minister's Questions Conservative MP Andrew Rosindell urged Mr Cameron to remind President Barack Obama that "the British government will never accept any kind of negotiations over the South Atlantic archipelago".



## Opposition parties slam reshuffle

ND spokesman Yiannis Michelakis accused the prime minister of «recycling the same faces." Greece's opposition parties have slammed the government reshuffle, claiming that it is a failed attempt to revive the fortunes of the ruling Socialists. In a statement, New Democracy's spokesman Yiannis Michelakis accused Prime Minister George Papandreou of "recycling the same faces." "Instead of forming a government to save the country, he created a caretaker government to follow the same, failed policies." Michelakis said that the removal of Giorgos Papaconstantinou from the post of finance minister was an admission by the government that its economic policy had failed. The Communist Party (KKE) responded to the reshuffle by labelling the new Cabinet "dangerous." "This is just another dangerous government for the people, for the passing of new barbaric measures and to prepare the ground for closer cooperation with the parties of the plutocracy," KKE said. The Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS) said that Papandreou missed the opportunity to bring in non-political figures and accused him of only appointing ministers that have established positions within the ruling PASOK party. The Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) said that the reshuffle would not be enough to save the government.



## Elliniko sell-off deal getting closer

Tender to be launched in next two weeks for redevelopment of old Athens airport

The site is a prime piece of real state as coastside real estate with transport connections and facilities that were built for the Athens 2004 Olympics Greece hopes to launch a tender within the next couple of weeks for investors to take on the redevelopment of the old Athens airport in Elliniko, State Minister Haris Paboukis told a parliamentary committee on Thursday. The massive site is a prime piece of real state as it is located next to the sea, has good transport connections and facilities that were built for the Athens 2004 Olympics.





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## To Reverse the Loss of Greece's Forests

Someday our descendants will see the rich, lush mountains of Greece, and that will be our living legacy to them. Make the dream a reality... "Plant Your Roots in Greece"

Since ancient times—even more so now—the value of trees to Greece has been immeasurable and their loss has been heartbreaking. "Plant Your Roots in Greece" offers you a unique opportunity to become an integral part of this splendor now and forever.

Today the enemy of Greece's forests is not warfare but forest fires which, with subsequent erosion, create a vicious cycle of forest and loss soil. Where mountains were once lush, they are now barren, the rich soil washed away, the once plentiful flora and fauna gone. The Greek government has recognized the critical problems and is committing major resources to this reforestation effort.

## The Plant Your Roots in Greece Foundation

The program will be a magnitude unmatched since the Greek American community came to Greece's assistance after the devastation of World War II and the subsequent Civil War. The program centers around the ability of anyone, of Greek descent or not, or anyone who is concerned and wishes to restore Greece's natural splendor, to plant a tree in Greece in their name or in the name of a loved one or friend.

## Be a Part of History

At a minimum donation of \$20 for two trees, including an inscribed certificate, the program is affordable to all. It is expected that millions of trees can be planted through this program and there will be vast forests in the name of individuals, associations and corporations as a manifestation of their love for Greece.

In addition to tree planting, an aggressive program of fire-fighting has been instituted and in 1999, for the first time in millennia, reforestation exceeded destruction from fires.

The first forest was planted in Sounion in 1999 with the help of the Federation of ENOSIS and was named the "Forest of Illinois." Since then, several plantings have taken place in the area of Sounion. Trees have also been planted on the island of Samos, Samothrace, at Ancient Olympia, Vouliagmeni, Kalavryta, Arcadia, Delphi, Maniaki, Thraki, Crete, Messinia, Serres, Arta, Dion Pierias, Penteli and Patras.

## Matching Funds from the European Community

It is the single largest environmental program in the European Union for Greece and will be one of the most massive efforts in history involving the planting and cultivation of seedlings.

The government of Greece has also arranged with the European Union for the EU to match on a one-to-one basis the dollars generated through the Plant Your Roots program. Thus, for every tree we plant, the EU will match funds for four additional trees.

## ORDER FORM

YES, I will join the "Plant Your Roots in Greece Program" to reforest the Greek mountains and countryside.

- ☐ \$20 - 2 Trees (Minimum donation)
- ☐ \$50 - 5 Trees
- ☐ \$100 - 10 Trees
- ☐ \$1,000 - A "Grove" of 100 Trees
- ☐ \$5,000 - A "Glen" of 500 Trees
- ☐ \$10,000 and more as donation

Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ trees

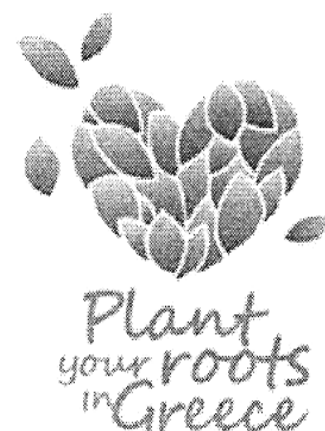
Make checks payable to:  
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The trees will be planted in honor of or memory of anyone you designate. All gifts will be acknowledged with a beautifully inscribed certificate of classic green elegance of the Greek mountains. Please indicate in whose honor or memory the gift is being made and the name and address of the person who should receive the certificate.

Plant Your Roots in Greece Foundation is a not-for-profit, tax exempt organization under the auspices of SAE / USA and HANC, offers contribution opportunities both to those who wish to support primarily victims of fire and those who wish to contribute to reforestation.





# NEWS FROM GREECE

## George Papandreou's recent statement.

The prime minister's statement reads as follows:

"The country is experiencing crucial moments. We must safeguard the future of the country with a feeling of national responsibility, handling the present multiform crisis with determination. I assumed the responsibility of governance at a time when the country was on the verge of disaster and bankruptcy.

We took the sins of others on our shoulders. With dedication our government has been waging the struggle for the country's rescue for the past 20 months.

And the country has remained upright also opening prospects for major changes. I requested that this effort take the characteristics of a common national effort.

The duty is a national one, not a partisan one. I made continuous proposals for cooperation to the opposition parties.

Today I came back with new proposals to the leaders of all parties, for the necessary national consensus to be achieved.

I clarified that I never related my responsibility with posts.

Despite my stance, the main opposition party handled this whole effort with communicational terms and not with terms of political and national responsibility.

Before even the essence was discussed, terms were raised publicly that can not be accepted, because they keep the country in prolonged instability and introversion, while the major national issue is the handling of the public debt.

I have learnt in my life to wage struggles for the country, for the economy, for the citizens, for values.

Let us all assume the responsibilities for our actions towards the country.

I shall continue along the same path, the path of duty, together with the Parliamentary Group of PASOK, the cadres and the Greek people. I shall form a new government tomorrow and immediately afterwards I shall request a vote of confidence from Parliament. It is the time of responsibility."



Prime Minister George Papandreou on Friday addressed the first meeting of his new cabinet immediately after it was sworn-in.

"We are still at a turning point, in the middle of a tough negotiation that will determine the country's future and we are called to reach a viable solution to an immediate and major national problem - namely, the debt problem that threatens to ruin us, destroying the lives of millions of Greeks -- while guaranteeing that this course will be safe and reliable," Papandreou said.

He said that a restart is being made through the new government, stressing that the previous government performed a "monumental, impressive and historic work".

Papandreou referred specifically to former finance minister George Papaconstantinou, stressing that "he shouldered unthinkable burden in crucial times for the country" and said that his work was of national importance, adding that he "honored the country and government by giving tough battles".

## Party reactions to reshuffle

The Communist Party of Greece (KKE) on Friday described the new Cabinet arising earlier from a government reshuffle, as a "government dangerous to the people, for the passing of the new barbarous measures and preparation of the government's more apparent collaboration with the parties of the plutocracy". It reiterated

its call for immediate elections and called for popular and political vigilance, organisation and action with the KKE.

"The parties of the system do not change by changing faces. They only become worse for the people," it added.

The Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS) party, said that "from an ecumenical government (being sought) we ended up with a government of the 'deep' PASOK", adding that "Greece missed a golden opportunity, because some sides did not manage the issue well, or did not want to".

The Coalition of the Left, Movements and Ecology (SYN) said that the "tragicomedy we have been living in these past days continued with today's reshuffle", adding that "it seems that nothing is capable of halting the course to complete collapse of the government".

SYN stressed that it was of absolutely no importance who will implement the most unjust and anti-social policy of the last decades, when the issue was its full reversal. It added that the ease with which the government and main opposition party exchange accusations and invitations for a joint "national" effort underlines how similar their policies are and how hypocritical their stance is towards the Greek people.

"PASOK and ND are part of the established vicious political system of the last decades, which is completing its circle," SYN said.

The non-parliamentary Democratic Left party said that with the policy that the government has been implementing over the past 20 months, the country and society are facing the immediate danger of collapse.

The content of this policy must change, it stressed, adding that the only thing that the Cabinet reshuffle can accomplish is a temporary beautification of the picture, but which will not endure.



Tourist arrivals at Greek airports grew 4.52 pct in the January-May period this year, compared with the corresponding period in 2010, the Federation of Hellenic Tourism Enterprises (SETE) announced on Wednesday.

In a monthly report based on the figures of tourists arriving in the country by air, the federation said tourist arrivals totaled 2,405,030 in the five-month period, up from 2,300,959 last year.

**Main opposition New Democracy** urged the new Finance Minister Evangelos Venizelos to immediately take measures to boost liquidity in the markets while noting that ND did not expect him to substantially change the policies of his predecessor.

ND spokesman Yiannis Mihelakis called on Venizelos to immediately take five steps that would direct more funds to the real economy. Among these he listed:

- \* Launching an initiative to use the capabilities offered by the European Investment Bank and the World Bank;

- \* Once again setting in motion major concessions projects, such as the five major highways that were virtually stalled

- \* Speeding up absorption of National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) funds.

- \* Proceeding to offset business debts to and from the public sector (taxes versus VAT refunds)

- \* and take steps to continue the provision of guarantees to the Greek banking system from the European Central Bank for at least another year, so that these funds might reach the real economy.



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# The hopeless charm of solitude

By Nikos Konstandaras

At a time when the Greeks are truly at the center of the global debate, when we are indeed the “navel of the world,” we want nothing more than to be left alone. We want to ignore the fact that everyone -- partners, friend and enemies -- are concerned about us either because they fear that we will not return the money they have lent



us and that our disease may spread to other countries and poison the global economy. We want to forget that we are part of the world, that we got into trouble because we participated in the global economy by borrowing mindlessly, without thinking that when the time for payment came the pain would be all ours.

The crowds in the streets are charmed by the idea that everything would be fine if the foreigners would just let us alone. “We don’t owe anything, we won’t pay,” they declare, in an effort to make both the debt and our creditors disappear. On another dimension, Prime Minister George Papandreou believes that the markets and foreign analysts are to blame for the country’s uphill battle. “Leave us alone. We know we have problems, leave us alone to deal with them,” he told a recent OECD conference in Paris. The leader of the main opposition party, Antonis Samaras, visited Paris and Brussels last week, where he expressed his own desire to be left alone -- alone, that is, to reject the austerity and reform program imposed on Greece by its creditors in return for lifesaving bailouts.

All the parties, along with the “indignant” crowds in our squares, want to be left alone. But we are not left alone. Earlier this month, on June 7, the leader of the world’s largest economy, Barack Obama, and the leader of Europe’s powerhouse, Angela Merkel, spent a good deal of time discussing Greece’s debt problem. Not because they feel sorry for us but because they fear us. “Through the global financial and economic crisis, we’ve seen how interdependent we are”, Merkel told a joint news conference with Obama. “And the stability of the euro zone is therefore an important factor of stability for the whole of the global economy. So we do see clearly our European responsibility and we’re shouldering that

responsibility together with the IMF. We’ve seen that the stability of the euro as a whole will also be influenced if one country is in trouble. And that is what this assistance is all about.” That’s why, despite the protests of many politicians and the German public’s anger, Merkel’s government managed to get approval from Parliament for a second bailout package for Greece.

Whether or not a growing number of Greeks believe that the current economic policy is wrong and is aimed only at sucking the blood of taxpayers to the benefit of the permanently privileged (Greeks and foreigners), the fact is that other countries

and organizations are trying to support Greece. Whether this continues up to the point where we can stand on our own feet, where we don’t need to borrow every month in order to pay wages, pensions and interest on our loans, or whether it ends at the point when the others no longer fear our collapse is a matter of time. One of the two will happen.

The political climate in Europe is so fluid that, despite the fact that there is still consensus on the need to defend the common currency, no one can predict what will happen in the next few years. Last Thursday, a council of ministers held up the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the Schengen Pact, questioning the ability of the two EU members to protect their borders sufficiently; Denmark is preparing to reinstate checks at its border with Germany. The passport-free zone and the common currency were the EU’s two greatest achievements -- and both are in danger today. With this in mind, when Portugal, Ireland and other members of the eurozone begin to recover and Greece is still far behind, then our country will find itself out of the euro. No one will fear us, no one will pity us. And if we go bankrupt, no one will lend us any more money.

For all these reasons, and while our partners still support us (for whatever selfish or selfless reasons), we would do well to act as if we were already on our own. We must find the strength to work together and find a way to pull our own weight. Only then will we not need anyone.

# European Central Bank warns of crisis hitting region

ECB’s Constancio reiterates support for voluntary debt rollover; Schaeuble expects decision Monday. The European Central Bank said the threat of the Greek debt crisis spilling



over into the banking sector is the biggest risk to the region’s financial stability.

“Greece could have a contagion effect,” ECB Vice President Vitor Constancio said in Frankfurt on Wednesday.

“That’s the reason why we are against any sort of default with haircuts and any form of private sector event that could lead to a credit event or a rating event.”

The euro area’s sovereign-debt woes have worsened as investors increased bets that Greece will not be able to pay its debts, sparking the region’s first sovereign default.

Greek government bonds led declines by securities from Europe’s most indebted countries on Wednesday.

Greek 10-year bond yields increased 41 basis points to 17.79 percent. The yield difference, or spread, versus benchmark German bunds widened to a euro-era record 1,494 basis points, or 14.94 percentage points.

“The euro area faces a very challenging situation that comes mostly from the interconnection of the sovereign debt crisis and the situation of the banking sector,” the ECB said in the review. “In light of the potentially very dangerous implications of sovereign debt restructuring for the debtor country, including its banking system, a determined and unwavering focus on improving fundamentals” is required.

The ECB and the German government have clashed over how much investors should contribute to alleviating Greece’s debt load, which reached 143 percent of gross domestic product in 2010.

While the German government has argued for an extension of the maturities of Greek bonds, the ECB has said it’s against anything that could be interpreted as a default.

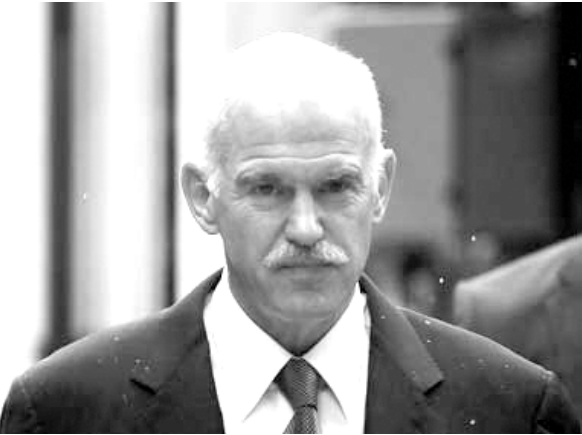
Constancio reiterated that the ECB is in favor of a plan for bondholders to agree to roll over their debt voluntarily. The approach is modeled on the Vienna initiative, where banks agreed to roll over loans to units in Eastern Europe at the height of the financial crisis in 2009. “We are not against all forms of private sector involvement,” he said. “Some sort of Vienna-style initiative could be conceived. It’s not for us to provide solutions.”

Eurozone finance ministers plan to reach a decision on how private holders of Greek debt should share the costs of a new bailout for Athens on Monday, German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble said on Wednesday.

“We have said the decision is due in the euro group on the 20th and until then you will have to be patient,” Schaeuble told reporters.

# Political farce

On Wednesday we saw a political farce of the first degree. A surprised public, at home and abroad, was at first informed that Greece’s Socialist Prime Minister George Papandreou -- obviously devastated by the bankruptcy of his political and economic policy decisions -- agreed to step down from office and join forces with conservative leader Antonis Samaras for the



formation of a unity coalition government. Papandreou, reports said, even agreed that the new prime minister would be picked by both sides. A few hours later, Papandreou backed down from his earlier commitment on the grounds that Samaras treated the prospect of cooperation between the two mainstream parties as a public relations stunt. The head of PASOK went on to announce a government reshuffle for today. The status of Greece’s political system has suffered irreparable damage as a result. The country’s credibility



in the European Union has been tarnished. Greek citizens are simply waiting to see the consequences of this amateurish -- some people would say criminal -- management of the current crisis, and of the nation’s future. Some might be tempted to instead put the blame on Samaras and his opposition conservatives. The premier, after all, has already chosen to do so. But, whether we like it or not, in a representative system like the one we have here, political power is exerted by the government in charge.

The country is not run by the opposition, the masses, the unions, the business community or by the pundits. Papandreou has failed us miserably -- and the price of this failure is to be paid by all people across party lines.



## Sickness rife in migrant detention centers

Medical aid organization warns about poor conditions for immigrants. The report found that the ailments of more than 60 percent of the migrants were a direct result of the dirty conditions in the facilities. The substandard condition of migrant detention centers in the northern region of Evros has resulted in a large proportion of the undocumented migrants being held there suffering from various illnesses, according to a report by the medical aid organization Doctors Without Borders. The report, whose findings were issued on Wednesday, noted that the ailments of more than 60 percent of the migrants were a direct result of the dirty conditions in the facilities.




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# Ten tasks for Turkey's new government Solving the EU-Turkey-Cyprus triangle

By Hugh Pope

New cities, high-speed trains, suspension bridges, airports, tax holidays, a “crazy” grand canal parallel to the Bosphorus waterway, iPads for all -- the campaign trail ahead of Turkey's June 12 parliamentary elections is strewn with promises of great times coming. Resolution of vexed questions in the domestic and foreign policy sphere has been relegated to the list of things “to be done after the election.” These more mundane challenges will however resurface as soon as the political class gets back to work.

So, based on the International Crisis Group's four years of reporting in Turkey -- and not counting the many challenges of the country's booming economy, or what its external partners should also do -- here are 10 outstanding diplomatic and political tasks that we think should be tackled with determination by the new Turkish government.



## 1. Relaunch Turkey's EU accession process

The European Union's internal divisions, and some European politicians' hostility to Turks joining the club, have done much to harm the EU's appeal in Turkey. Indeed, the fact that Turkey's EU membership negotiations, in progress since 2005, have virtually ground to a halt has barely been mentioned in the election campaign. But Turkish (and European) leaders should remember that if there is one single factor that makes Turkey stand out in its troubled region, it is the country's convergence with Europe -- arguably nearly two centuries old, but treaty-based for nearly 50 years. EU standards are the locomotive of Turkish reform, some 4 million people of Turkish origin live in Europe, half of Turkey's trade is with Europe, most tourists to Turkey come from Europe, NATO is the cornerstone of Turkish defense and two-thirds of Turkey's foreign investment comes from EU states. Turkey and Europe shared many of these fundamental interests for decades, and the two sides stepped back from the brink with an attempt to restart the process in 2009. Yet Turkey's EU process is now hanging by a thread, since there are almost no negotiating chapters left to open. Turkey holds the key to unlocking EU blocks on at least eight of these chapters. EU politicians' talk of an alternative “privileged partnership” for Turkey seems empty. But with Europe distracted by its internal struggles, the idea is being pushed back on the agenda. The new Turkish government must proactively find a way to allow lifeblood back into the relationship.

## 2. Fix Cyprus

Ankara must refocus on the strategic goal it set itself in 2004: removing the Cyprus problem from the international agenda through achieving the reunification of the island. An easy first step is to implement the Additional Protocol, namely, opening Turkey's ports and airports to Greek-Cypriot traffic, a commitment Ankara formally signed in 2005 as a condition for starting EU negotiations. The EU could have helped by allowing direct, preferential trade to Turkish Cypriots, but it did not, and Turkey's best interest is now to help itself. Implementing the Additional Protocol has no direct link to any Turkish position on a Cyprus settlement and serves a double purpose: freeing several blocked EU negotiating chapters and helping to normalize relations between the Turks of Turkey and Greek Cypriots. A mutual absence of trust between Ankara and Nicosia is the single biggest obstacle to reunification of the island. The new government would also do well to start a real, structured dialogue with Greek-Cypriot officials to give new impetus to ongoing talks to solve the Cyprus problem. Failure to achieve a compromise settlement will cause real damage.

## 3. Undertake broad, inclusive constitutional reform

The ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has promised a reformist, inclusive new constitution. Implementing the AKP's ideas for a new constitution promised in the 2007 election campaign would go far toward reducing ethnic tensions and modernizing the way Turkey is governed (for instance, by removing ethnic attributes from Turkish citizenship, making Turkish the official and not the only recognized language and removing parliamentarians' immunity). EU-oriented reforms over the past decade have already changed about one-third of the 1982 constitution, drawn up under military rule. The AKP has promised a whole new text. For it to stick, it must be the product of genuine consensus, including the Kurdish national movement, not a top-down imposition. Changes must first reduce sources of domestic conflict before trying potentially divisive new ideas like moving to a new presidential system. At a minimum, any marks of ethnic discrimination should be removed and freedom of expression further anchored. The idea of increased powers for local government, a main demand of many ethnic Kurds, is now supported by some opposition parties including the biggest, the Republican People's Party (CHP).

## 4. Broaden and deepen reforms to solve the Kurdish problem

The AKP's taboo-breaking “Democratic Opening” to reach out to Turkey's Kurdish community, which makes up approximately 15 percent of the population, helped put a long-term settlement of the Kurdish problem within reach and will be the subject of a forthcoming Crisis Group report. As the strongest party to the conflict, the new government must broaden and deepen this initiative, offering permission to towns and villages to revert to their original names, more local government, and the right to bilingual education. The AKP has scored genuine breakthroughs, prosecuting members of now inactive death squads, granting respect to Kurdish culture and embracing the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq. Consequently an apparent majority of Turkish Kurds no longer profess an ambition for a separate state in Turkey's southeast nor support the use of force by the banned Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

## 5. Sustain Turkey's engagement in the Middle East

The revolts in the Arab world set back Turkey's hopes of rapid progress to a more stable, prosperous neighborhood. But Ankara should continue to work toward Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu's “zero problem” foreign policy goals: a better-governed, more interdependent region with more efficient borders, integrated infrastructure, visa-free travel and free trade. Turkey is too unique to be a one-size-fits-all model, but Ankara should continue to use its influence and experience where it can to urge regional regimes toward more representative government.

It should also remember that it is the charisma, investment and higher standards that have flowed from the EU accession process which have helped Turkey rise above the troubles of the Middle East and made the country such an object of regional admiration.

## 6. Seek chances to normalize relations with Israel

A voyage planned by a new international flotilla to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza at the end of June will pose an early test for the new government. Turkish NGOs plan to participate in large numbers among the approximately 10 ships from around the world. Ankara says there is nothing it can do to stop them, but taking into account the risk of a repeat of the Israeli killing of nine Turkish members of last year's flotilla, the potential for further damage to Turkey's relationship with the US, Egypt's opening of its border with Gaza, and Israel's partial lifting of its blockade, the government is showing no more inclination than in 2010 to participate directly in the flotilla. Going forward, Turkey should seek chances to normalize relations with Israel in the consciousness that its international leverage is most effective when it has productive ties with all parties in the region.

## 7. Seize any opportunity to normalize relations with Armenia

Two groundbreaking protocols signed between Turkey and Armenia in 2009 on normalizing relations have foundered on a Turkish condition that Armenia first withdraw from at least some Azerbaijani territory occupied around Nagorno-Karabakh. Since then, a growing number of armed incidents, soaring military budgets and belligerent rhetoric have been threatening to trigger new conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Disappointment in the failed protocols increases intransigence in Armenia, while better Turkish-Armenian relations could support conflict resolution. The new Turkish government should seize on any breakthrough to find ways to implement the protocols on reopening the Armenian border and establishing diplomatic relations.

## 8. Finesse the Aegean Sea dispute

The new government can take bold steps to resolve Turkey's 40 year-old territorial disputes with neighboring Greece over the Aegean Sea. Ankara and Athens have done much to consolidate normalization since 1999. Official talks on the Aegean since 2002 now seem tantalizingly close to agreement. In private, both sides agree that the time has come to settle the dispute, especially since it is more psychological and political than real. As will be laid out in a forthcoming Crisis Group briefing, the new government can help by preparing the rhetorical ground for compromise, along with similar steps by Greece's leadership, which has an urgent interest in reducing defense spending. Turkey is far more powerful militarily and can help by eliminating Turkish military flights over inhabited Greek islands, and demonstrating that theoretical Aegean disputes can be talked about rather than fought over.

## 9. Seek long-term domestic improvements, prioritizing the judiciary, the education system, women's rights and freedom of expression

In its first two terms in office, the AKP government, building on the work of its predecessors, registered remarkable progress. Torture almost disappeared from Turkish jails, single-party government brought more policy consistency and better municipalities have brightened the face of most Turkish cities. Looking forward, four more areas of domestic governance still need attention. Firstly, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has rightly made reform of Turkey's judiciary a major goal, and judicial publications are filled with articles by judges, prosecutors and lawyers about how to make the system work better. Secondly, UN indices show Turkey's education system lagging behind Iran, Algeria and Tunisia and in need of a well-planned overhaul. Thirdly, Turkey must address its shocking neglect of women's rights -- in 2010, it ranked 126th of 131 countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report -- and plug the legal, educational and policing gaps that result in 42 percent of women in the country experiencing physical and sexual abuse (according to a first comprehensive report on the issue by Hacettepe University in 2009). Fourthly, laws and regulations and judicial mind-sets must be changed across the board to prevent ethnic groups, journalists or critics of the government from being jailed or prosecuted for the simple expression of peaceful opinions.

## 10. Continue to widen democratic participation

The democratic legitimacy of Turkey's elections make it the standout country in the region -- ballot stuffing, intimidation and violence are remarkably rare. Now it is time to raise the democratic level of the system itself. Political parties need to move to a system that is more bottom-up and less top-down, to end the scandalously low participation of women in politics, and to encourage more young people to join parties and work their way up them. The 10 percent threshold for a party to win election to parliament is by far the highest among the 47 member states of the Council of Europe (double that of the next country, Germany's 5 percent threshold) and should be lowered. Finally, parliamentary regulations need to be reformed to allow more efficient legislation drafting and to win greater public trust in the assembly's workings. Hugh Pope is the Turkey/Cyprus project director for the International Crisis Group.



Ayman al-Zawahiri as he gives a eulogy for former al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden in a video released on jihadist forums on 8 June 2011 (image provide by SITE Intelligence Group) Zawahiri warned a week ago that Bin Laden would continue to "terrify" the US from beyond the grave The long-serving second-in-command of al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, has been appointed its head following the death of Osama Bin Laden, the militant organisation said in a statement. Bin Laden was killed by US forces in Pakistan in early May. Al-Qaeda warned it would continue to fight a holy war against the US and Israel under Zawahiri's direction.