

THE NATIONAL COORDINATED EFFORT OF HELLENES (CEH)

1100 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037

(202) 393-7790 [fax] (202) 628-0225

E-mail: CoordinatedEffort@Manatos.com

LEADERS LOBBY TOP U.S. POLICY-MAKERS AND PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AT 23RD ANNUAL CYPRUS, HELLENIC AND ORTHODOX ISSUES CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 23, 2007--A total of 30 key U.S. Senators and Members of Congress, including three of the top four Presidential candidates from both parties, and the high-level Administration officials in charge of matters relating to Cyprus, Greece and Turkey participated in the **23rd Annual Cyprus, Hellenic and Orthodox Issues Conference** in Washington, D.C. May 16-18, 2007. Over 100 Hellenic leaders from across the U.S. and around the world, lobbied these key policy-makers.

-- U.S. Congress --

A number of the most influential Members of Congress and Senators met with conference participants to hear their concerns and express support for their efforts. They included:

U.S. House of Representatives

- The Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Congressman **Tom Lantos** (D-CA);
- The Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Europe Subcommittee, and founder and co-chair of the Turkish Caucus, Congressman **Robert Wexler** (D-FL);
- The Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Congresswoman **Ileana Ros-Lehtinen** (R-FL);
- Europe Subcommittee members, Congressmen **Albio Sires** (D-NY) and **Gus Bilirakis** (R-FL), who is also the Co-Chair of the Hellenic Caucus;
- The Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Africa and Global Health Subcommittee, Congressman **Donald Payne** (D-NJ);
- House Foreign Affairs Committee member, Congressman **Russ Carnahan** (D-MO);

- The Chair of the House State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, Congresswoman **Nita Lowey** (D-NY);
- Other House State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee members, Congressmen **Mark Kirk** (R-IL) and **Jesse Jackson, Jr.** (D-IL);
- House Appropriations Committee member, Congressman **Maurice Hinchey** (D-NY);

- House Majority Leader, Congressman **Steny Hoyer** (D-MD);
- House Republican Leadership – Chair, House Republican Policy Committee Congressman **Thaddeus McCotter** (R-MI);

- Greek-American Congressmen **John Sarbanes** (D-MD) and **Zack Space** (D-OH), and Congresswoman **Shelley Berkley** (D-NV) whose family is from the Jewish community of Thessaloniki
- The Co-Chair of the Hellenic Caucus, Congresswoman **Carolyn Maloney** (D-NY)

- Congressmen **Lincoln Diaz-Balart** (R-FL) and **Mario Diaz-Balart** (R-FL)

U.S. Senate

- The Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator **Joe Biden** (D-DE);
- The Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's European Affairs Subcommittee, Senator **Barack Obama** (D-IL);
- The Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator **Carl Levin** (D-MI);
- The Ranking Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator **John McCain** (R-AZ);
- The #2 in the Senate Leadership – Assistant Majority Leader (Majority Whip), Senator **Richard Durbin** (D-IL), who is also a member of the State, Foreign Operations

Appropriations Subcommittee and Chairman of the Financial Services Appropriations Subcommittee;

- Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's European Affairs Subcommittee, Senator **Bob Menendez** (D-NJ), who is also a member of the Senate Leadership as the Vice-Chair of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee;
- Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's European Affairs Subcommittee, Senator **Ben Cardin** (D-MD), who is also the Co-Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) "U.S. Helsinki Commission";
- Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator **Hillary Clinton** (D-NY)
- Member of the State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator **Barbara Mikulski** (D-MD), who is also the Chair of the Senate Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee;
- Member of the Senate Select Intelligence Committee, Senator **Sheldon Whitehouse** (D-RI).

-- Candidates for President of the United States --

For the first time in Hellenic-American history, three of the four leading American Presidential candidates from both parties, and others, made presentations regarding Hellenic and Orthodox matters to Greek-America's political leadership at this conference.

Eleni Tsakopoulos Kounalakis, a preeminent American business leader and Democrat introduced Senator **Hillary Clinton** (D-NY). Senator **Barack Obama** (D-IL), who is also the Chairman of the Senate European Affairs Subcommittee, was introduced by his protégé, the recently-elected Illinois State Treasurer, 30-year-old **Alexi Giannoulis**. Senator **John McCain's** (R-AZ) Hellenic supporters **John and Linda Tavlarios** brought his presentation to the group. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman, Senator **Joe Biden** (D-DE), who also spoke at this meeting, is a long-time friend of many of the Hellenic leaders at the CEH conference.

Governor **Bill Richardson** (D-NM) attempted to meet with these Hellenic leaders earlier that day, but a conflict in the conference schedule prohibited his presentation. And, Congressman **Dennis Kucinich** (D-OH) attended the event in an effort to make a presentation but the extended stay of Senator Obama unfortunately prohibited it as well.

Previously, few major Presidential candidates addressed Hellenic and Orthodox matters personally, and then it was usually with an individual supporter like **Alex Spanos** with President **George H.W. Bush**. The closest the Hellenic/Orthodox-American community has come to this recent event was during the general election period when the Democratic

Party's nominee, **Michael Dukakis**, and the Republican Party's nominee George H.W. Bush each addressed the Clergy-Laity Congress in Boston in 1988.

-- Administration --

Conference participants traveled to the State Department where they held an over one-hour, in-depth discussion with the third-ranking State Department official – Undersecretary for Political Affairs, **Nicholas Burns**. The Undersecretary's arrival for this meeting was delayed because he was pulled into a last-minute meeting with Secretary of State **Condoleezza Rice**, who sent conference participants her greetings. This session offered leaders an opportunity to express in great detail their concerns and frustrations with Cyprus settlement efforts, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the problems created by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and other issues.

Other administration officials who handle these issues on an hourly basis for the U.S. government, who participated in this conference included: National Security Council Director for Europe, **Matthew Palmer**; State Department Deputy Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, **Matthew Bryza**; State Department Deputy Director of Southern European Affairs and Senior Turkey Desk Officer, **Baxter Hunt**; State Department Deputy Director, Bureau of European and Eurasian Public Affairs, **Athena Katsoulos**; State Department Greece Desk Officers **Gabrielle Cowan** and **Ilan Goodman**; State Department Cyprus Desk Officers, **Melissa Klegg-Tripp**, **Elise Mellinger** and **Katie Lawlor**; and White House Office of Public Liaison Associate Director, **Dana Edwards**.

-- Honorees --

Senator **Barack Obama** (D-IL) was the first annual recipient of the *James Williams Award*. This award is named after James Williams, an African-American from Baltimore, Maryland who went to Greece in 1821 to fight alongside Hellenes in the Greek War of Independence and was among the casualties of that fight for Greece's freedom. It will be given each year to a prominent member of the African-American community in the U.S. for, as the award states, their "great contribution, in the spirit of James Williams, to Hellenism and Hellenes."

Undersecretary of State **Nicholas Burns** was the first Philhellene to receive the *Livanos Award*. This award is given each year to, as it states on the award, "that individual who, like George P. Livanos, has utilized ancient Hellenic values to realize extraordinary achievement

in modern society while contributing to the improvement of our civilization.” Previous award recipients have included: Deputy Secretary of State **John Negroponte**; then-CIA Director **George Tenet**; Assistant to the President for Homeland Security **Frances Fragos Townsend**; then-Senator Paul Sarbanes (D-MD) (last year’s recipient); former Governor and Nominee for President of the United States **Michael Dukakis**; and then-Senior Advisor to the President **George Stephanopoulos**, among others.

The 2007 *Frizis Award* was presented to the President of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation and Spiritual Leader, Rabbi **Arthur Schneier**. The *Frizis Award* is named after Mordohai Frizis, the Jewish Greek hero who was the first high ranking Greek military officer to give his life in defense of freedom against the Axis Powers in 1940. It is awarded each year to a prominent member of the Jewish community in the U.S. who has made significant contributions to Hellenic issues. Previous recipients of this award have included: Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Congressman **Tom Lantos** (D-CA) (last year’s recipient); Undersecretary of State **Marc Grossman**; then-National Security Council Director **Sandy Berger**; then-Presidential Emissary for Cyprus, **Richard Holbrooke**; former Democratic Nominee for Vice President of the United States, Senator **Joe Lieberman** (D-CT); former Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Congressman **Ben Gilman** (R-NY); U.S. Ambassador to Greece **Thomas Miller**; and the Honorary President of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) **Maynard Wishner** (the first recipient in 1993), among others.

Congressman **Eliot Engel** (D-NY), was the 2007 recipient of the *Paraskevaides Award*. This award is presented each year to, as it states on the award, “that individual who, like George Paraskevaides, has utilized ancient Hellenic values to contribute to the nations and people of Cyprus and America, and to Hellenism in the modern world.” Previous recipients of this award have included: Senator **Ted Kennedy** (D-MA) and Congressman **Patrick Kennedy** (D-RI); House Democratic Leader, Congresswoman **Nancy Pelosi** (D-CA); then-House International Relations Committee Chairman, Congressman **Ben Gilman** (R-NY); White House Chief of Staff **John Podesta**; Senator **Bob Menendez**; then-Congressman **Michael Bilirakis** (R-FL) (last year’s recipient); and long-time leading Cyprus advocate on the House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, Congressman **John Porter** (R-IL), among others.

In addition, conference participants honored: Former Undersecretary of State, Former Member of Congress and Former Cabinet Member, **Edward Derwinski**; Mayor of occupied Kyrenia, **Maria Ioannou**; Cyprus Consul General **Martha Mavrommatis**; Honorary Consul of the Republic of Cyprus for Virginia, **Tommy Kyrus**; Honorary Consul of the Republic of Cyprus for North Carolina, **Takey Crist**; Pan-Macedonian Association, Inc., USA Supreme President, **Panos Spiliakos**; American Hellenic Council of California Vice President **Aris Anagnos**; and Pan-Pontian Federation of USA and Canada member **Panos Stavrianiides**.

-- U.S. and World Hellenic Leaders --

The heads of many of the top Hellenic organizations in the U.S., and around the world, came to Washington, D.C. for this important strategy and lobbying session. They included:

- President, International Coordinating Committee – Justice for Cyprus (PSEKA), **Philip Christopher**
- Honorary World President, World Council of Hellenes (SAE); and National Chairman, UHAC, **Andrew A. Athens**
- President, National Coordinated Effort of Hellenes (CEH), **Andrew E. Manatos**
- Supreme President, Cyprus Federation of America, **Panicos Papanicolaou**
- Executive Vice President, Pancyprian Association of America, **Nikos Mouyiaris**
- National Commander, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, **Anthony Limberakis**
- Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, Father **Alexander Karloutsos**
- Vice President, American Hellenic Council of California, **Aris Anagnos**
- U.S. Regional Coordinator, World Council of Hellenes (SAE), **Ted Spyropoulos**
- AHEPA Cyprus and Hellenic Affairs Committee / Cyprus Honorary Consul for North Carolina, Dr. **Takey Crist**
- Supreme President, Pan-Macedonian Association USA, **Panos Spiliakos**
- Pan-Pontian Federation, **George Mavropoulos**
- Past President, Federation of Hellenic Societies, **Tasos Manessis**
- Chios Societies of American & Canada, **James Kontolios**
- President, Hellenic American Leadership Council, **Endy Zemenides**
- President, U.S.-Cyprus Chamber of Commerce, **Andreas Comodromos**
- President, Morphou District Association, **Nikolaos Kotziamanis**
- Executive Council Member, National Federation of Cypriots in Great Britain, **Suzy Constantinides**
- Lobby for Cyprus (UK), **Andrew Kevorkian**

- President, Pancyprian Association of Florida, **Thelma Pieri**

Those Cyprus and Greek government officials who also participated in this important effort included:

- Ambassador of Greece to the United States, **Alexandros Mallias**
- Ambassador of Cyprus to the United States, **Andreas Kakouris**
- Greek Parliamentarian and First Vice-Chairman of the Inter-parliamentary Committee for Hellenes Abroad, **Gregory Niotis**
- Mayor of occupied Kyrenia **Maria Ioannou**

Andrew A. Athens, Chairman, National Coordinated Effort of Hellenes (CEH); National Chairman, United Hellenic American Congress (UHAC); World President, World Council of Hellenes Abroad (SAE)

Philip Christopher, Vice Chair, National Coordinated Effort of Hellenes (CEH); President, International Coordinating Committee--Justice for Cyprus (PSEKA); President, Pancyprian Association of America

Andrew E. Manatos, President, National Coordinated Effort of Hellenes (CEH); Executive Board Member, UHAC and PSEKA

Panicos Papanicolaou, Supreme President, Cyprus Federation of America

Nikos Mouyiaris, Executive Vice President, Pancyprian Association of America