**Europe: Confronting an Uncertain Future**

**Tufts EPIIC Symposium – 2016**

**Broad Ripple High School**

**Representing the Nation of Greece**

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Introduction

The Hellenic Republic is honored to be represented at this year’s symposium. With the current issues among our allies, we would like to discuss a variety of topics. Examples of our pressing concerns include the social and cultural protection of our people, suppression of organized crime and government corruption, control of refugee traffic, fair and appropriate resettlement of refugees, and whether or not the Greek state should leave the Eurozone. We hope that each state is able to come to constructive agreements pertaining to their necessities. Most importantly, we encourage each delegation (including our own) to consider the genuine advice and opinions of the other nations that are represented at this meeting.

Key Points

* Greece would like to discuss the border securitization issue in Europe.
* Greece seeks collaborative solutions to suppress arms-dealings, drug and human trafficking.
* Greece seeks assistance in the social protection of our people.
* Greece hopes to discuss the problem with xenophobia and racism of minority groups in Europe.
* Greece wants to replace austerity measures with other solutions.
* Greece hopes to collaborate with the other countries that are being represented at the symposium on the fair resettlement of refugees.
* Greece would like to discuss whether or not to “Grexit.”

Background

The Greek territory has been involved with many world hegemonies. During the reign of Justinian (A.D. 527-565) the Byzantine Empire’s territories extended from the Asia Minor to Western Europe. After Justinian’s death, the time period was known as the “Byzantine Dark Age,” a series of calamities occurred in the Empire. In the west, Justinian’s captured land was recovered by his opponents. In 630-660 A.D., the majority of the Empire’s eastern territory was lost to the Arabs, resulting in the inevitable and eventual downfall of the Empire.

Although Byzantium never returned to the status of Justinian’s “golden age,” in the ninth century its military situation became stable. By the eleventh century, the empire reclaimed a substantial amount of its territory. However, between 1180 and 1204 the Byzantine military began to experience arduous times. The death of Emperor Manuel Comnenus presaged revolts against the Empire; more than fifty rebellions and uprisings took place.

Many successors, Michael VIII (r.1259-1282) for example, attempted to maintain the Empire. In 1453, however, the growing Ottoman Empire besieged the Byzantine Empire and soon took over Constantinople. “The Fall of Constantinople” was the official demise of the Eastern Roman-based Empire.

Once the Ottoman Empire annexed most of the Balkans, including Greece, the land of Athens was now under the control of the Turks. By 1500, more than half of the Greek islands and plains were under Ottoman rule. The land of Greece was divided into six *sanjaks*, each ruled by a nobleman loyal to the Sultan. The Empire also implemented a *millet* system, which separated the people based on their religions. The conquered land was conferred to various Ottoman lords who held the lands as feudal fiefs under the Sultan’s authority; they could not be purchased or inherited by another. Once the fief-holder had perished, the land reverted to the Sultan’s possession.

The Ecumenical Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church was held in high regard by the Ottoman Turks. Due to the docile behavior of the Orthodox population and ethnic Greeks, the Sultan was given authority over their communities. The Patriarch also controlled courts and schools, as well as the Church. This led to Orthodox priests, along with local magnates, becoming the rulers of Greek villages and towns. Municipalities like Athens and Rhodes, were self-governed. The Orthodox Church helped preserve Greek heritage. During the nineteenth century, devotion to Greek Orthodoxy became a prominent mark of Greek nationality.

After the unsuccessful Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683, the Empire entered a decline both militarily, against Christian entities, and internally, which provoked the discontent of the people as well as prompted disorder and occasional rebellions. The Ottomans resorted to military control in parts of Greece but the Greeks only strengthened their resistance to the Ottoman army. Economic dislocation arose and the population declined. Another indication of decline was the decision to allow Ottoman landholdings to become hereditary estates, which could be sold or given to heirs. The development of this new class of Ottoman landlords led to further poverty and continued population decline in the plains.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the position of educated and privileged Greeks within the Ottoman Empire improved. The empire recruited skilled Greeks into its administrative, technical, and financial fields - fields in which the Ottoman Turks lacked experience. Catherine the Great, Orthodox ruler of the Russian Empire, hoped to conquer the land of the declining Ottoman entity by encouraging a Christian rebellion against it. During the Russian-Ottoman War, the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji (1774) was signed and eventually Russians began to regularly involve themselves with the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. The Greeks felt as though the treaty was an abuse of Russian authority. Once the Greek citizens began to realize this, it reconnected them with the rest of the world and initiated a vigorous movement of nationalism.

Greece was incidentally involved in the Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815), but the seizing of Venice in 1797 was an inciting force for Greek independence. When Napoleon Bonaparte acquired Venice, he also gained control of the Ionian Islands as well as their local autonomies and elevated them to French dependency. This was the first time Greeks had governed themselves since the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. By the end of the war in 1815, Greece emerged from its extensive period of isolation. In 1821, the Greeks rebelled against the Ottoman Empire; it was the first Ottoman-ruled province to gain its independence. The unprecedented spirit of nationalism that swept Europe and the revival of Greek history as a learning apparatus were the stimuli of the revolt. On February 3, 1830, Greece was officially founded and by the Convention of May 11, 1832, it was recognized as a sovereign state. In order to prevent further experiments in republic governments, the Western Powers recommended that Greece be a monarchy. To the Greeks’ dismay, the Bavarian Prince Otto (r.1832-1862), a non-Greek, held the throne; he implemented high taxes, and he denied the Greeks a constitution. In 1862-1863, King Otto was overthrown, exiled, and replaced by George I (r.1863-1913).

Despite Greece’s numerically limited and inadequately equipped armed forces, the state’s contribution to the Allied Powers during World War II was decisive. At the beginning, Greece refused to succumb to Italian demands. When Mussolini’s infantry invaded Greece on October 28, 1940, Greek troops successfully repelled them; this was marked as the first Allied victory in the war. In reluctant retaliation and with the aid of Bulgaria and Italy, Hitler’s regime successfully invaded and occupied Greece. During the years of Nazi Germany’s occupation, thousands of Greeks died in direct combat, Greek Jews perished in concentration camps, and a plethora of citizens endured or fell to the Great Famine of 1941 to 1944.

The Greek Civil War (1946-1949) depicts an example of a post-war communist revolution. On one side, the conflict involved non-Marxists who supported the Greek royalist government, while on the other side, a communist guerrilla force known as the National Liberation Front and the Greek People’s Liberation Army (EAM-ELAS) was controlled by the Greek Communist Party (KKE). The civil war left Greece with a modern mentality of political polarization. The Hellenic Republic to entered an alliance with The United States and joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1952. Following this, relationships with its Soviet neighbors became unnatural.

The Monarchy of Greece was officially abolished in 1975 and a democratic republic constitution was established. On January 1, 1981, Greece was accepted into the European Union. Since then, the state has seen unprecedented prosperity. Unfortunately, this growth has been halted due to the current economic crisis in Europe.

Committee on Governance

Greece is a parliamentary republic government. We have been so since 2005 when the government from the Panhellenic Socialist Movement ended. Now the Coalition of the Radical Left leads with Alexis Tsipras as the Prime Minister. The Coalition of the Radical Left is a coalition of thirteen groups. This allows great independence, anti-fascist, democratic and labor movement struggles in Greece. The Coalition of the Radical Left remains very peaceful by not associating itself in wars. They contributed a pro-peace policy for Greece, a policy of independence, and an amiable peaceful cooperation, mostly with our neighboring countries.

We had a coarse start when we first gained our independence. Past leaders of ours included Dimitrios Ioannides, George Papandreou, Giorgios Papadopoulos, and Phaedon Gizikis. After World War II, we decided to align ourselves with other Western Democracies; The Communist Party of Greece being the most influential. During the 1950’s and 1960’s, we were ruled by multiple conservative parties. In 1963, The Center Union Party of George Papandreou came into part but ended two years later. When the Unionists weren’t in preparation of Greece anymore, many weaker parties tried taking control our nation. This led to a dark time in Greek politics. The people of Greece did not agree with this situation and free elections were called for. Later in 1967, Greece became a dictatorship. It was led by self-elected Giorgios Papadopoulos and lasted seven years. Leading to the end of this dictatorship, General Dimitrios Ioannides partially restored civilian rule, but he retained a large measure of power.

When Constantine Karamanlis returned from exile, he created the New Democracy (ND) political party. The first socialist government was elected and led by the Panellenic Socialist Movement. Since then, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement has been leading our Parliamentary Republic government.

Greece has developed many political parties overtime. Five of the major ones are: Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA), New Democracy, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), and the Union of Centrists (EK. PASOK), which is in charge of assembling alliances for our military. It has also improved Greece over the years by providing better health services, education, social services, and job opportunities. ND is supportive of greater liberalization and is a strong supporter of European integration. SYRIZA, which supports the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), is the party that will decide if our nation will leave the euro. The political party of EK guides our country with centrism and liberalism. These political parties have been a part of our country since 2001; they participate in our proportional electoral system.

We believe that men and women have equal rights. All citizens are able to freely participate in social, political, economic, and religious life. Citizens are able to vote once the maximum five-year term of one’s presidency is finished. Greek citizens are the only ones eligible for public service. If a Greek citizen is bearing arms, they are obligated to assist the defense of the nation.

Non-citizens visiting our country are able to openly express themselves, religiously and politically. Non-citizens have the right to be involved with our economic life. All people can enjoy full protection of their life, honor, and freedom; these rights are irrespective of nationality race, creed, or political allegiance. Non-citizens cannot be prosecuted, arrested, or otherwise restricted unless they directly violate Greece’s laws or our Constitution.

The most controversial topics within Greece involve the Grexit, security of our borders, Europe’s refugee crisis, immigration, and whether or not austerity measures should be taken. Greece currently has issues regarding border control. It is difficult for us to control the thousands of refugees that enter our borders when we receive insufficient amount of help from our alleged upholders. Our nation has received criticism and warnings from the EU. For example, we have decelerated the amount of migrants coming in through our islands by restricting the number of migrants entering. However, the EU’s decision to allow Greece three months to fix our borders added additional pressure to our nation.

Greece’s role in the EU is to insure that our interests and policies are pursued as effectively as possible within the EU framework. Greece has held five of the EU Presidency of the Council meetings. We also strongly support the augmentation of the European Union. Our role has substantially changed since joining the EU. When we first entered, our nation was not readily accepted. Since then, we have restored our democracy. Greece is determined to reestablish democracy and stability in Southern Europe.

Greece defines a democratic deficit as a democratic state whose actions and policies cause the party lean further right of the political spectrum. Greece does not have much of a voice when it comes to the EU and its democratic deficit. According to a Pew Research poll, 80% of Greeks believe that their voices are not being heard by the EU. An example of a declining democracy is Hungary’s Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s twist on the European Union’s framework by making populist appeals to support his campaign, thus restricting Hungary’s democratic values.

The EU as an entity does not have a democratic deficit. There are some individual countries involved with the EU that do have this dilemma. A few countries that can be referenced are Hungary and Italy. Despite this, the EU still works to expand its authority. Over the years, the EU suffered due to “lack of authority”. Even though not all EU states are in favor of democracy, there is still trust in the EU’s value for democracy. The question of the EU having a democratic deficit has been parading for years. There has been a substantial amount of criticism and attention to this topic. The effect of all of this led to the European Parliament. Therefore, despite all the controversies, Greece believes that there is not a democratic deficit within the EU’s structure.

My delegation will be representing SYRIZA at the conference. SYRIZA has helped improved Greece since 2004. In 2015, SYRIZA dominated all other political parties in Greece. SYRIZA is opposed to austerity being a solution to our economic crisis. A main goal for SYRIZA is to end the EU’s austerity plan for Greece which has been in place to help Greece after the 2008 economic crash. SYRIZA is in favor to remain a member of the euro currency.

Greece remains a strong nation despite all of our obstacles. We are determined to overcome these complications. Despite all the criticism and lack of help from our neighboring states, we will work to regain the trust of numerous countries. With SYRIZA being our leading political party, we will work to overcome potential austerity measures. Greece will do whatever it takes to secure our borders and protect our citizens, and nothing will make us surrender our goals.

Committee on Cross-Border Issues

As a member of the European Union, Greece is concerned with the issues confronting Europe during the current crisis including immigration, human trafficking, drug smuggling, and illegal arms dealing. As the southernmost country in the EU, refugees from Syria are flooding across our borders at an alarming rate. We are under constant pressure to strengthen our border security, yet we receive little support from our neighbors. The chronic economic situation of Greece and the EU has become a vicious cycle of blame directed primarily at Greece. The consequences of the debt crisis have been significant in Greece since 2008. We are unable to fund many basic necessities for our citizens, yet we are expected to secure our borders against more than a million people. Such a task is nearly impossible without backing from our fellow EU members.

     A significant cross-border concern for many European countries is arms dealing which allows firearms to fall into the hands of drug dealers, murderers, human smugglers, and even terrorists. Without proper financial and logistical support this problem can only get worse.  Heroin has also been arriving in Western Europe from Afghanistan for years via the Balkan Peninsula. We have certainly made concerted efforts to curtail heroin trafficking, but with the Syrian refugee crisis it has become incredibly difficult for our government to effectively control this critical cross-border problem. Another cross-border issue is human trafficking. Immigrant women are frequent victims of human traffickers, as are children and teenagers. Amidst the chaos of the current crises in the European Union, these issues have become much more difficult to address.

Mass immigration is also one of our main concerns. With over a million people seeking asylum in Greece during 2015, and with more expected to arrive in 2016, we find ourselves at an impasse. Many northern European nations such as Germany and France are putting pressure on southern European nations (Greece and Italy for example) to solve problems that these southern EU states do not have the capacity to control without the help of other nations.

        Our position on the Schengen agreement is very similar to our position on the Euro. It is in Greece and the EU’s best interest that Greece remain part of the Schengen Agreement and the Eurozone.  We also agree that there needs to be a securitization of borders and a revision to the Schengen Agreement. Greece cannot afford to secure its own border. In fact, we have cut fiscal allocations for many of our citizen’s basic needs like health care, infrastructure, and public sector jobs. Such dramatic reductions in governmental spending would cause unrest in any nation, and that is what Greece is now experiencing.

One way to fight corruption is to implement policies that increase transparency in government and in business. Greece has been trying to overhaul its economy using the austerity measures insisted upon by our creditors, but austerity measures have done nothing but intensify our economic problems. Austerity measures forced us to lay off half of all government employees, slash pensions, cut welfare, and cut budgets. With pensions slashed and jobs lacking, the working poor and lower middle class can no longer afford the dignified lives they had once enjoyed. Furthermore, austerity has only increased corruption because our economy has become stagnant and lacking in real opportunities. Under such circumstances, people have fewer inhibitions about taking bribes or breaking rules if it means a choice between surviving or not surviving.

Greece has one of the most important strategic positions in Europe in regards to any and all cross border issues. As an EU member state, Greece is committed to work with fellow EU member states to solve the problems confronting us as a whole community.

We envision a more peaceful, safe and cooperative Europe that prospers and assists member states in need. We wish to see a Europe that collaborates on solutions instead of placing blame for problems. If Europe does not work together to solve its issues, the peace that the EU has brought to Europe for years may be shattered and Europe collectively may be risking whatever progress the idea of the European Union has made.

Committee on Economics

The Greek economy, though currently in crisis, has always been resilient. Currently, our overall budgets have been cut by € 28 billion, substantial reductions considering our total economy of € 179 billion. Our infrastructure budget has been cut from € 65 million to € 12 million over the last four years. The unemployment rate has increased well above 25%. In the last six months, we have been forced to conduct strict austerity measures to comply with EU requirements tied to our economic overhauls.

The crisis has affected not just our economic growth, but our country as a whole. With austerity measures in effect, it is becoming harder to access basic human services. Universities, hospitals, and municipalities cannot perform under these conditions. Our security apparatus is currently struggling with the recent influx of immigrants. The question that remains is simple: how can we be expected to deal with the millions of people who are trying to get in when it is already difficult to tend to our own people? Regardless of the hardships, our people continue to persevere. We have learned to work with our own resources. While looking toward external resources for assistance with our economic problems, we have been helping each other. The opulent do what they can for our police department, and surgeons continue to operate despite salary cuts.

The cause of our crisis lies largely in the very union that we are a part of, the Eurozone. We feel that a single currency system has been more beneficial to more well-off countries such as Germany and other northern European countries. We are also dealing with corruption within our own government. In February, 2013, Vasilis Papageorgopoulos, former mayor of Thessaloniki, was given a life sentence for embezzlement. In that same year, Akis Tsochatzopoulos, once a powerful minister of defense and second-ranking figure in the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), was sentenced to 20 years for money laundering. Austerity policies only seem to deepen our problems. We have people who depend on our government for basic needs, but we cannot help them if there is no workers who can help.

As a country that has been a part of the EU for thirty-four years, Greece agrees that the EU is based on monetary and political policy. The monetary policy is managed through the European Central Bank and national central banks of member-states. One of its goals is to keep price inflation below but close to 2% over the medium term. Greece’s average inflation, as of 2015, is now -1.73%, well below the medium term. The EU possesses many attributes of modern political systems. Within sixty years, it has become a unique form of political cooperation comprising of twenty-eight member states with the world’s largest combined income.

The financial crisis has indeed brought about a strain on what is holding this union together. We are faced with the problem of whether we will be able to come to some kind of agreement with our creditors. Whether or not we can come to an agreement will affect all of Europe. Decisions made determine not only our future, but the future of the euro and the global economy as well. It will be difficult to regain trust of our creditors. While we receive help from other EU countries, we certainly believe that there has been more finger-pointing than actual effort to solve our problems.

The eurocrisis can very well be a result of Europe’s cohesion issues. Some of the Cohesion Policy’s goals are to be able to promote economic growth and jobs and to reduce poverty. Greece, however, is seeing little benefit from this policy. We understand that there are more countries within our union that need help just as we do, but ours is a situation that will inevitably affect everyone. It would be in Europe’s best interest to do as much as they can to aid Greece and its citizens. Despite the trouble, we believe more willingness to cooperate with one another will help alleviate the situation. This will ultimately put the euro in steady standing.

We do not believe that countries should be able to leave the Eurozone. No one has ever attempted to leave the euro, so there is no real idea of what results may come should that ever occur. There are many financially stable countries within the euro that can provide support and guidance so struggling nations will not see leaving the EU as their only option.

Greece is in great need of policies that further promote economic growth, policies with social fairness and fiscal sustainability. We are a country with an economy that is capable of being successful, but in order to move forward, we need policies that will benefit, not restrict, our economic potential.

Austerity policies do not help us gain control of our situation. Rather, austerity measures are making circumstances harder. Austerity policies are keeping our citizens from being able to access basic human services. Austerity policies have increased the unemployment rate. Austerity policies have resulted in our banks being unwilling or unable to make loans. A primary factor in Greece’s economic depression has, in fact, been EU austerity policies. In order to be a part of the EU, a country must uphold strict economic standards. Those standards mean that Greece is unable to adjust it currency exchange rate in order to offset the effects of major budget cuts. Despite this, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the EU have continued to ask for further austerity measures without an explanation as to why these policies which have failed for the last five years would somehow have a positive turnout now. The Greek economy is capable of getting back to where it needs to be. But in order to get to that point, we must come to an agreement on how we can palliate the situation without resorting to a plan that has not yet worked and holds little hope of working moving forward.

Committee on Security

With Greece’s current economic status, its security has suffered. Greece’s major security concerns are terrorism, the influx of illegal immigrants, narcotics control, and corruption. Recently, Greece has become one major point of entry and transit for over a million illegal immigrants, from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Terrorism has become such a problem that one source close to the Greek intelligence service said that there may be as many as 200 people in Greece associated with groups such as ISIS or The al Nusra Front. Many believe Greece is not necessarily a target for terrorists, but rather a gateway to the rest of Europe. Like terrorism, the problem with narcotics control is the fact that Greece is a gateway for narcotics into the rest of Europe. Finally, corruption has made it extremely difficult to deal with security concerns. Greece shares the same as most European Union (EU) nations regarding terrorism and the influx of illegal immigrants.

With recent acts and very real threats of terrorism in Europe, Greece has realized that border security is serious problem. Greece has come to the conclusion that it needs to control the number of immigrants entering our country. While at a conference of EU member states on January 21st, 2016, many indicated their belief that terrorists are using the migration crisis to slip into Europe.

Greece became a member of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952, which makes Greece one of the longest standing members of the alliance. Along with Greece’s EU membership, NATO is an essential pillar of Greece’s defense and security architecture. NATO’s transformation from a military alliance to a political institution of broader scope has provided stability for Greece. Our participation has also proven strategically beneficial for the stability and security Greece’s allies in NATO. Greece’s important geostrategic location widened the Alliance’s perimeter and the stability zone of Europe. Greece also actively contributes to all NATO operations. Greece believes the long lasting missions of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) are of great importance. An example of the missions of the OSCE that Greece supports is the Minsk Group. Greece is content with the idea of America helping in European security.

Greece is extremely reliant on oil imported from Russia, Libya, OPEC, the Persian Gulf, and Egypt. One of Greece’s major import partners is Russia. In spite of the fact that Greece is supportive of lifting EU sanctions against Russia, energy has been a source of coercion against Greece. There have been questionable increases in Russian oil prices over the past ten years by Russia causing additional and unnecessary drain on our already suffering economy.

Even though Greece’s funding for security is limited due to the large debt it faces, we believe our membership in NATO may provide assistance in maintaining the security of Greece. Greek membership in NATO is beneficial to the organization because of the geographical advantage Greece presents. This advantage could help reduce the influx of illegal immigrants, which might in turn reduce the number of active terrorist groups and individual terrorists in Europe. Stronger border security would also impact the problem of narcotics trafficking.

As all nations know, the solution for internal corruption, is not a simple one. Greece is currently developing new anti-corruption policies, which will take time to take effect. But over time, we believe these policies will dramatically decrease governmental corruption. With Greece’s geographical advantage, NATO should do everything in its power to keep Greece a member and Greece should everything it can to continue its relationship with NATO because of the security advantage the alliance offers.

Committee on Migration

Since Antiquity, Greece has been a leader of democracy where a government was responsible for enforcing laws and policies to promote fairness and equality. However, with its entrance into the European Union in 1981, Greece changed; the European borders opened up, allowing immigrants easier entrance into Greece.

An increase in immigration and illegal refugees entering Europe has caused unrest and raised many concerns within the EU. With populist parties on the rise in many European countries and concerns with Islamic terrorism, it is unclear if the EU is capable of implementing long-term asylum and migration reforms. The current migration crisis has our government concerned about the financial burden that comes with welcoming immigrants given our current economic state. Greece lacks the resources to feed and shelter these immigrants, but we also lack the ability to prevent them from entering our country. It is our priority to regulate the number of refugees crossing our borders. We are also discussing a plan to manage the economic struggle that comes with our nation’s substantial growth in asylum seekers.

Until the Second World War, Greece had been a country of emigration. Greek authorities encouraged this emigration because they saw the emigrants’ remittances as helping to sustain the Greek economy and alleviate unemployment and underemployment. In the late 1980’s, Greece became a destination for immigrants. Hoping to discourage immigration to Greece, the Greek immigration policy relied on the massive deportation of mainly Albanian immigrants in the late 1990’s. Because Greece has been a country of emigration in the past, the Greek government does not have the necessary experience and knowledge to control the current migrant crisis.

When immigrants enter Europe, they bring many challenges as well as opportunities. Difference in cultures between the incoming immigrants and the European citizens, fear of terrorism, the language barrier, racism and xenophobia can create many obstacles when it comes to integrating immigrants into European societies. Food, shelter, education and healthcare are all immediate challenges that we must attend to.

Greece believes that policies regarding asylum seekers must be reformed so that the burden of handling refugees is equal among all EU nations. The European Union’s failed asylum policies must take some responsibility for the suffering of thousands seeking to escape their war-torn countries. The Dublin Regulation contributes greatly to this problem. The regulation requires refuges to apply for asylum in the first EU country they enter. With this reform in place, the responsibility of assessing asylum applications and treating the asylum seekers and refugees falls disproportionately on EU member states with exposed borders.

In search of opportunity, over 125,000 immigrants have already arrived on Greek soil since the start of 2016 with approximately 1,000 new immigrants arriving each day. A majority of these immigrants have come from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan. Most have endured the voyage across the Mediterranean Sea in small, overcrowded lifeboats or paid human traffickers to provide them an uncomfortable voyage across Turkey. With more and more immigrants entering Greece each day, Greek citizens have become increasingly aware of the dangerously high unemployment and crime rates.

Since the influx of immigrants in the 1990’s, the number of Greek citizens who feel that there are too many immigrants in their country has increased by 50%. Currently about 85% of Greeks believe that immigrants are to blame for the increased crime and unemployment rates. This trend is only going to increase the social unrest in Greece already on the rise due to economic austerity measures.

Greece will be fully committed to policies regarding asylum seekers and refugees once there is agreement on reforms that will distribute the responsibility of incoming immigrants fairly among all EU countries. Greece will not assent to any compromise until the EU changes the policies regarding asylum seekers fairly.

The recent influx of refugees in Europe is one of the largest human migrations in human history. Many of these refugees were professionals in their home country, many bring needed technology and manufacturing skills, and many are eager to contribute to the work force in their new communities. The European Union must work together to manage its immigration crisis to mitigate the challenges and optimize the opportunities. However this will require a coordinated and concerted effort to create economic opportunity that will benefit all EU nations. Successful integration will also require educational programs that increase cultural understanding and minimize tensions from both the native born and newcomers. Greece is eager to play a role in this process; however this will require a significant allocation of resources and a shared commitment from the EU and the international community.

Committee on Foreign Policy

Greece conducts foreign policy within the framework of the European Union (EU) and independently. Many sanctions against Russia have been implemented, including closing global markets to Russian energy firms, affecting Russian banks, and blocking Russia from accessing key technologies needed to develop new gas fields and oil. Working outside of the EU framework, Greece has been supportive of lifting sanctions and acted to encourage to stop the European Council's decision to enforce further restrictive measures against Russia. On the contrary, we have been working with Turkey in dealing with migrant refugees, proving Greece operates within the framework of the EU.

We believe it is necessary to work jointly with the EU in order to end the current crises regarding refugees. Prime Minister Alexis Tspiras stated, “It’s necessary to have a joint response to the refugee crisis and tackle the causes creating this crisis, which is the war in Syria,” and later added, “the aim is to minimize refugee flows and crush the trafficking rings that exploit them.” Approximately more than one million migrants and refugees entered Europe in 2015 which has overwhelmed not only Greece, but other border countries as well. A joint EU foreign policy would be very beneficial for all nations and migrants.

Greece has a voice in current EU foreign policy decisions. If we were to withdrawal from the EU, a precedent would be set that would affect trust in both currency and security zones around Greece. This precedent would cause the rest of Europe to look at other countries who have high debt and give investors a reason to withdrawal their money. Other countries high debt include Italy, Ireland, Cyprus, Spain, the UK, Portugal, and many more.

We do not agree with current EU policies regarding Ukraine and Russia. Because of the sanctions imposed onto Russia, Russia has now banned any food import from the EU. Since Russia is a huge trading partner for Greece, this hurts our country tremendously. As Christos Yannakakis, who leads our country's largest regional association of cooperatives and growers has stated, “Russia absorbs more than 60% of our peach exports and almost 90% of our strawberries.” Unless the EU offers help, our agricultural economy will collapse.

Greece believed that EU intervention in Libya was the best decision. If we did not arbitrate, the death toll in Libya would have been worse. Muammar Gadaffi proved to be one of the most unprofitable leaders of his country.

Our nation believes that the EU should work with the U.S. on foreign policy as it would be a great learning opportunity for both. With a renewed bond, the EU and the U.S. could truly maintain the set forth agenda in the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA), which involves: “promoting peace and stability, democracy and development around the world, responding to global challenges, contributing to the expansion of world trade and closer economic relations, building bridges across the Atlantic, parliamentary links, and implementing agenda.” New treaties, various strategies, or networks with new nations could be established.

Relations between Greece and the U.S. are stable. A diplomatic relation was established in 1868 after the first consul from the U.S. was appointed to our country in 1837. After WWII, the U.S. contributed millions of dollars in agriculture and infrastructure as part of the Marshall Plan. As an ally and a diplomatic leader in Europe, we have helped the U.S. support Turkey in acceding to the EU, promoted Balkan economic development and stability, and supported the diversification of Europe's energy supplies.

Greece hopes that the EU members will try to understand our economic situation and help us deal with it in a less severe way. Austerity measures have been proven to lead nowhere and have created economic chaos for our nation. We prefer not to resort to austerity measures, rather, we implore for European assistance and cooperation to address this issue in a new manner.

Committee on Identity & Integration

As the world speculates on the future of the states that comprise Europe, Greece is one of the names that comes to the minds of many. Identity-related tensions remain coarse between the Greek government and its minorities, discrimination amongst our diverse people is an unresolved issue, and an influx of immigrants has called for urgent and strenuous solutions. However, we have endured a myriad of struggles such as these with great fortitude since the foundation of Greece and we continue to be a resilient state.

During World War II, our nation was occupied by Hitler’s Third Reich; it proved to be one of the worst periods of time in Greece. Almost 400,000 deaths occurred including Greek military, civilian casualties, and Greek-Jewish Holocaust victims. In 1946, our nation was separated into two political and combative factions: The Greek army, which supported the royalist government, and the communist coalition of the National Liberation Front and The Greek Popular Liberation Army. EAM-ELAS was led and sponsored by the Greek Communist Party (KKE). Both parties fought for primary control of Greece which eventually led to a civil war. This conflict caused more than 80,000 casualties and over 700,000 citizens were left homeless after the Greek Civil War. The royalist government’s victory caused a widespread movement of the party’s western political views and influence as well as a resistance toward the Soviet ideology.

The historical memory of the WWII occupation of the Axis powers in our country has impacted the discourse of our government as well as its people. The public domain tends to forget or avoid discussing issues related to these events. In the government, however, relations with Germany are strained due to the two states’ WWII history. The dilemma on war reparations for German war crimes remains unsettled with Berlin’s finance minister, Sigmar Gabriel, deeming Greece’s request as “stupid.”

After WWII, Greece joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952. This decision has made the government more cognizant on promoting democratic values as well as the encouragement of cooperation and consultation among the other members. The Truman Doctrine also influenced the dynamic of Greek politics. This would allow the United States to support “free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” In 1947 this American principle has beneficially diffused U.S. foreign policy throughout Greece and the world.

Since the Second World War, the Greek government has considered any Greek citizen an ethnic Greek. Although we consider our country to be ethnically homogeneous, Greece’s minority groups include Albanians, Arvanites, Macedonians, Roma, Turks, Vlachs, and Pomaks. The rights of these minorities vary depending on ethnicity, religion, and linguistic origin. Residents in Greece are eligible for citizenship after five years. In addition, we morally and officially acknowledge the existence of religious minorities.

Greece emphasizes political/individual and social/cultural rights according to its constitution. All individuals are granted “the right to develop freely their personality” as well as “participate in the social, economic, and political life of the country.” They are able to do so as long as they do not “infringe the rights of others or violate the constitution and the good usages.” People living in or visiting Greece shall enjoy complete protection of their lives, honor, and liberty regardless of nationality, race, language, and of religious or political beliefs.

The Greek government encourages newcomers to participate in Greek society by welcoming and assisting them in settling into our rich Greek culture. The geopolitical changes of the European Union in the late 1980’s have played a substantial role in the dynamics of many European societies. Since then, it has been in our government’s and our peoples’ interest to establish more policies pertaining to the rightful integration of unaccustomed and/or discriminated populations. Greece believes that the EU in its entirety must take initiative towards refining management of diversity within several European states.

Our government plans to institute effective integration policies but we must begin to patiently accommodate the influx of refugees into Greece life. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has stated that “integration prospects and related support for refugees are practically non-existent.” However, through the increased access to employment, solutions to the difficulties of family unification, expansions on social housings, and a suppression of the current issues of racism and xenophobia, opportunities for immigrant success in Greece will continue to improve.

There remains a contentious issue between ethnic Turks who are Greek citizens and our government. Many within that minority group have made countless attempts to obtain minority status in Greece despite enjoying the benefits. This has caused general disquietude in that such events might affect our territorial integrity. Greece does not currently face any secessionist movements nor are there any prominent signs that one shall occur soon. We resume to examine Turkish contentions for viable solutions.

With the migrant crisis prevalent in Europe, Greece has been the primary entry point for refugees fleeing from their war-stricken countries. As of this year according to the UNHCR, more than 128,000 migrants have crossed our borders by sea. Since then, the EU has proposed approximately 700 million euros for humanitarian aid for the refugee emergency. The issue of Macedonian authorities closing their side of the Macedonian-Greek border as well as the decisions of Balkan states to close its borders including Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia has stagnated government affairs to implement any policies to safely distribute migrants to northern Europe.

In deeper analysis, the future of Europe and its people is an unsettling one. If there are no signs of cooperation among Greece’s peers in the EU, then there will be a vast paucity of prosperity and a sizable increase of demoralization in European societies; we must act now.

Issues

* Greece wants to seek ways to increase and advocate for government transparency.
* Greece would like to resolve the migrant issue within Greek borders.
* Greece would like to improve relations with minority groups.
* Greece would like to implement alternative and viable solutions as substitutes for strict economic measures.
* Greece wants to establish an extensive plan that would gradually resolve its debt as well as the debt of other states.