

IMMUNITY FROM WESTERN POLICY ORIENTATION: REVISING THE RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND RUSSIA

Marios P. Efthymiopoulos

INTRODUCTION

On April 8, 2015, Mr. Alexis Tsipras, the Prime Minister (PM) of Greece, visited the Russian Federation and its capital Moscow.¹ During his official visit, Mr. Alexis Tsipras had a meeting with Mr. Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation, and other top Russian officials. The meeting, much anticipated by the Greek side, inspired a lot of criticism from the West on its usefulness in the time of crisis. One may add that a worldwide discussion ‘ran high’. It would put Greece on the standpoint yet again: western media reacted with skepticism.² What is Tsipras all about? Would this affect the ongoing discussion on the future of Greece’s participation in Eurozone? Would it affect the future geopolitical standpoint of Greece towards the West? International news agencies associated Tsipras with reallocation of national interests of Greece vis-a-vis Europe.³ News media concentrated on the ideological necessity of the ruling government party “Syriza”⁴

of Greece, to reallocate interests towards the Russian Federation. Higher attention to Russia causes bypassing the current EU embargo and/or a future increase of measures applied, due to the Ukraine Crisis.

PM Tsipras is reallocating national and foreign interests of the Hellenic Republic. That is clear. He is creating a new geostrategic, geopolitical and economic security oriented map. A new policy orientation is at hand. A new ‘chess game’ is being put in order. It considers economic realities and ideological trends. A new policy spectrum of Greece is shaped. It considers a strong alliance with the Russian Federation, that is just a start. An alliance which may also expand to include an eventual and necessary membership of Greece to New Development Bank newly established by BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa),⁵ making Greece the first European Union member to possibly commit its debt and the IMF, EU and ECB debt loan to this emerging institution. Within the context of bilateral relations between the two, the government of the Hellenic Republic is looking for strong political support from the Russian Federation.

The agenda of discussions during the latest meeting between the two leaders included issues of foreign and defense affairs, energy issues, trade, and cultural affairs, to name a few. Considering early analyses in the news media⁶ and primary

¹ Announcement of the Visit of Alexis Tsipras in Moscow, April 8, 2015 / Athens News Agency and the Prime Minister’s Office. Mode of access: http://www.amna.gr/pressReleaseView.php?id=83044&doc_id=15188561.

² Trade Ties and Sanctions on the Agenda as Greece’s Tsipras Visits Moscow / Deutsche Welle, April 8, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.dw.de/trade-ties-and-sanctions-on-the-agenda-as-greeces-tsipras-visits-moscow/a-18366314>.

³ Russia Links Loom Larger as Greece Seeks Debt Relief / The Wall Street Journal, January 28, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/russia-links-loom-larger-as-greece-seeks-debt-relief-1422481033>.

⁴ Syriza, is the political party lead by PM (2015) Alexis Tsipras in Greece. Leftist political party-ideological approach to the former Communist

Leninist Marxist approach, currently in ideological relocation towards the European left.

⁵ BRICS Plan New \$50bn Bank to Rival World Bank and IMF / Russia Today, March 27, 2013. Mode of access: <http://rt.com/business/bank-rival-imf-world-852/>.

⁶ Tsipras Praises ‘Brotherly Relations’ Between Russia and Greece / NewsWeek, March 31, 2015.

sources of information,⁷ many anticipated goals and possible forthcoming achievements are yet to be seen and developed. Enhancement of bilateral relations was discussed. Peripheral and global issues were examined. Concerns were raised in the issues, where joined efforts can be applied to resolve existing challenges or deadlocks.⁸ Relations continue to enhance months later.

Considering the debt and loan negotiations of Greece in June 2015, that is not an ending story. It seems, PM Tsipras looks at economic realities and options. Considering the wish for debt restructure, methodology of payment and investment opportunities among others, the PM looked forward to the latest meeting with President Putin, making sure to support possible Russian actions of potential forthcoming investment opportunities in Greece.

A new policy framework and orientation has now been established. It is a process that binds the two sides together in a step by step ongoing approach. Among them, cultural diplomacy and cultural tie programs⁹ are among the most successful diplomatic policies for reapproachment.

A new agenda for 'sustainable growth policies for Greece' may as well be adopted. It provides evidently a good reason for Russia to increase, through 'traditional', otherwise forgotten, cultural ties with the modern day Russia, as reasoning and motive for cooperation.

Tsipras considers Russia as a cultural and religious ally of Greece, a source for long-term objectives and realization of its national strategic planning procedure, if any, for a foreseeable sustainable growth projection plan, which is closer to BRICS (but also to the USA) than the 'conservative' European Union.

Mode of access: <http://www.newsweek.com/brotherly-relations-between-russia-and-greece-says-tsipras-318303>.

⁷ Private Sources of information from both Russia and Greek side restricted the permission to publish names.

⁸ Tsipras-Putin Sign New Trade Deal and Renew Greece-Russia Relations / Greek Reporter, April 8, 2015. Mode of access: <http://greece.greekreporter.com/2015/04/08/tsipras-putin-sign-new-trade-deal-and-renew-greece-russia-relations/>.

⁹ Ibid.

Realignment of national and foreign policy objectives are at hand. They will create a temporary protection from current and possibly future economic pressures associated with the dependency of Greece from its current debtors and the new Eurogroup negotiating team for the Greek Debt and existing Troika Program. It will also satisfy party politics, ideological leftist needs that will be 'unwrapped' in the near future.¹⁰

Once the re-negotiations of Greece's debt procedures with Eurogroup are complete, however according to a reform program they might be delayed and re-discussed by late 2015, Tsipras estimates to re-engage the market approach to the Russian economy, making sure to add a strong policy of Foreign Direct Investment Opportunities. A good way to do this is the establishment of tax-free market zones for investment opportunities.¹¹

PM Tsipras' wish is to eventually create a new 'reality realm', to do more action rather than planning, to balance foreign policy options and enhance trade effectiveness of Greece with the Eastern hemisphere and global supporters, such as Russia. Russia will alternatively provide a way for a membership seat in newly established BRICS, bypassing the blockade of the existing disintegrating EU-Russian Federation relations.

A global shift of capital flow and for investment globally¹² is in place. The PM of Greece understands this global phenomenon that allows for new checks but also balances of interests and power. Tsipras wants to go into global market economy competition. To do so, he wants and needs the Russian Federation, as well as BRICS and CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) – emerging 21st-century economies – to support Greek actions and methodologies, reassuring a re-align policy

¹⁰ Tsipras and Putin Hail 'New Spring' in Relations / EU Observer, April 8, 2015. Mode of access: <https://euobserver.com/foreign/128265>.

¹¹ Efthymiopoulos, Marios; Zeneli Valbona. From Transition to Opportunity: Security through Economic Development & Institutional Strengthening Research in the World Economy. – Toronto, CA: Sciedu Press, 2012. Vol. 3, Issue 2.

¹² John Hawksworth. The World in 2050 / PWC. Mode of access: <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/issues/the-economy/the-world-in-2050.html>.

through trade and future trade agreements with the Russian Federation and BRICS.

'The needs of the two nations and their people are been met', the people from the two respective countries stated,¹³ adding to the current state of affairs the possibility of further negotiating, the importance of ideology support, culture, trade and religion. It is estimated that Tsipras will try to strengthen the current and future relationship with the Russian Federation. Cultural and market reorientation is at the table for further and future negotiations. Tsipras 'leans' towards the Russian side looking at large at global opportunism, and global trade agreements for the foreseeable future as well with other leading states. The conservative market of the EU may not be enough to consider development and growth procedures, even paying off current and future dues in the EU, for a new Greece that otherwise wishes and should pay its debt. However, it should also be made clear that Greece should find constructive and practical methods to come out of the debt as soon as possible. Greece needs robust large investments and development actions in practice while facilitating and evolving its own society to meet the 21st century needs.

This is '*the feasibility study of Tsipras' ideology*'. This is the new framework policy of the Hellenic Government adopted through the last elections in January 2015: keeping balance with both Russia and the USA, yet request change in the European framework through new and possibly more feasible alternatives in paying off a debt, not withholding that the debt has become a European debt.

If the Greek government stands by the end of negotiation period in 2015 the Eurogroup and social pressures then Tsipras will eventually provide evidence and reasoning for strong and robust realignment of total foreign policy objectives which will be beneficial for the Russian Federation. It will offer concrete reasoning and robust objectives. The current state of relations seems to be willing to offer plenty to the global market shareholders. At the

same time, it will affirm objectives of support towards the Russian development structure clause. For the forthcoming years, the Greek risk assessment feasibility plan may be able to assure for new strategic opportunities with the Russian Federation. It will include the regions of the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa, but also the Middle East and the Black Sea Regions as points of sustainable growth opportunities and stability procedures.

This paper is an attempt to project new strategic realities and options, unfolded from the first official visit of Alexis Tsipras as Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic to the latest Economic Forum meeting of St. Petersburg in June 2015.¹⁴ This is Tsipras' 'immunity' policy from the Western or otherwise European orientation.

This paper is a real-time challenge. It develops its process and analysis, considering both the EU and world political challenges and changes which occur daily. This paper is written amidst the ongoing Greece-Eurogroup, IMF, European Central Bank negotiations on the future debt payment by Greece. Along the lines of real-time analysis, this paper considers current changes, challenges and threats at all levels: political, trade, economic and military. The paper considers why and how to re-orientate objectives with a global market economies such as the Russian Federation.

The paper inquires the relevance and importance of a robust geostrategic alliance between the two countries; it provides elements of a possible 'success story' between the two; a formation of a new order of checks and balances that goes beyond the traditional sequence of relations existing in the 20th century's issues raised. This paper looks at a strong new possibility, a new power generator for the geopolitical area surrounding Greece. It is a consideration of new feasible options that 'battle' the current state of economic and political affairs at the EU level positively affecting both Greece and the Russian Federation profiting from each other for different reasons.

A strategic plan is been unfolded from the side of Greece. It is believed and appears to be structured. It reflects current needs of a market and a society that needs immediately an

¹³ Interviews held both while the research in both Greece and Russia: In Greece the interview was conducted in late September 2014. In Russia it was conducted in May 2014. Both people interviewed requested their anonymity.

¹⁴ St. Petersburg Economic Forum June 18-20 2015. Official Site: <http://www.forumspb.com/>.

‘injection’ of prosperity, growth, development, innovation and resolution of existing socio-political and economic matters.

This paper is an early analysis that reflects the necessity...or not, of the re-evolution of the Greek-Russian state of affairs. It will look at the profitability risk, of re-orienting, several but not all, national interests towards the Russian Federation, which is the case seen to be at this moment, a ‘win-win’ situation it seems for the both.

Proposals and possible outcomes will be pointed out. Lessons, learned from the recent visit of the PM Tsipras to Moscow, are analyzed. Critical evaluations follow on current and ongoing investigations and assumptions of the new kind and style of possible emerging relations.

The paper is beneficial in leveling Greek-Russian relations. It is a paper of critical thinking and analysis. It is, however, a canonical paper. It considers diverse questions and assumes for concrete political action. Through its argumentation, assumptions and issues for consideration, the article looks at current conditions assuming a structured agenda to be negotiated and applied.

We should note that the paper’s analysis and development of recommendations took longer than anticipated. As real policy and concrete analysis, procedures change by the hour. The research paper was written between January and End of May 2015. It does include primary and secondary sources of information, giving way to a quality paper with a quantitative methodology.

The paper assumed many anticipated and unanticipated changes in the program of the leaders in evaluating the ongoing restoration of Greek-Russian Relations. It was not anticipated that following PM Tsipras’ first meeting with President Putin in Moscow that the earlier would not have joined V-day celebrations in Moscow in early May 2015 but did anticipate the participation of the PM of Greece at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum in June 2015.

The second meeting was expected and foretold.¹⁵ It was the case that Tsipras was

¹⁵ Protagon article on “Tsipras’s limits” / Protagon, April 6, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.protagon.gr/?i=protagon.el.article&id=40443>. Invited by President Putin to attend the v-day celebrations according to the newsmedia group Protagon.

invited to attend V-day Celebrations as well, in less than a semester: constructive development in their bilateral relations. However, the Greek PM could not attend the event. The reason is quite clear: the ongoing discussion on the future of the Greek debt. Neither did the first ‘citizen of Greece’, the Honorable President of the Hellenic Republic, attend the celebrations. Rather, Greece was represented by the head of the Hellenic Parliament, representing the Greek Government Ms. Zoi Konstantopoulou.¹⁶

One would have assumed and expected that in the possible second meeting in Moscow in less than six months PM Tsipras would also extend an official invitation to the President of Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, to officially visit Greece to hold talks, establishing the most important agenda of meetings and ‘wishful thinking’ of enlarging and guaranteeing elements of security stability, development, growth and investment. Yet that was not the case.

Development procedures and effective engagement were expected, nonetheless. In the recent visit, Panagiotis Lafazanis, Minister for Development, met with his Moscow counterparts and experts to discuss the evolving possibility of Greece to meet the criteria of membership in BRICS.¹⁷

A membership in BRICS will eventually be proposed by and through the support of the Russian Federation.¹⁸

We, therefore, assume that strategic alliances will eventually and further be proposed, examined and discussed, considering geostrategic trends and global development opportunities. Historical agreements and treaties will be re-institutionalized. A new balance in the region will be implemented.

Legal and political treaties and legal rivalries will now give way to new discussions.

¹⁶ Paul Mason: “Just Spotted Greek Parliament President Zoe Konstantopoulou Laying Wreath at Moscow V Day. Is She Only NATO Presence There?” Mode of access: <https://twitter.com/paulmasonnews/status/596957271940272128>.

¹⁷ “Cash from BRICS”, Panagiotis Lafazanis Discusses Membership of Greece to BRICS / Ethnos Newspaper Greece, December 1, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.ethnos.gr/article.asp?catid=22770&subid=2&pubid=64195067>.

¹⁸ Request of the interviewee to keep anonymity for this information.

Actions will be considered for new positions. Statements and wishes are to be taken.¹⁹ An example: the Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Turkish and Bosphorus Straits²⁰ has not been renewed although its

¹⁹ According to a research visit in Moscow in May 2014, a concluding remark states that outstanding treaty and historical issues will give rise to new and further discussions that will reiterate balance of power and interests control in the regions in and around the Black Sea, Mediterranean region, The Turkish Straights and the Aegean Sea.

²⁰ The Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits is a 1936 agreement that gives Turkey control over the Bosphorus Straits and the Dardanelles and regulates the transit of naval warships. The Convention gives Turkey full control over the Straits and guarantees the free passage of civilian vessels in peacetime. It restricts the passage of naval ships not belonging to Black Sea states. The terms of the convention have been the source of controversy over the years, most notably concerning the Soviet Union's military access to the Mediterranean Sea. Signed on 20 July 1936 at the Montreux Palace in Switzerland, it permitted Turkey to remilitarise the Straits. It went into effect on 9 November 1936 and was registered in League of Nations Treaty Series on 11 December 1936. It is still in force today, with some amendments. The proposed controversial 21st century Kanal Istanbul project may constitute a possible by-pass to the Montreux Convention and force greater Turkish autonomy with respect to the passage of military ships from the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara. For more information on the document you can find here: http://sam.baskent.edu.tr/belge/Montreux_ENG.pdf. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which entered into force in November 1994, has prompted calls for the Montreux Convention to be revised and adapted to make it compatible with UNCLOS's regime governing straits used for international navigation. However, Turkey's long-standing refusal to sign UNCLOS has meant that Montreux remains in force without further amendments. The safety of vessels passing through the Bosphorus has become a major concern in recent years as the volume of traffic has increased greatly since the Convention was signed – from 4,500 in 1934 to 49,304 by 1998. As well as obvious environmental concerns, the Straits bisect the city of Istanbul with over 11 million people living on its shores; maritime incidents in the Straits therefore pose a considerable risk to public safety. The Convention does not, however, make any provision for the regulation of shipping for the

time has now passed. To add, the future of the Crimean Greeks and the Sea of Azov Greeks, is yet to be specifically discussed with Russia who may play a role of 'safe-keeper' of Hellenic culture, traditions and religion in the Azov Sea. Greeks are established in the areas of southeast Ukrainian oblasts of Luhansk, Donetsk and Mariupol.²¹ To finally add energy to future security and transport from Russia to energy dependent states, via Russia, through Turkey to Greece and beyond.²²

The current state of affairs, all in all, should be expected to develop. Bilateral relations will be strengthened. The Prime Minister of Greece wishes political force reaction to current 'obstacles', with the support of the Russian Federation. Stronger bilateral relations best consider options, while grave geopolitical changes continue in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea regions. Considering the

purposes of safety and environmental protection. In January 1994 the Turkish government adopted new "Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits and the Marmara Region". This introduced a new regulatory regime "in order to ensure the safety of navigation, life and property and to protect the environment in the region" but without violating the Montreux principle of free passage. The new regulations provoked some controversy when Russia, Greece, Cyprus, Romania, Ukraine and Bulgaria raised objections. However, they were approved by the International Maritime Organisation on the grounds that they were not intended to prejudice "the rights of any ship using the Straits under international law". The regulations were revised in November 1998 to address Russian concerns.

²¹ For More information visit, on Ethic culture of the Azov Greeks: <http://www.azovgreeks.com/agma/index.html?page=hstry>; http://www.greeks.ua/content/research-seminar-ethnic-culture-of-the-azov-greeks-the-experience-and-the-prospects-of-research_en/en. The author travelled to Ukraine and in specific the Azov sea areas, Including Luhansk, Mariupol, Donetsk. Discussed and interviewed local people and indigenous Greeks living in the area. Visited the community centers and hospital in Mariupol, and villages around were a large number of Greeks live at. September 2013-October 2013.

²² Tsipras – Putin Speak of Spring, Agree on Energy – Trade Cooperation / New Europe, April 8, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.neurope.eu/article/tsipras-putin-speak-spring-agree-energy-trade-cooperation/>.

both leaders' prospects and options, the both project interlocutors work and, therefore, are expected to propose issues, which will consider providing an end to existing instabilities and emerging threats on the basis of the both countries' national interests and policies.

This paper is clear of theoretical subject matters. Pragmatism and realism are key elements of canonical policy, with which re-orientation of relations develops.²³ A sole methodological approach to this level of research currently matures, while relations between the two countries develop and events are unfolding. The paper evaluates critical position statements made by decision-making centers. It examines current and recently past analyses, media-world reactions on the relations of the two states and adds value through its primary information collected during academic research trips in Ukraine (September-October 2013), Russia (May 2014) and Greece (September 2014).

The most recent primary information for the creation of this paper was collected from March to April 2015, a few months after Mr. Tsipras took office as the Prime Minister of Greece.

This paper attempts to clarify positions. It puts forward issues for consideration. It establishes reasoning and accountability on the importance to hold bilateral strong long-term structured relations. The paper attempts to increase the level of anticipated results and seeks solutions in standing issues; namely, in the fields of economics and investment opportunities, transit routes, energy security and the future cooperation of the two sides in the field of foreign and security policies.

As a disclaimer, this research is by no means associated with any government, ministries or centers of interest. This paper is a part of academic research. It bears all the freedoms of an academic paper and reflects solely the work conducted by the author. This is an independent study that reflects needs, realities, variables, validity in questioning issues and adding issues and proposals for consideration. It is not associated with any government or any center of decision-making. It is associated

with the research work of the author namely in the field of international security, strategy and development at the American University in The Emirates in Dubai.

ECONOMIC CRISIS, GREEK AND RUSSIAN OPPORTUNITIES

The recent economic crisis has not left anyone unaffected globally and regionally. Fiscal constraints did not leave enough space for people and states, to 'manoeuvre' for new investment, development and infrastructure.²⁴ The same case applied to Greece, which is no less than a victim of itself and of interested lenders with high interests but also of false political turns, in fiscal strategic economic growth, orientation and prosperity levels.

Greece by 2015 is under a debt loan. Its official economic recession dates back to 2010. By 2015, Greece is yet again at a financial deadlock – the result of a political turmoil that led to the change of government in January 2015. Today, under the leadership of Alexis Tsipras, a leftist by ideology, Greece seems to defy current restructuring measures imposed by the EU and the IMF and the ECB (European Central Bank) and looking at possible other options, namely from countries of the global market, looking at their spheres of influence. The countries, which are attractive to the geopolitical and geostrategic needs of Greece, are large countries with non-direct borderline with the state, powerfulness in history, traditions and cultures binding the two or multiple sides, and the willingness to invest. These countries are at the eyes of the Greek government: the USA, the Russian Federation, People's Republic of China, India and Brazil, to name a few, and/or other, also new, institutions that can satisfy independently Greece's needs being the World Bank or the newly established BRICS bank.

What led to the systematic economic disintegration and the necessity of alliance resettlement is quite simple: bad fiscal control during the decades of the 80s and 90s; private

²³ When Tsipras Meets Putin: an Opportunity for Fruit Diplomacy? / The Guardian, April 8, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/08/greece-russia-tsipras-putin>.

²⁴ Ronald Janssen. Greece and the IMF: Who Exactly is Being Saved? / Centre for Economic and Political Research, July, 2010. Mode of access: <http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/greece-imf-2010-07.pdf>.

interests and a 'rotten system of then populist government' that somehow satisfied the needs of the then emerging European Community. At the same time, the Greece membership in the European Community before 1981 was seen more as an action of security and established capitalism inside the state, which made a good opportunity for Western influence in the Balkans and unstable Turkey. Eventually, over the years, European integration process succeeded to a point. A European identity was created. Neighborhood policy and enlargement procedures produced viable robust long-term results and integration within the EU frameworks became a necessity for those who are 'aspired to become a member or a trade member with the EU. In all of this, Greece which succeeded much of settling in as an equal member of the EU was at the same time a receiver of large amounts of funds, which would provide for restorations, establishments and development. As soon as Greece reached its peak with the Olympic Games, welcomed back in Greece by 2004, Greece's country and per capita GDP has reached similar levels with the rest of Europe, while inheriting a common currency, the euro, by 2001 and giving up one of the oldest currencies in the world – the Greek Drachma.

The change happened fast. With the new EU regulations as well as control, provided to the EU reaching to the EU Lisbon Treaty of 2009²⁵ on further legal and political integration, some had found the opportunity to miscalculate or exploit power over time. This phenomenon eventually led to the emergency and immediate action loan of Greece before 2010, when its financial strategic growth plan had failed. The program initially supported by the IMF in 2010, which also revived the IMF marketing advertisement as an institution, as people now constantly speak about the IMF, at times of austerity and cutbacks. The loan was for 256 billion euro for Greece, a state of 14 million people, according to the latest demographical statistics of 2009.²⁶

By 2015, five years onwards, Greece has managed to make payments and take

appropriately settled installments, while its society slowly disintegrates, as it seems not to be able to cope with taxation policies. Although Greeks seem to be wishing to pay, the taxation is high, direct and indirect taxation is not stable in terms of when, how much and for how long. Foreign investments have not been declared or completed just yet. Programs of registered investments are solely made in specific numbers being until January 2015, facilitated by the former Prime Minister's Samaras office or 'political environment', or at least seen as such by the Greek public as we questioned many of them. Today we know nothing about how the future will look like. What will come about soon after and especially considering the current negotiations processes of a new debt loan agreement that may facilitate social reconstruction for starters and may lead to the creation of a new industry system that does more than the current one?

Greece seems not only to face economic constraints but also political changes. All results show a question of credibility, the sovereign approach in policies and abilities to deliver in practice. This is a result of a public debt loan, which has a false approach and cause²⁷ over the short period of five years.

The downgrading of the Greek government debt to 'junk bond' status back in April 2010 created a European and global alarm in the respective financial markets.²⁸ A domino effect, one may say, took place. It led to financial degradation, as well as in other countries, especially those of South Europe and Western Europe, Ireland and a non-European country, long overdue to fail first, Iceland.²⁹

The PIGS states (Portugal, Italy, Greece, and Spain) entered a bailout system and loaning

²⁵ The Treaty of Lisbon: Mode of access: http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/lisbon_treaty/ai0033_en.htm.

²⁶ Statistical demographic information.

²⁷ Greek Debt Deadlock Hits Share and Bond Prices // *Financial Times*, April 25, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/675da560-e82a-11e4-894a-00144feab7de.html>.

²⁸ Zettelmeyer, Jeromin; Trebesch, Christoph; Gulati Mitu. *The Greek Debt Restructuring: An Autopsy*. – Peterson Institute for International Economic, 2013. 67 p. Mode of access: <http://www.iie.com/publications/wp/wp13-8.pdf>.

²⁹ Iceland Rises from the Ashes // *The Guardian*, October 6, 2015. Mode of Access: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/06/iceland-financial-recovery-banking-collapse>.

procedure, which guarantee affordability in payment of salaries and affordability of reset of production, with the proper strategic planning of paying back, but with much-needed restructuring. The case seemed not the same for Greece, which lent more funds that it should have.

Public bonds in Greece rose high. Not a good sign for possible economic growth. Micro-economically, demand and supply were no longer met. Private capital markets were practically no longer available to afford Greece's debt and Greek Banks debts. There was an urgent need to restructure the fiscal sector including the fiscal, social, services, industrial and banking sectors. On the 2nd of May 2010, the Eurozone countries and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed on a €110 billion initial bailout loan for Greece. The conditions were to comply with the following three key points:

A. to implement austerity measures and to restore the fiscal balance;

B. to privatize government assets with an initial total worth of €50bn by the end of 2015;

C. To keep the debt's structure sustainable to the global market needs.³⁰

Indirectly, this meant a request to a total restructure of Greece, for the country, to meet the emergence and needs of global markets but also global new challenges. Eventually, this would lead to social and political restructuring, possibly rendering Greece in the future, an attractive market again, but not in the short-term.

Development and growth for Greece can only come about through several steps, namely meeting the needs of the competitive business market world. This includes mergers and acquisitions (middle to small size businesses), and industries upgrades or closures.

Greece is to meet a new capitalist framework that is to be associated with a corporatist environment, one that would/will be globally applied and make the market both attractive for investment and strong in making capital 'made in Greece.'

This is the new economic world order in business viability terms for Greece. Global

market shares will 'add' or 'make' Greece a global market 'services' provider. It will be a clear long-term financial application to both lenders and investors which seek global market opportunities and investments, but most of all seek long-term stability and feasibility planning.

Mergers and acquisitions are currently initiated through the Committee of accredited members for the sale of public property³¹ to make the market more robust. Yet more are needed. Vigorous structural reforms and new acquisitions will improve competitiveness and growth prospect; from the financial to the banking sectors, services and industries, including the sale of major industry, tourism and private infrastructures and estates. The legal system should be 'renewed' in practice. The health system should meet the needs of the 21st century in infrastructure, technology and services, while private and public insurance and the tourist sectors are currently being restructured and rebranded. Greece needs to meet requirements for affordability in expenses and profitability either as a public or private investment that will satisfy service needs.

For the first two years of the IMF loan period, namely from 2010 to 2012, the Greek economic debt seemed not to be reliable enough and, therefore, its payment dues would not be possibly made. A reformation of the loan, with a restructured procedure, was tasked. It would now be handled, by the European Union. A European monetary group and the European Central Bank would share the burden with the IMF. In essence, the EU is for the first time in charge of a member's state dependency, namely Greece over its debt. Making or marking for the EU a first action with which the EU would be evaluated based upon its credibility and abilities to deliver, making sure the validity of the loan payment action methodologies and a restructured planning that would further integrate Greece in the European Union according to the Lisbon Treaty. The European Central Bank and the Euro-economic working group of the Eurozone members are now in charge of all consequent policies to follow.

³⁰ Europe and IMF, agree to a 110 Billion Euros Financing of Greece / IMF, May 2, 2010. Mode of access: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2010/car050210a.htm>.

³¹ TAIPED, "ΤΑΙΠΕΔ" // HRADF. Mode of access: <http://www.hradf.com/el> (the Public authority accredited to sale public property).

However, the procedure to meet the required EU needs rendered the Greek state vulnerable. Greece's dealings fit well with the 28 EU members, the Eurozone members and the IMF, however, do have a strong impact in its social structure and political actions.

The aforementioned made Tsipras's new government tasks since January 2015 quite difficult, as the government represented not only the Greek Left but also social voices from a different range of political party affiliations that can no longer cope with the new rules, procedures and surely vast amounts of taxation.

Tsipras came in hard, adding red-lines and strong political and fiscal objectives. His strategic plan is to negotiate with an initial team leadership and then a government task force. It is headed by its Ministry of Economics and its new minister, Dr. Yanis Varoufakis, a solid personality in economics, with however a questionable negotiating effectiveness that is yet to be proven.

Tsipras' tasks were/are to have a new deal, and/or a group of deals. Deals that will possibly both create affordability of debt payment but also create affordability of global market exposure and development and social restructuring. It is well understood, however; action planning and procedures during the negotiation period are quite different. Negotiations have been going on since the national elections of Greece, in January 2015 nominated Tsipras its Prime Minister.

By June 2015, negotiations are evolving. It is clearly hard to find common ground on solid debt repaying methodology and effectiveness. Eventually, fall out of negotiations, may lead Greece to a 'death-row action', known as Greek Exit or Grexit.

Unfortunately, the economic crisis in Greece is to last for many years. It requires rigorous and serious decisions to be made. A structured planning procedure, a commitment to a strong strategic planning, which needs to be made so not only to bring Greece back and to restore its financial, social and political reliability but to make it a front-runner in regional and global politics. Restructuring, growth and most importantly real-market investment and development; decisions, which will eventually have to be taken, will have to

reflect Greece's future prosperity, growth and development but as many as few possibilities of negative reactions to Greece's society.

A sudden deadlock or breakdown of negotiations will lead to grave challenges and threats. While the new government wishes are slowly downgraded through the steps taken slowly by the Euro-working Group,³² the negotiation procedures continue. Time seems a 'minefield', as time and money are lapsing. A possible resolution to the debt restructuring should be finalized by the end of June 2015 through the Eurogroup and ratified by national parliaments of the states of the Eurogroup, the ECB and the IMF.

Syriza's government will eventually follow similar path payment procedures on the baseline as the predecessor government did with minor or in several cases major changes. The tasked payment methodology will eventually not change. That is clear. Privatization will eventually continue. New taxation policies seem to be negotiated. Greeks will eventually have to face the new realities and consequences.

The sequence of events that will follow will lead Tsipras to ask for more Russian direct investment application and possible BRICS association through membership. Privatization of major industries, sectors and services will continue. Businesses and public infrastructures will be sold. Peripheral and national port authorities, airports and marinas, highways and national rail company among others will be privatized partially or completely to secure fund allocation and sources of income at least for a period lasting until the next general election period. Greece at the same time may become a supplier of Russia's gas and petrol. It will satisfy Russia's military presence in the Mediterranean ocean, and why not in the Aegean if needed.

New challenges will come about. New and emerging economic institutions will give rise to the opportunity for Greece's possible sustainable growth and investment, as long as there is a strategic plan and procedure for the foreseeable future. In this case, BRICS reconstruction bank seems to be an option and/or an opportunity for Alexis Tsipras.

³² Eurogroup Consilium: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/eurogroup/>.

His task will be a difficult one. With social and political pressure, national and European, he, among the others, will have to convince Western debt owners that he will bring about a political balance in Greece, a fiscal growth rate, a robust payment methodology and new investment opportunities. Tsipras will take Greece back to the multipolar international political framework,³³ where Greece has a balanced role play as an ally in the region.

Realities and consequences will need to be faced with. A possible Greek exit from the Eurozone, known as Grexit, although an alternative, may not be the best alternative.³⁴ People may believe that a Greek exit will make the national market in the long-term more attractive, due to Greece's location and posture, with early profitability; however, the social circumstances in the short-term period will render Greece vulnerable to social and political instabilities and reactions of questionable security in the country.

Greece will eventually have to resolve standing matters. Greece should find a way to pay off its debt. It is a loan after all. It should have not been agreed, but this is now a rhetorical argument. Greece should have never put itself to the IMF or Eurogroup in such a political and social disposition, the way that it did. This is, however, an entirely different discussion and analysis, which questions morality and ethics in politics, business and society.

Greece's government should attempt to provide concrete, practical, realistic not canonical solely solutions. There are options. Greece will soon face a true opportunity at hand for both its people and possible investors and supporters. Nevertheless, with what geopolitical or strategic cost, I wonder?

An opportunity may be a structured plan of true and actual development, a plan of strategy and effectiveness in putting the 'train back to the rails'. It may stand out in practice as a solution. True development is requested.

³³ A similar reference was made by President Putin on the basis that BRICS reconstruction bank is a key element that brings back a multipolar world // *Russia Today*, March 22, 2013. Mode of access: <http://rt.com/news/brics-multipolar-world-putin-635/>.

³⁴ There will be chaos said Dr. Efthymiopoulos // *Reuters*, May 20, 2012. Mode of access: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/20/us-greece-newdrachma-idUSBRE84J03Q20120520>.

Development procedures should stand out for real market re-orientation, trade, growth, investment and assistance with services and mobility actions that will render Greece innovative in terms of basic and major city and country infrastructures, all of which will boost investments in the country.

International economic zones should be set up. Foreign Direct Investment should be directed to Greece,³⁵ country, which otherwise is safe, sound and stable, unlike areas of conflict and zones of frozen conflicts or possibilities of unknown external threats.

The major part of the profits of the international zone of taxation should be directed to direct pay of the debt, loan and interests that come with.

Ambitious projects should be declared. Those that relate to energy and direct trade cross-border, regional and international financial growth, development projects of sustainable effectiveness that provide and guarantee financial security. New and smart cities should be created.

Sustainable growth should be established. Strategic planning that recommends an action plan in a timeframe and real action should be projected. This will provide investors with the capital investment back, sustain and afford the investment and will allow a positive outcome, otherwise known as profit.

Local and national GDP will rise again, getting in the way of a five-year recession plan with more years surely to come, if this way and policy persists. The current state of affairs will change. Institutional renewal, innovation and stability will be provided. New employment opportunities, in education, research, health, innovation and other services, will also be provided. A total strategic reallocation in military security affairs will be examined as long as Greece's role within the framework of both the EU and NATO is still protected.

Where the West sees Russian foreign and defense spending or presence as a threat, it is widely and commonly believed in Greece, that Greece can bring a balance to the power

³⁵ Efthymiopoulos, Marios; Zeneli Valbona. *From Transition to Opportunity: Security through Economic Development & Institutional Strengthening Research in the World Economy*. – Toronto, CA: Sciedu Press, 2012. Vol. 3, Issue 2.

relations between the West, namely the USA, the EU and NATO with Russia.

In essence, marking an economic alliance and re-emergence opportunity of Greece to go along the global market economies, through as well Russia's global market shares, making Russia a gateway to the emerging Eastern market, is a well-structured opportunity.

Financial security, energy security and trade as well may offer stability not only in Greece but the in the South-East European States with European and global aspirations.

Greece's opportunity for financial security will become an aspiration for regional states. Financial security and prosperity is applicable through development projects. Development projects will render cross-border stability if they happen in a cross-border area as well. It is expected to resolve regional issues and disputes and move along the lines of sustainable growth and knowledge economic and development prosperity practices. It will certainly increase the chances for success. It will commit the aspired the South-East European states, to integrated engagement through Euro-Atlantic structures, rendering the region as secure militarily and political for the long-term, while also aspired global market opportunities.

Fiscal security, however, cannot be assured or guaranteed. This is a competitive market approach. Through the framework of relations between Russia and Greece, the stage of competition can be met. There should be a clear long-term projection, commitment and an ambitious strategic plan for total actual growth and development at all fields. For and of a structured innovative and new community engagement and a new market economy that does more for both its citizens, tourists and investors.

The creation of the FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) Network between the two states through the creation of IDN (Interoperable Development Network) would be considered as a 'road map to success.' It will guarantee stability, investment and true development. The FDI through the IDN will guarantee fiscal security and growth in practice. It will eventually recommend for political, military security but as also stability in the region. It will be innovative, co-operational and multilateral. It will create and combine current existing institutions. It will create new institutions of joined conceptual

and practical policies. It will provide actual deliverables for long-term sustainable growth projects that assure sustainable stability, security and profitability.³⁶

Greece and Russia differ. Their prisms of interests differ, power and projection planning as well, checks and balances too. However, they do have more to cooperate with that unites a common cause for a global market effectiveness and cultural diplomacy appreciation. A joined pillar for growth and actual development between the two countries is in a canonical way a strong answer against the growing instability of the market and regional instabilities.

CULTURE, DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

Cultural Diplomacy complements values that projects national influence and gives a way to foreign policy objectives. Cultural diplomacy maybe a 'possible bypass of existing difficulties'. It may positively affect the both countries. Issues of finance, trade, energy, tourism and technology agreements, inter alia, can be added in the agenda of cultural and now effective diplomacy. We are to see a gradual increase of joined decisions that attempt to have an impact factor practically in both regional and international levels through which cooperation will be established.

Cultural Diplomacy will become a 'hub for transport for information and actual development'. It will be an instrument that binds the two. It also binds regional needs for stability and the balance of power that will come about with, if cultural diplomacy is associated with development.

Cultural Diplomacy is not a new policy orientation, for all the countries. The approachment of cultural diplomacy as a policy affects politics. The prisms of realism and pragmatism in international politics projects new realities. Grave geostrategic changes occur. Challenges constantly emerge. Power leadership is projected. Technology is associated with progress, development but also leadership success. Local communities and

³⁶ Efthymiopoulos, Marios; Zeneli Valbona. From Transition to Opportunity: Security through Economic Development & Institutional Strengthening Research in the World Economy. – Toronto, CA: Sciedu Press, 2012. Vol. 3, Issue 2.

societies become global in a local way, through their cultural identity. Cities become truly diverse and multi-cultural. These characteristics now create a field of new policy orientation, mixed in international politics, with which actions are taken named as cultural diplomacy.

Policy and diplomacy of culture as an instrument for influence is not a new policy for Russia. During the Soviet Era, it was part of the “Marxist-Leninist” ideological policy of the Communist Party.³⁷ Education and enlightenment were seen as ‘preparatory courses for party orientation’. The same system is also now applied. Formed during the 20s and 30s, today it seems to reshape itself, to meet capitalist and or corporatist needs of the 21st century.

According to Compendium, “this system remained mostly unchanged until the late 1980s, despite several superficial alterations. Its basic components included:

- Creation of a broad network of state cultural institutions with a strong educational component;
- Formation of a strict, centralized administration and ideological control system;
- Enactment of corresponding regulations;
- Support for classical or high culture that was perceived as loyal or neutral in content³⁸;
- “... Since 2003, the Federal Government of the Russian Federation, in the spirit of better transparency and more effective budget spending:
 - Re-distributed responsibilities between the three administrative levels by passing more tasks to the regional and local ones;
 - Introduced performance budgeting, and enlarged competitive distribution of budget funds;
 - Created new juridical forms for NCOs (non-commercial organizations) to stimulate institutional restructuring of the culture sector (changing the status of the former state cultural, training and research institutions); and
 - Fostered development of state-private

³⁷ Kellner Douglas. Cultural Marxism and Cultural Studies. Mode of access: <https://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/essays/culturalmarxism.pdf>.

³⁸ Compendium: Cultural Policies and Russia / Cultural Policies. Mode of access: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/russia.php>.

partnerships, desettlement, and privatization in the socio-cultural sector, including restitutions to religious organizations...³⁹

Considering onsite research, information collected and discussions held in Moscow in mid-May 2014, this paper considers that the Russian Federation is in the preparation of a 21st-century cultural strategic concept. We may name it as ‘a Global Russian, Heritage Concept’. It would be safe to assume that Russia’s cultural diplomacy and policy by the end of 2014 is an added value towards foreign and defense policies.

As soon as the geopolitical issues are concerned, Russia claims the right for policy orientation. Crimea, a most debated issue, was and still is a matter of heritage for the Russian Federation; and Crimea seems to be only the start for both political affairs and business actions. Crimean Russians are now part of the Russian Federation.

Solitude seemed to be a key characteristic of request to unite with mother Russia and its Russian historical and cultural ties. A “historical mistake” that had to be resolved, according to Putin’s speech on March 18, 2014,⁴⁰ and unite Crimea to the Russian Federation. A necessity to Russian claims, according to his presidential speech address to lawmakers in Moscow soon before his visit to Crimea⁴¹ and Sevastopol.⁴² An issue was quite differently seen or addressed by counterparts and allies such as leading thinkers in the United States of America⁴³ and the European Union.⁴⁴

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ President Putin Addresses State Duma: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603>, March 18, 2014.

⁴¹ PutinAddressesLawMakersinMoscow//RTnews: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtM5rk4tods>.

⁴² Putin’s Visit to Sevastopol / EuroNews, May 9, 2014. Mode of access: <http://www.euronews.com/2014/05/09/president-vladimir-putin-makes-on-mention-of-ukraine-crisis-in-victory-day/>.

⁴³ Putin’s New Words over Crimea, Terribly Reminiscent of Hitler / EuroNews, March 20, 2014. Mode of access: <http://www.euronews.com/2014/03/20/putin-s-words-over-crimea-terribly-reminiscent-of-hitler/>.

⁴⁴ International Business Times: Ukraine Crisis: World Leaders React to Unfolding Disaster in Crimea / EuroNews, March 2, 2014. Mode of access: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/ukraine-crisis-world-leaders-react-unfolding-crisis-crimea-1438553>.

Cultural diplomacy is beneficial towards the national strategic and security goals of the Russian Federation. Throughout the heritage and education objectives that it comes with, Russia strategically orients itself and realigns the 21st-century objectives.

Mass media effectiveness as a forward engagement is a part of the cultural and heritage policies of the Russian Federation for the 21st century. It is a tool for marketing. An information and communication tool of strength, which describes Russian policies and understanding in the world community. It allows for more action and responsibilities.

The policy of cultural diplomacy for Russia is an issue of “management for cultural institutional networks.”⁴⁵ “...It was passed to the regional and municipal (local) levels and thus their funding was made dependent upon related budgets...”⁴⁶ At present, cultural diplomacy reflects community cooperation. It includes cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS countries) and those that are interested in being next to be allied or associated with the Russian Federation, surely and irrespectively of actions in the South East of Ukraine.

For PM Tsipras, cultural diplomacy will test development action and planning. In a bilateral level, it is understood that it brings the two sides closer one to the other. It aims for national interest agendas and action at an international level. *Greece* has limited resources and options in foreign and defense policy objectives. While Greece has lowered its national defense expenditure⁴⁷ and its NATO annual budget contribution to a 2.5% per annum, Greece looks at options that are cost effective or at least considered like this, unlike what international news media journalists claim.⁴⁸ Greece seeks benefit for it to improve its national ‘numbers’. To improve interests and

possibly bring a budgetary balance of Greece towards its debt to be paid, to the international organizations, states associated with and private debt owners. Greece wants and needs to find methods to project growth, which will trigger actual development actions.

Considering that Greeks are now using the Internet as an emerging source of information, Internet communication through which social media platforms do exist for, Greece seems to have established a variety of cultural diplomacy policies. Greece’s rebranding story, a marketing tool, helps to shape and associate Greece better with the tourism, its heavyweight industry Tourism, but also possible new trade agreements. However, its rebranding story-telling is not enough. It needs to be and go global.

Ultimately, Greece will need to shape a totally new foreign, defense and development economic objectives, for a new strategic long-term, robust plan that surely does more at the levels of much-needed approach what constitutes Greece in the global societal structure. One that evens the global market needs and equals profitability both in the micro and macroeconomic levels at the level of Cultural Diplomacy. This is the best method of approaching the international community.

Greece has a complete ‘file’ of existing and future ‘heritage policies’. It holds many reasons to call for action and/or alliances. As Greece’s culture and heritage is and can surely be understood as a global heritage. Ownership is therefore not an issue. It can be based on the need of protection and global heritage sustainability.

Greece is an ‘Archipelago’ of Archeology, architecture and design. Greece is a place of technology and natural beauty; a resource of morality and ethics, when combined, create a philosophical essence to reality and need of what constitutes a global culture and heritage; the birthplace of the Olympic sentiment, games and respect without fear of racism. This is the new social movement that should be established, one that does more for both the citizens and natives of Greece but also the world to which is associated and is assumed that this Great Nation can only benefit by great nations with respect, knowledge and regional and or global power projection.

⁴⁵ Compendium: Cultural Policies and Russia / CulturalPolicies. Mode of access: <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/russia.php>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Sipri Military Expenditure Database. Mode of access: <http://milexdata.sipri.org/>.

⁴⁸ Greece Can Pay Its Debts in Full, but It Won’t: The Signs for Greece’s Creditors Aren’t Propitious. Mode of access: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/greece-can-pay-its-debts-in-full-but-it-wont-1424384652>.

LOOKING EAST

Through the prism of agreed fields of cooperation, PM Tsipras and President Putin will develop fast track cooperation in trade and development process concerning bilateral issues. These relate with trade, growth, development and culture. Considering the joined press statement and images,⁴⁹ during their first meeting, and images during the latest St. Petersburg Economic Forum in June 2015,⁵⁰ both sides seem to attempt a re-emergence in otherwise much-needed relations.⁵¹ Irrespective of the current international disputes, namely events happening in Ukraine, the embargo to Russia from the West and the economic status of the Greek state, relations between the two should and will eventually be restructured and renewed. As for both sides, bilateral relationship is a one way street.

A long-term commitment and possibly a form of alliance management may be seen. New forms of cooperation will come into effect supplementing and complementing efforts. Transport, investments, services, new mineral resources exports, maybe sectors of cooperation, which will enrich the most recent of decisions, a gas pipeline, in which the costs of passing through Turkey, Greece and then on to Europe will be divided in an equal share, when in Greece with the Russian Federation⁵². Making and marking Greece as both a service hub and a consumer place through a sustainable growth strategic plan, which will eventually be developed and that will be time-profitable, it will be a strategic plan projecting investment, growth and profitability with all risk assessments associated with.

A signature from both for this new cross country pipeline will render the both sides to

look upon more inter-connected reasons and interests. A new plan will be developed which will be even more supportive in actions and will prevent and or assess possible disintegrating situations in which the both sides will be called to jointly act in and on behalf of their interests.

PM Alexis Tsipras considers possibilities of sustainable short and long-term development and actions while Europe turns its back on him. Accordingly, progress will benefit the both states possibly equally. A long-due and awaited move which does more to bring forth clear relationships with modern Russia, with new dealings, evidently exposing once more joined the cultural and religious ties with.⁵³

The PM of Greece considers pragmatism, a characteristic President Putin is considered for as well. They both want solutions that are valid, affordable and sustainable. In this way Tsipras expects to bring back actual development to the state in all of the possible sectors. Capital will be created with which Greece will meet its debt needs. Greece will look at practical sustainable development in all of its sectors and services; with a different view politically and economically than the current one supported within the state of affairs in Europe.

Political electoral success, which came in January 2015, provided reasoning for a new evaluation and reconstruction of a feasibility process, with all associated risk assessments. According to the aforementioned analysis, Greece may stand out as a viable country, through the following two options:

A. Tackling foreign and national debt. Inside the prism of European command and structure, while anticipating a Euro-Atlantic Trade deal that would probably ease some fiscal and trade issues for Greece while it fights to battle bureaucracy and faulty methods of exports and trade. At the same time Greece will face, and look at, the East for possible options that will not de-rail its EU relations on the basis of capital creation, investment, flows and payback process.

⁵³ In a discussion with a leading academic, it was stated that Russian interests are clearly stated in the field of Business with countries that hold a. great consumer numbers b. geostrategic location c. economic viability. Culture, is a most important asset of success.

⁴⁹ Press Statement and Replies to Journalists of the Bilateral Meeting: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/49220>.

⁵⁰ Zanettos, Nicholas. Russia-Greece Pipeline Kill Diversification Dream? // Signalive News, March 20, 2014. Mode of access: <http://www.signalive.com/en/news/energy/131103/russiagreece-pipeline-kills-eu-diversification-dream>.

⁵¹ Greek PM Defies Neocolonial Approach // Russia Today, April 9, 2014. Mode of access: <http://rt.com/op-edge/248093-greece-russia-talks-relations/>.

⁵² Tsipras & Putin to Sign Preliminary Deal on Gas Pipeline / Ekathimerini, June 17, 2015. Mode of access: http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsitel_1_17/06/2015_551190.

B. Through reforms that supersede already requested the Eurogroup and IMF or ECB reforms. The EU-IMF framework makes sure that the debt is paid back with conditionalities that may make sense in the paper but do not reflect and do not take specific variables into consideration, such as the slow death of Greece's civil society. Agrees with Western programming but with global economic standards in which joined or separate decisions with the Russian Federation shall be taken.

The visit to Moscow in early April 2015 was early considered by the West "a speculative visit, considering the current and ongoing debt negotiations".⁵⁴ A "Political Prophylaxis Syndrome", one could describe immediate reactions from Western Allies, in what others would call the visit as a scheduled and programmed meeting that was actually set up in early February 2015, during the visit of the Hellenic Foreign Minister, Mr. Kotzias to Moscow with his counter-part Mr. Lavrov.⁵⁵

The latest meeting in St. Petersburg during the Economic Forum was labeled by Western media the synthesis of a new strategy that is now seen in the eyes of the Greek PM, a reallocation of interests of Greece: Greece is now immuned from Western Orientation.

WAY FORWARD

The timing of reallocation of the strategic concepts of Greece amidst the fiscal negotiations with the European Union has certainly raised concerns in Europe and in the West. Yet it is also Greece's option and opportunity to engage in reaffirming its role with Global players such as the USA and the Russian Federation.

Greece is to allocate a new foreign and strategic policy orientation that will be fixed

and locked through difficult periods of fiscal years to come. Greece will continue to negotiate with its international debt creditors. For which some Greek officials have suggested and can now find funding elsewhere such as seen in the eyes of direct investment from global partners and institutions such as BRICS.

Russia will not provide eventually direct finance support to Greece, but rather through institutions such as BRICS, in which burden sharing between other members will complete a most needed puzzle of support to Greece.

Nonetheless, direct investment programs, direct sales and cultural programs will become the 'epitomy' of a new policy orientation with which Greece will come back to the more traditional period of support led by the Russian Federation and other supportive European leaders such as France rather than with the European Union, at least for the period in which a leftist, former communist supporter such as Alexis Tsipras will be leading the Greek State.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Greece is to experience grave changes. Challenges which are laid upon Greece will render the country more vulnerable. Stability and supportive actions are a must for a state, in which geographic location matters. Strategic planning ahead should be done in support with institutions such as the EU to reallocate debt and create a constructive payment plan. However, if this may not be the case, Greece will render itself to a more globalist view in which Russia and the USA as global powers along with those having a European but global orientation such as France, will allow itself for direct talks of mass investment opportunities while strategic planning, law and emotions of society change.

Cultural ties will play a great role in multicultural societies that share similar consequences with Greece. Religious issues will matter and reflect the needs of same religions to wonder their future either in the progress of Europe or in a new state of affairs that does more in terms of more and new joined interests that are now being cleared up considering threats coming from the Asian States and the Middle East.

⁵⁴ Alexis Tsipras Flies to Moscow Amid Speculation of Bailout from Putin // The Guardian, April 8, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/07/alexis-tsipras-flies-to-moscow-speculation-greek-bailout-vladimir-putin>.

⁵⁵ Joined Comments from the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Greece and the Russian Federation, as published by the Hellenic Republic Embassy in Moscow / MFA, February 11, 2015. Mode of access: <http://www.mfa.gr/russia/presveia/news/koinos-deloseis-upourgou-exoterikon-kotzia-kai-upourgou-exoterikon-tes-rosikes-omospondias-sergkei-labrob-moskha-11022015.html>.

Immunity from Western Policy Orientation: Revising the Relations between Greece and Russia

Marios Panagiotis Efthymiopoulos, PhD, Assistant Professor, American University in the Emirates, Dubai UAE, e-mail: marios.panagiotis@au.ae

***Abstract:** The article analyzes bilateral relations between Russia and Greece in the context of economic crisis in Europe taking into account historic, civilizational, economic, political and international factors. The author assesses possible opportunities which could be enjoyed with the intensification of cooperation with the Russian Federation and with international organizations, such as BRICS. Moreover, the article discusses the economic situation in Greece and possible ways of crisis-management.*

***Key words:** Greece, Russia, crisis, economy, West, reforms, debt crisis, Europe.*

Иммунитет против «прозападности» в политике: пересматривая отношения Греции и России

Мариос Панагиотис Эфтьмиопулос, PhD, доцент, Американский Университет в Эмиратах, Дубаи, ОАЭ, e-mail: marios.panagiotis@au.ae

***Аннотация:** В статье автор анализирует двусторонние отношения России и Греции в свете экономического кризиса в Европе с учетом исторических, цивилизационных, экономических, политических и международных факторов. Автор дает оценку новым возможностям, которые могут открыться перед Грецией в случае интенсификации отношений с Российской Федерацией и международными организациями с ее участием, включая БРИКС. Кроме того, в статье рассматривается экономическая ситуация в Греции и возможности преодоления кризиса.*

***Ключевые слова:** Греция, Россия, кризис, экономика, Запад, реформы, долговой кризис, Европа.*