



EUROPEAN UNION  
DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**17<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HERMES EXPO**

Thank you for your invitation to speak at Hermes' 17 Annual Expo. I am delighted to attend and present to your audiences the trade and investment related initiatives and policies of the EU and the U.S. as they develop and deepen their already impressive economic relationship.

Hermes Expo since its very beginning in 1992 shares our commitment to strengthening the transatlantic relationship. Suffice it to say, thanks to Hermes Expo staff's hard work, business people get to know better what's going on both sides of the Atlantic, and make informed business choices.

Organizations like Hermes Expo are doing a lot to raise awareness about the extend of the integration of the EU and the US economies, the activities our companies and their affiliates undertake on both sides of the Atlantic, the opportunities that are presented to them, as well as the obstacles they face. For these reasons, I would like to recognize Hermes Expo's President Paul Kotrotsios and his staff. They deserve a very big thanks for successfully promoting during all these years the Greek-US economic ties which are a vibrant part of the wider transatlantic relationship.

I believe the vision of Europe's founding fathers which led to the reconciliation of Europe's war torn countries through the European Economic Community (EEC), and then the European Union (EU) has everything to do with why you, the exhibitors and visitors of Hermes Expo, are here today. The economic relations and market integrations between the EU and the US have developed spectacularly. EU policies related to trade and investment, have provided the right wider policy framework to EU and U.S. companies alike and have in fact enabled Member States to develop the kind of deep and vibrant economic relations that now exist between Greece and the US.

The United States has always supported the European integration. From the early days as a purely economic bloc of 6 Member States to the continental size Union of 27 Member States today, active not only in trade but also in all global issues of concern to its citizens such as the global fight against terrorism, climate change, AIDS, the fight against poverty, providing assistance to those in need and promoting peace and respect of human rights around the globe.

Thanks to EU Membership, Greece has been able to modernize its agriculture, help its less privileged regions, build new infrastructure networks, create new jobs, create world class points of excellence on research and high technology and improve its education and training. Greece today is an outward-looking country, fully involved in European decision-making. It is particularly active in helping its neighbours to meet the conditions for their future EU membership, and it plays a prominent role in EU relations with the US, Balkans, the Middle East and others.

Having said all that, I hope that Hermes will continue its dynamic presence in the US and its very valuable efforts promoting US-Greek relations. I sincerely wish all the success to the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Expo.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Angelos Pangratis', written over a horizontal line.

Angelos Pangratis  
Minister and Deputy Head of Delegation