***Prospects and Opportunities of Greek Entrepreneurs for Trade and Investment in ΝIGERIA***

***Brief greeting from Mr. Vassilis Kotsis, Vice Chairman of the Greek Nigerian Chamber of Commerce and Technology***

* ***Your Excellences***
* ***Mr. President of the Hellenic – African Chamber of Commerce and Development***
* ***Esteemed speakers***
* ***Dear participants and friends***

My name is Vassilis Kotsis and I am the Vice Chairman of the Greek Nigerian Chamber of Commerce and Technology.

It is my honor to be among you all and participate in your event, representing our Chamber, its Chairman Mr. Michael Economakis who unfortunately cannot be here with us today due to his travelling outside of Greece, our Board of Directors as well as our members.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a fact that especially nowadays, more and more Greek business people affected one way or another by the various different crisis in the world, are searching to find new “Roads of Silk”, ways and places where they can trade and invest, expanding and creating long prospects for their businesses.

And what better a place than Nigeria to explore business and investing possibilities, offering among others the following advantages:

* + It is the largest economy in Africa as well as the biggest country in terms of population, with appr. 200million people (20 times bigger than Greece).
  + It is a country developing and growing every year, providing unlimited possibilities for success, open to new ideas and investments.
  + Has a labor force of over 80 million people, 50% of which age between 24 – 44 years old.
  + English is used as the main language
  + It is a friendly country to do business, having a very good investment support framework. A country trusted by numerous foreign businessmen and companies activating in Nigeria since many years, a lot of them coming from small countries like Greece or are direct competitors of Greece and Greek products in the global market.
  + But most important is the fact that Greeks and Nigerians are closer than we think, in mentality, culture, way of living and doing business. It is proven many times that when Greeks and Nigerians work together something good always happens, starting many years ago with the huge success stories of Greek families starting businesses in Nigeria like Koumantaros, Leventis and Mandilas families, to the recent example of the Antetokounmpo family.

On the other hand, there are difficulties and challenges to be faced. But, is it not like this for every beginning, especially in a foreign country? Seriousness, persistency and patience are the keys to any success, together with a good business plan.

We, at the Greek Nigerian Chamber would like to thank you for inviting us to this webinar, in an effort to make Greek businessmen aware of the wide prospects and numerous opportunities for Trading and Investing in Nigeria, as well as in Africa in general.

Our Chamber since its birth in 1999, has been working hard to promote bilateral business and investment activities between the Greek and Nigerian private sector. Having on board people with experience in various sectors of economy as well as doing business in Nigeria, we bring interesting parties together and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experience through workshops, business luncheons, seminars, trade fairs and missions, as well as other such activities that aid trade and investment.

It is very recently, in November 2021, that we have organized in cooperation with the Nigerian Embassy in Greece our annual GNCCT Investment Forum. It was a two-day event, attended by top representatives of the State and the business world from both countries, recording in detail business opportunities created in sectors such as agriculture and aquaculture, ports and terminals, education, housing, construction and cyclical economy. I am proud to say that it was an event that was completed with great success and very important participations and discussions.

Moreover, it was an event that made clear to all of us that there is a genuine interest from Greek business people to find new business ways and that the Nigerian authorities are ready to welcome and support new investments from Greece in multiple market sectors.

That is why we are happy to announce that a third trade mission to Nigeria is being programmed to happen in 2022, following the very successful ones we had back in 2015 and 2018. Details of this new trade mission will be communicated to all of you as soon as traveling days and programs are fixed.

I would like to thank for one more time the Hellenic African Chamber of Commerce and Development and especially it’s President Dr. Mousouris for inviting us in the today’s event and to call upon the Greek business community to be bold, take the extra step needed and join us in Nigeria and Africa in general, writing its own success story.