

1.It is an honor and privilege to participate in this meeting which I am sure will give us as well as to the rest of interlocutors the opportunity to reinvigorate our interest for further cultivating our bonds with the African continent and particularly with Ghana, since this country lies today in the epicenter of this visual gathering.

- 2. You know that the main target for the Greek economy in the coming years is a systematic increase in productivity and openness, as well as the creation of closer links between manufacturing and technology/innovation.
- 3. Saying that, the exponential character of Greek economy's orientation comprises also Africa.
- 4. I am sure you are well aware that the EU is determined to strengthen this relationship with the African states and to build a stronger political partnership, based on mutual interests and commitments. As the EU wants to bring EU-Africa relations to a new level, Ghana fulfills the required criteria and she is well positioned to be a partner of EU, for its economic potential, its shared values and its democratic track record.
- 5. Within this framework of plan of action and based on the features of the <u>Comprehensive</u> <u>Strategy with Africa</u>, Ghana will not make the exception of this understanding.
- 6. Ghana being rich in natural resources has a very strong development potential. At the same time, Greece on its part, is an important gate for doing business, having acquired indisputably valuable expertise and know-how in many sectors, like agriculture, tourism and renewable energy.
- 7. Taking into consideration the already existing favorite climate between Greece and Ghana, I am sure that members of the business community and private sector may take advantage of this fertile ground and work together and harmoniously for the implementation of specific projects.
- 7. I am confident that the today's gathering may signal a new phase of engagement with Ghana, bringing together Greek entrepreneurs, officials from both countries, experts from private sector to exchange view on issues of common interest and further elaborate on the steps to follow, as well as to articulate certain guidelines in order to streamline our policy and interests towards the African countries and Ghana, in particular.