

Opening ceremony and SNF award

TRANSFORMATION OF EXISTING SIX-LEVEL INDUSTRIAL BUILDING TO A SPECIALIZED CARE CENTER FOR MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

Non-profit organization “Ark of the World”

Tuesday, October 10, 2017, 07.00 pm

(Your Excellency Mr President, Father Antonios, Ladies and Gentlemen,)

On behalf of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Board of Directors, we would like to thank you for the honor and express the pride that we feel to be supporting the work of the *Ark of the World*.

The Ark’s great and difficult task is known to all. It is worthy partners-grantees such as the *Ark of the World*, through their actions and daily struggle to help and support those in need, that encourage us to continue our efforts to contribute, to the best of our abilities, to improving our present reality and fight for a better future for everyone.

With this in mind, we continue to support Greek society with grants in various areas. A prominent example of this is the new SNF initiative to further support the Health Sector in Greece, with a series of education and infrastructure projects, whose budget is expected to exceed €200 million. Furthermore, the SNF continues to respond to society’s urgent needs in order to provide immediate relief from the adverse effects of the socioeconomic crisis, having already almost completed three individual grant initiatives, totaling €300 million.

These initiatives include the SNF grant to the *Ark of the World* for the redesign, renovation and equipment for the new facilities of the Specialized Care Center, in the inauguration of which we have the pleasure of participating today.

The need to create structures to meet the growing demand for housing, feeding and teaching vulnerable social groups due to the general economic situation in our country, is an undeniable fact. Therefore, when we received the Ark’s request in 2011 to support its project for the reconstruction of the existing six-level Specialized Care Building, so that it may welcome the Ark’s new operating structures, we understood that we had in our hands a demand that fully fell within the priorities imposed by the needs of society and, hence, the priorities of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

Indeed, after investigating the request, we confirmed that we were dealing with a proposal that was accurately documented and correctly budgeted, by an organization with which we had worked together harmoniously in the past.

This is a six-level building, whose premises have been remodeled in order to house a nursery and kindergarten for children of abused women, a small guest house for women and children, a dining

hall/restaurant, which will provide daily meals to the homeless, education and training rooms, as well as an amphitheater.

The Specialized Care Center will provide a wide range of services to mothers and children with limited access to existing social structures.

In closing, it is our wish that bright examples such as the work of the Ark and its wonderful personnel, may function as a source of inspiration and as an example for all, reminding us of the moral duty we have to contribute to society.

We would like to thank Father Antonios, Mrs Katsimali, and the entire Ark “family” for their social contribution, dedication and professionalism. We are absolutely convinced that with your many years of experience, you will carry out your new mission with great success. We wholeheartedly wish you good luck in your continued work.