

STATEMENT

Mr. Andreas Dracopoulos,
Member of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Board of Directors

Athens, Friday July 18th, 2008

Mr. Andreas Dracopoulos, Member of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Board of Directors, stated the following, on the occasion of Renzo Piano's visit:

"...we are optimistic on our Project - the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center (SNFCC) and its development, which will include the Educational and Cultural Park (almost equal in size to the National Gardens in downtown Athens) and the new premises of the National Library of Greece and the Greek National Opera; we are also excited that the projects of the world renowned architect that we have selected, Renzo Piano, combine the applied green philosophy and functionality, along with high aesthetics.

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center (SNFCC) aims to become an important "destination" in our country, a new dynamic educational venue, a site of cultural evolution offering multiple activities, with the advancement of new technologies. The new premises for the National Library and the National Opera of Greece, will further advance education and the love for the arts, not only in the hearts of its local residents but for the visitors, as well. The Educational and Cultural Park, will become a lively green area – accessible to the general public (and to people with special needs). Its development will further enhance the vital "people and nature" relationship in a crowded city. Apart from the mere fact that it will be a "breath of fresh air", it will also function as a venue for various educational and cultural activities and programs, working in parallel to the National Library of Greece and the Greek National Opera.

Today, we informed the Prime Minister of Greece, Costas Karamanlis -whom we would like to thank for his ongoing personal interest and for the state's responsiveness and cooperation- on the Project and the preliminary study's progress.

We have already started all necessary procedures and talks with the applicable organizations, towards the execution of the contractual agreement of our grant, including the terms for construction and equipment.

Renzo Piano's detailed plans are expected to be presented before the end of the year".