

**MoU signing ceremony between the
“Maria Tsakos” Foundation and ClassNK
29th November 2013**

**Speech by Mr. Efthymios E. Mitropoulos,
Chairman of the BoD of the
“Maria Tsakos” Foundation**

Good morning dear friends. Likewise, I want to thank you for your presence here today.

Personally, it gives me great pleasure to open a new phase of co-operation with ClassNK. In my previous life I had many opportunities to work together with you either through AJAX or directly with ClassNK so, it fills me with delight to be here and welcome you to our Foundation, the “Maria Tsakos” Foundation.

I want also to express my delight for the progress that so far has been made in the relations between the Foundation and your Classification Society. As you may know Mr. Ueda, the whole story started on a Liberty ship during the liberty congress when your representative made a very good presentation on the program of your classification society and we thought with Captain Tsakos that it would be a great opportunity for us to enter a discussion which culminates, I am pleased to say, in what we are going to do here today which is the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding of Co-operation between ClassNK and the “Maria Tsakos” Foundation. And I want to express my strong belief that from now on, we move on to a stronger and closer relationship with mutual benefits and that this should be one of a number of research projects for many years to come.

I'll give a very short description on the project we work together at the present which we have named study S.H.I.P.S., and S.H.I.P.S. stands for “Study on the Health Impact of air-Pollution in Ships”.

The objective of the study is to assess levels of exposure to ambient particles to establish whether they constitute a health hazard for ship crews, especially those working in the engine rooms of ships, and to quantify any associated potential health risks. Consequently, to design practices and procedures to prevent such health related risks.

The study is managed by our Foundation, the “Maria Tsakos” Foundation, in co-operation with the University of Athens Medical School, the Department of Chemistry, your Classification Society and other entities from the private sector. Yourselves and our Foundation are co-funding the project and we thank you very much for your generosity and the financial support provided so far.

The project as you may know has two phases. First, a pilot study is underway to determine whether ambient air measurements of Particulate Matter, Volatile Organic Compounds, and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, reach health hazardous levels. If that is the case, then a second phase will determine specification and quantification of the associated health risks.

Within the pilot study, environmental fixed measurements and personal measurements are taken on 9 ships, all provided by the Tsakos Group of Companies, 3 liquid cargo ships, 3 dry bulk cargo ships and 3 containerships. On each ship, fixed standard monitors are placed in the engine room, the engine room workshops and the engine control room. Crew members from 3 different job positions in the ships complement, that is engineers, stewards and deck cadets will allow four people that are employed for control purposes and they will carry personal monitors and fill in a questionnaire at the time they depart the ship, during their work, during their shifts on a daily basis. It is expected that the overall program will be completed and the results will be reported no later than December 2014; so we have more than one year to run the project.

The study is relevant to seafarers' health and welfare and because of that it is in line with one of the primary objectives of our Foundation. The final results and conclusions of the study will be published in scientific journals and then, as we may decide together, forward it to relevant international organizations for example to IMO, to ILO, to the World Health Organization , to AJAX if you so wish, so that appropriate actions, if necessary, may be taken.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Rahim for his co-operation so far since he was established as our liaison in London and Mr. Hirata who was so kindly asked to come over and in this very room he made a very good presentation about your Classification Society.

Thank you.
