

Report of the Cyprus and Hellenic Affairs Committee
88th Annual AHEPA Supreme Convention
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
July 16, 2010

The following report was approved by the General Session of the 88th Annual Supreme Convention on July 16, 2010:

- 1) The Order of AHEPA will continue to work to strengthen the AHEPA Grass Roots Network, which uniquely distinguishes the AHEPA from all other Greek American organizations, and which if adequately developed, can serve as its most effective tool for the promotion of Greek American interests and ideals.
- 2) The AHEPA will continue its efforts to grow the Hellenic Caucus in the House of Representatives, which now stands at 158. Our goal for 2010-2011 is to grow the caucus by 60 new members.
- 3) The AHEPA commends the United States for granting Greece its Visa Waiver Program designation on March 9, 2010.
- 4) The AHEPA will support H.Res. 236, which urges Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul. (Presently 36 co-sponsors)
- 5) The AHEPA continues to support H.Con.Res.122, which calls for the return of the Parthenon Marbles to Greece (Presently 1 co-sponsor)
- 6) The AHEPA will support legislation calling for the removal of Turkish occupation troops from Cyprus, the human rights of all Cypriots and the preservation of religious and cultural monuments in the occupied territories.
- 7) The AHEPA will support the full restoration of federal funding in the amount of \$500,000 for the Voice of America's Greek Desk Service.
- 8) The AHEPA will seek to strengthen relations with other appropriate Greek American organizations in order to more effectively fulfill its mission, as it relates to Greece, Cyprus, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and to issues involving the FYROM, the Greek minority in Albania, and the Aegean Sea.
- 9) The AHEPA will seek to explore ways in which it can create awareness of the Pontian Genocide. The committee salutes the recent decision of the Swedish parliament to recognize the genocides of the Armenians, the Pontian Greeks, and other Christian populations of Asia Minor. Furthermore the committee is extremely pleased to recognize the commemoration of the name day of the Virgin Mary of Soumela by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on August 15, 2010 the first such liturgy since 1922. The committee will pursue closer cooperation with Armenian national organizations in order to obtain recognition of the genocide carried out by the Ottomans of the Christian population of Asia Minor. The AHEPA furthermore supports the Pontian Greek American community's efforts to secure full recognition and proper commemoration of the Greek Pontian Genocide.
- 10) The AHEPA expresses concern about the infiltration of Turkish and FYROM revisionist propaganda that has made its way into our public school systems, specifically in textbooks, and will explore the matter going forward.
- 11) The AHEPA will explore the introduction of a Federal proclamation designating the month of March as "Hellenic History Month."
- 12) The AHEPA will provide annual financial funding in the amount of \$20,000 for the Cyprus and Hellenic Affairs Committee, in order to strengthen its communications capabilities, to permit holding educational symposiums, and to permit printing of educational materials.

In addition the Committee:

- Unanimously adopted the resolution presented on behalf of the Pan-Macedonian Association of the U.S.A., by Bill and Nina Gatzoulis, regarding the name of the FYROM, see attached full resolution appendix “A.”;
- Was briefed by Panos Ioannides, PhD, on behalf of the Movement for Freedom & Justice in Cyprus, see appendix “B”;
- Reviewed “Statements made by the leadership of the Government of FYROM and other individuals regarding FYROM’s ethnicity and language,” presented by George Papageorgiou, see appendix “C.”

Furthermore, the Committee recommended AHEPA examine the following:

- Holding an academic-based conference on the topic of Israeli-Greek relations as they pertain to security, trade, and other issues of mutual interest;
- Presenting the positions of the Greek American community to the Greek government as they relate to Hellenic national issues;
- Posting the grass roots contacts sheet on the ahepa.org website; and
- Taking the initiative to organize visits of Congressional staffers to Greece and reviewing Congressional ethics guidelines as they relate to organizing such visits.

Moreover, the Committee affirms the Board of Trustees’ decision to formulate a PAC, and requests an initial contribution funding amount of \$50,000.

Also, the Committee will request time to make a presentation at the District Governors’ Conference on September 10-11 regarding our effort to revitalize our grass roots network and grow the Hellenic Caucus.

We will receive Consul General of the Republic of Cyprus Stavros Avgoustides for a briefing on Friday, July 16.

Moreover, the Committee retains \$300 collected through donations at the adjournment of our committee meeting.

This report was compiled with the assistance of Andrew Kaffes.

Respectfully submitted,

Standing Committee Members

Spiro Macris, *Chairman*
Col. Nick Vamvakias – Region 2
Savas Tsivikos – Region 3
Kip Kyprianou – Region 4
Carl Hollister – Region 5
Alex Christy – Region 8 North
Alex Rigopoulos – Region 8 South
Gilbert Kyprianou – Region 8 South

Standing Committee Members Absent

Demetri Kirkiles – Region 1
Sakis Onisiphorou – Region 7
E. John Rumpakis – Region 8 North

Convention Committee & Guests

Chris Achilleos

George Anagnostos, PSS

Ioannis Bougas

John Christou

Vassos Chyrsanthou

James W. Cocolis

John Galanis, Board of Trustees

Bill Gatzoulis

Nina Gatzoulis

Michael Georgis

Dr. Andre Gerolymatos

Isidoros Goryalakis

Luke Hajjantoni

Nick Hatjistilianos

Panos Ioannides

Gus J. James, PSP

Tasos Kalantzis

George Kalyvas

George Karatzia

Constantine Katsarakis

Arthur Kiratsous

Odysseas Kolasis

John Kopatsis

Paul Kostas

George Loxas

Dr. Ken Matziorinis

Anthony Mavromaras, Past Canadian President

Dr. Pete Nickolas

Nicholas Nikas

George Papageorgiou

Michael Paul

Nina Peropoulos

Peter Peropoulos

George Pitsicoulis

John Polydouris

John Soudas

Nikolaos Taneris

Elias Tsekerides

Stefanos Vertopoulos

Demetrios Yantsulis

Sam Zanaria

John P. Zois