

**Address by EuroAsia Interconnector  
Chairman and CEO Nasos Ktorides at the  
European Parliament on Wednesday, December 6, 2017**

**Mr Miguel Arias Cañete, EU Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy**

**Dear members of the European Parliament and guests**

The often-used phrase, "*May you live in interesting times*" is differently attributed to a Chinese saying to reflect positive change, usually linked to ongoing developments in a particular area or sector – hence living in 'interesting times' versus 'un-interesting times'. In fact, the closest this phrase gets to is a Chinese curse.

If that is the case, what would be the curse of today? The fact that after the great Industrial Revolution of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the next big achievement by man was electrification? Or that despite all the scientific and technological advances, some lands, or even entire nations, are isolated from what we now call "civilisation" simply because they do not have electricity?

Today's talk, "**Ending Energy Isolation in the EU**", could not have come at a better time.

On the one hand, events in the past decade have suggested that continental Europe and its thirst for energy cannot exclusively rely on, or be subjected to "on-and-off" threats from some suppliers. On the other hand, every citizen, every household, every community of Europe should be allowed to choose where he or she receives electricity from, be it locally produced power stations, or generated from natural gas and clean renewable sources of energy (solar, wind, thermo and hydro) from faraway lands, transmitted through high-voltage electricity cables under the Mediterranean, similar to what we are building.

The EuroAsia Interconnector Limited, as a leading Project of Common Interest (PCI) of the European Union, comprises of the electricity interconnection between the grids of Israel, Cyprus and Greece (via Crete) through a subsea DC cable and with HVDC onshore converter stations at each connection point, with a total capacity of 2,000 megawatts (MW). The project is an energy highway and bridge between the two continents with a total length of 1520kms and creates a reliable alternative route for the transfer of electric energy to and from Europe.

And to put it into context, the electricity demand of energy-isolated EU-member islands, such as Crete or Cyprus, that rely heavily on imported liquid fuel for their power stations, is around 1,000 megawatts for the first island and no more than 1,200 megawatts for the second.

Just two weeks ago, the Cyprus Government *Official Gazette* published the agreement between the energy regulators of Cyprus and Greece – the Cyprus Energy Regulatory Authority (CERA) and the Hellenic Regulatory Authority for Energy (RAE) – in the cross-border cost allocation of the EuroAsia Interconnector.

In justifying its decision, CERA said the EuroAsia Interconnector meets the guidelines for trans-European Energy infrastructure, as well as the guideline for cost benefit analysis of ENTSO-E grid development projects.

It added that the Crete-Attica interconnection and the Cyprus-Crete Interconnection “have reached sufficient maturity”, and that “the cost allocation between the two Member States is reasonable and documented and there is a net positive impact from the project on the involved parties”.

Thus, the EuroAsia Interconnector, that has completed all pre-works study phases and is scheduled for starting construction by 2018 and completion by 2021, will end the energy isolation of Cyprus as the last an EU member state energy isolated. It also creates the electricity highway from Israel-Cyprus-Crete-Attica-Greece through which the European Union can securely be supplied with electricity produced by the newly-found natural gas reserves in Cyprus and Israel, as well as from the available Renewable Energy Sources, contributing at the same time to the completion of the European Internal market.

And that is not all. The EuroAsia Interconnector promotes the substantial development of the Renewable Energy Sources and contributes to the reduction of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, with significant economic and geopolitical benefits to the involved countries and contributes to the EU target for 10% of electricity interconnection between Member States.

Finally, it provides significant socio-economic benefits at the range of 10 billion euros and allows for local investments with locally produced human resources, in other words, putting an end to the ‘brain drain’ of highly skilled people that some of our countries have been suffering from.

So, dear members of the Parliament, no matter what a Chinese philosopher may have said, we are truly living in interesting times, with tremendous benefits and opportunities for our local communities, ending the energy isolation and high cost of island power generation, and contributing directly to making a positive impact on the cost of electricity and cost of living of all European Union citizens.

Thank you,

Nasos Ktorides  
Chairman and CEO