

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Konstandinos Karamanlis of Greece in Strasbourg, France

April 4, 2009

President Obama. Well, listen, we're going to just make a very brief statement because, well, the meeting obviously was running late.

I am so pleased to have the opportunity to meet with the President [Prime Minister]^{*} and reaffirm once again the extraordinary friendship between Greece and the United States.

We had the opportunity to celebrate Greek Independence Day in the White House. And it was a reminder for all of us that not only is the United States inspired by Greece, not only were our Founding Fathers inspired by the values of ancient Greece, but that Greek independence was also inspired by the United States. It gives you a sense of the fact that we have shared values, a shared belief in democracy and liberty, that we have struggled and fought for that democracy and liberty as fellow members of NATO. Now in the 21st century, we continue to fight on behalf of those issues shoulder to shoulder.

So I'm very grateful to the Greek community in the United States for being such a wonderful bridge to Greece. Our relationship is strong, but I'm confident that in the years to come, on a whole host of issues, from dealing with the economic crisis to dealing with terrorism to dealing with energy, that the United States and Greece will be critical partners in all these international efforts.

So I'm very proud to call the President [Prime Minister]^{*} my friend and that the friendship between our two countries is very strong.

Prime Minister Karamanlis. Well, it is known that we have a very strong relationship between Greece and the United States. [*Inaudible*]^{*}—by those in the modern world which remain the core values: rule of law, democracy, freedom. And we share a very strong bilateral relationship and also close cooperation within the framework of the alliance.

As, President, you already mentioned, the Greek diaspora is a very strong link between the two countries—[*inaudible*]. And of course, we are looking forward to work closely with you to address all the problems our societies face.

President Obama. Wonderful. Okay, thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. at the Palais de la Musique et des Congres. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. White House correction.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Greece, Prime Minister Karamanlis.

Locations: Strasbourg, France.

Names: Karamanlis, Konstandinos.

* White House correction.

Subjects: France : President Obama's visit; Greece : Prime Minister; Greece : Relations with U.S.; Greek Independence Day : A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy; North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

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