

June 27, 2011

High Level Event
**“The European Statistics Code of Practice and the
Enhancement of Credibility of Official Statistics”**

Opening of the Event

by Andreas Georgiou

President of the Hellenic Statistical Authority

Honorable Ministers,

Secretaries General

Deputy Governor of the Bank of Greece

Director General of Eurostat

Chairman of the Partnership Group of the European

Statistical System

Partnership Group Members

Special Secretaries

Presidents of Chambers

Members of the Council of the Hellenic Statistical System

Distinguished delegates

Dear Colleagues,

It is my honor to warmly welcome you to this high level event. This event is co-sponsored by the Director General of the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of France and President of the Partnership Group of the European Statistical System, Mr. Cotis, whom I sincerely thank.

A few months ago, the idea of this High Level Conference was born during discussions with Mr. Cotis and Mr. Radermacher—the Director General of Eurostat. The idea was to have a high level event that

would address issues and challenges associated with implementing the European Statistics Code of Practice in European countries, including in Greece. Special emphasis would be placed on institutional aspects, quality of legislation and the role of government and public administration management in improving the quality of official statistics. All these concern very important matters that are critical to the ongoing major effort in the European Union to ensure full compliance with the Code of Practice. And full compliance with the Code of Practice is essential for the development, production, and dissemination of reliable official statistics.

It is important to note that the Commission intends to propose amending Regulation 223 of 2009 on European Statistics—the Statistical Law of the European Union—in order to reinforce the implementation of the governance framework of statistics. The goal would be to further clarify and ensure—by making it legally binding—the principle of professional independence of national statistical authorities, and this to be done consistently with the European Statistics Code of Practice, which is currently being revised to further elaborate the concept of professional independence.

It is my belief that European official statistics that are reliable are a major pillar in efforts to keep the Eurozone and the European Union robust. In the absence of such reliability of statistics, the future of the Eurozone and of the Eurozone is at risk.

It is significant that this High Level Conference is taking place in Greece. Since 2010, Greece has been engaged in an unprecedented effort to align its statistical system with the European Statistical System and to ensure the quality—and above all the reliability—of its official statistics. We have to take all necessary steps to assure that this effort is successful. This calls for full compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice and this, in turn, requires the

commitment and actions of both statisticians and the political system—legislators, government, and public administration management.

Before yielding the floor to prominent speakers, I would like to thank each one of you for honoring us with your presence here today and to wish you a very productive, successful and fruitful meeting.