



MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

4 March 2021

H.E. Nikos Dendias
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Athens, Hellenic Republic

Dear Minister,

My Dear Friend Nikos,

My good friend, it gives me great honor and pleasure to congratulate you on the 200th anniversary of Greek independence. Many centuries before modern Greece became independent, ancient Greece was the cradle of democracy, a place where key foundations of philosophy, science and culture were laid, foundations that are the base for today's Western civilization.

Since gaining independence 200 years ago, Greece has faced numerous challenges, at home and abroad, and has created a free and independent society, that is true to Greek values and philosophy. Greece is an integral and important part of the European Union and the Mediterranean region, it is a bridge between continents, peoples and cultures.

Greek-Israeli relations constitute an important anchor to the stability of the region and to regional cooperation and are of strategic value to both of our countries.

For many Israelis, Greece is their favorite tourist destination. Israelis feel at home in Greece, from the idyllic beauty of the islands to the historic treasures of mainland Greece, the fantastic Greek cuisine, culture and music are so familiar to many Israelis. For Israel, we are privileged to welcome Greek tourists and pilgrims.

The Jewish community of Greece has a long and varied history and has contributed significantly to Greece's welfare and prosperity. Communities such as Thessaloniki are critical to Jewish life as well as to the memory of the Holocaust and the brave actions of many Greek citizens in standing up to the barbarity of the Nazis.

Minister, I am confident that our two nations and peoples, will continue to build even closer relations at every level and I know that both Israel, and me personally, have a close friend and ally in you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gabi Ashkenazi', written over a horizontal line.

Gabi Ashkenazi