

‘The Greek American community welcomes you’: Archbishop Elpidophoros greets Mitsotakis in New York



NEW YORK — His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America welcomed Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Sept. 23 to the annual Greek-American Community “Oli Mazi” (“Όλοι Μαζί”) Luncheon in Manhattan, hosted by The Hellenic Initiative and 27 Greek American organizations. Mitsotakis is in New York for the high-level week of the 81st U.N. General Assembly. He was accompanied by his wife, Mareva Grabowski-Mitsotaki.

“The Greek American community welcomes you,” His Eminence told the prime minister in Greek. “It loves you and it stands by you.” “Thank you, and I am happy to be here once again,” Mitsotakis replied.



Energy was at the center of Mitsotakis' remarks on relations with the United States. He cited the Vertical Gas Corridor and Greece's role in supplying energy to the Balkans and Eastern Europe. He said a U.S.-Greek consortium would most likely begin exploratory drilling for natural gas next spring. He also spoke about his stop in California, where he met with Silicon Valley executives as part of an effort to strengthen Greece's position in technology and artificial intelligence. Mitsotakis described Greece as a pillar of stability in a very turbulent region. "Greece is a peaceful country, and we always seek good and productive relations with our neighbors, especially Turkey," he said. "We threaten no one, but we will not accept anyone threatening us." He also reminded those who hold voting rights in Greece to register on the online platform so they can take part in the next election.

Mitsotakis then presented decorations of the Hellenic Republic to six honorees:

Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev.

Michael Amiridis, president of the University of South Carolina

Dr. George Dangas, a cardiologist and professor of medicine and surgery at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

John Koudounis, president and CEO of Calamos Investments

Athena Kromidas, who for many years was principal of the William Spyropoulos Greek American Day School at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Flushing, Queens

Patrick Theros, a former U.S. ambassador to Qatar



Senior U.S. officials in attendance included Michael Rigas, deputy secretary of state for management and resources, and Aristidis Kourkoumelis, assistant secretary for trade and economic security at the Department of Homeland Security. Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was also present. Three members of the Greek government also attended: Environment and Energy Minister Stavros Papastavrou, Culture Minister Lina Mendoni and Deputy Foreign Minister Alexandra Papadopoulou. Elected officials at the luncheon included California Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis; New York state Sen. Andrew Gounardes; and state Assemblyman Michael Tannousis. They were joined by former New York state Sen. Michael Gianaris. Greek diplomats attending included Antonis Alexandridis, the ambassador to the United States; Iphigenia Kanara, consul general in New York; and Symeon Tegos, who was consul general in Boston until recently. Kyriakos Pogiatzis, consul general of Cyprus in New York, also attended.

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