Ελληνική Εταιρεία Γεωγραφικών Μελετών
«Ο Στράβων»

GEOPOLITICAL ACTUALITIES

- There is no sound geopolitics, without a keen sense of equilibrium of Powers.

- **Egypt**, the keystone of stability at the crossroads of Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa, Middle East, Read Sea and the Horn of Africa, is imperiled. Suez Canal and tourism revenues have tumbled, immigration from Sudan and elsewhere is growing, the Damocles sword of exodus of Gaza Palestinians via Raffa forced by Israel is hanging over the traumatized social nexus, the diversion of Blue Nile waters by Ethiopia, all these problems put together pose to Cairo an existential threat. The urgent financial assistance by the UAE, provides breathing space to President Al Sissi, yet much more is to be done.

Houthis would be put at bay; EU operation ASPIDES is at last a welcome demonstration of European awakening to challenges not beyond the horizon. Yet, it is of utmost urgency for all reasons, humanitarian, political, pertaining to regional stability, that Israel stops its military onslaught in Gaza and accepts a long term cease fire, as a prelude for return to the negotiating table with stated objective, no matter the sisyphean practical hurdles, the calling into existence of the state of Palestine, as the national home for the Arab Palestinian people.

- **Ukraine**

Worrying developments in view of Russia s staying power. The belligerents, are at a point of tactical military victory for Russia, while there is no apparent margin for Kiev to accept realities on the battlefield. The prolongation of war harbors immense risks; above and foremost for Ukraine itself, being in a process of galloping depopulation. Second, for Europe; the social fabric in several EU countries is weakening. Germany s competitive edge in industry is severely affected. President Macron s rallying cry against Russia seems to be falling flat. In terms of France s domestic politics this looks like “fuite en avant”. Realities are forbidding for military adventurism in the Russian steppe. Differences about opposing claims in Sahel should be addressed elsewhere by means of quiet diplomacy.

Time is of essence. Peace efforts in the near future, even before the next USA Administration, should be renewed. The earlier the better. Elections in

Kiev cannot be postponed indefinitely. Armistice would be agreed on the basis of uti possidetis. Constitution of Ukraine has to be thoroughly revised, so as to allow for a better representation of regions and minorities. Ukraine, for the benefit of the common European house, in function of its geographical location, should be declared permanently neutral, outside Alliances; freedom for churches should be restored and guaranteed. An international conference under the UN auspices would be convened to address the issue of war reparations and reconstruction.
And we in the West should liberate ourselves from the Brzezinskian obsession that we can deconstruct Russia, left aside the fact that we have played a part in the tilt of Moscow to Beijing.

- **Europe**
The impending decrease of American presence in Europe accentuates the necessity for choice; renewed pleas for strategic autonomy of Europe, stronger voices for further bolstering European defense industry and joint military planning, in conjunction but not under the umbrella of NATO s international military staff, are timely responses to the evolving conditions. This is also the residue of President Macron s Paris conference of last week.

- **Closer home, Greece**
The interests of Athens are served by proactive, peace building -and not frontline/outpost- diplomacy, embedded in the European and western political, cultural, economic nexus.

- De-escalation in Gaza, cessation of the IDF operations there, success of the maritime EU operation ASPIDES in defense of free shipping in the Red Sea, in coordination with the US, avoidance of a migration tsunami Gaza>Egypt>Europe.

- Deepening of communication with partners, friends and neighbors alike to help avoid misinterpretation of the Greek Turkish Athens Declaration of December 07, 2023.

- Fathom accurately Libyan realities and working to reclaim time lost, with a view to agree on delineation of the respective exclusive economic zones in the sea expanses between Crete and Cyrenaica. The second is destined by geography and history to be a focus of Greece s trade and economic cooperation with Libya.

- Solidarity with and manifold support of the Republic of Cyprus is first chapter of faith of the Greek foreign policy. Athens remains deeply committed in the resolution of Cyprus question with inter alia drastic reform of the system of international guarantees and evacuation of foreign military forces.

- Fifty years after the fall of junta, Greece should pursue its reforms, so as to embark on a “society of knowledge”, rebuilding a performing economy in a cohesive society, bolstering defense capabilities in view of alien ambitions,

without departing from the underlying foundations of the Greek state, namely Freedom-Democracy-Orthodoxy, tenets bequeathed by the founding fathers and enshrined in the Constitution. But above and foremost, Greece should stay a lighthouse for democracy and humanism, a beacon of culture and science, in the troubled intersection of S.E. Europe and the Levante, to resonate from the Black to the Red Sea.

Stravon of Amaseia,
Early March 2024