

# GREECE: VALUED ALLY. STRATEGIC PARTNER.

## Advancing U.S. Interests in the Eastern Mediterranean

Southeastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean combine to form an important geopolitical region to the United States due to the significant energy, commercial and communications resources that transit the region. The recent discovery of hydrocarbon reserves in the eastern Mediterranean reinforces this position. Therefore, it is in the United States' best interest that the region is politically, economically, and socially stable and democratic principles flourish, including adherence to the rule of law. Greece is a pivotal ally to advance these interests.

### Greece Contributes Significantly to NATO, U.S. Missions

- Greece is only one of three NATO countries to maintain the 2% minimum standard for military expenditures: (2.1%)
- **US NSA Souda Bay, Crete**, successfully implemented joint USN/USAF reconnaissance missions and air refueling support for **Operations Desert Shield/Storm, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom**.<sup>1</sup>
- **Libya**: 400 U.S. Marines deployed at US NSA Souda Bay, Crete, were "part of contingency planning to provide the president flexibility on full range of option regarding Libya" along with the amphibious assault ships USS Kearsarge and USS Ponce.<sup>2</sup> Tens of thousands of civilians were also evacuated to Athens.
- **Afghanistan**: Tens of thousands aircraft use Greek airspace, including 30,000 allied flights during one, two-year period. Greece offered personnel for training and security purposes and donated equipment, transportation services, and millions of Euros.
- **Egypt**: American citizens evacuated to Athens during Arab Spring.
- **Operation Active Endeavor and Ocean Shield**: counterterrorism and counter-piracy missions in the Mediterranean Sea and off the Horn of Africa.
- **Peacekeeping Operations**: Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan

### America Values Alliance with Greece

**President Barack Obama**: "...let me acknowledge Greece's efforts to extend the security and stability in our time...let me commend Greece, our close NATO ally, for standing up for the security and opportunity of people around the world—from the Balkans to Afghanistan, where Greek service members are helping to give people who have know[n] too much war the chance to live in peace and security." – March 9, 2010

**Bruce S. Lemkin, Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force**: "From World War II and the Cold War through today, Greece had remained a stalwart NATO ally and friend. [Since 9/11] Greece [has] provided strong political support, the use of Greek airspace, and offered Greek military assets to combat terrorism, including the deployment of a Greek frigate to the Arabian Sea for almost two years...Greece has been resolute in its support of operations in the struggles against terrorism and extremism, through the vitally important use of Souda Bay Air Field as landing base, unrestricted overflights, and providing a continuous rotation of personnel to Afghanistan since 2002." – March 19, 2009

### Greece: America's Historical Ally

- Greece: one of three nations allied with the U.S. in every major international conflict of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- WWII: Greece provides first major setback for Axis Powers at the **Battle of Crete**.
- NATO ally since 1952.

2.1%

Greece is only **one** of **three** NATO countries to maintain the 2% minimum standard for military expenditures.

#### GREECE:

1 of 3

**Countries Allied with the U.S. in Every Major International Conflict of 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

*"I feel strongly about the strategic value of Greece today and in the future... Greece is the finest strategic partner the U.S. could ever have...Greece stands beside it [the United States] even when it hurts [Greece]."*

**--Capt. J. Stephen Hoefel, U.S. Navy (ret.)**, former Commanding Officer at US NSA Souda Bay (2000 – 2003), May 3, 2011, AHI Policy Forum

### US NSA Souda Bay

Activity in 2012:

- **118** U.S. Navy ships
- **953** USAF aircraft
- **102** NATO vessels
- **148** NATO aircraft

Activity January 2013:

- **9** U.S. Navy ships
- **9** NATO vessels

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cnic.navy.mil/SoudaBay/About/MissionAndVision/index.htm>

<sup>2</sup> "U.S. troops arrive in Greece in Libya buildup," *USA Today* as reported by the Associated Press, March 3, 2011.

# From U.S. and NATO Missions to International Peacekeeping: *Greece Contributes to American National Security and Interests*

**OPERATION** NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center (NMIOTC)

**WHERE** Souda Bay Naval Base, Crete

**APPLICATIONS** Maritime Interdiction Training



NMIOTC opened in 2008. Funded by Greece, NMIOTC provides training for allies and partners of NATO, enabling them to better execute maritime interdiction operations. Greece also lends its maritime expertise which includes extensive experience with commercial shipping and port security.

- 30 percent of global maritime traffic passes through waters adjacent to NMIOTC, including 27 percent of oil shipments, making it an ideal locale.

NMIOTC is a cutting-edge training center, improving skills, interoperability, and cooperation among naval units through sea training and simulations. Forty training modules are designed for a whole crew of modern naval vessels from the commanding officer down to the members of the boarding crew.

NMIOTC offers practical training in:

- Container inspection,
- Small arms,
- Suspect and small-boat handling,
- Boarding team tactical sweeps,
- Rigid-hull inflatable boat inspection,
- Fast rope insertion, and
- Operations under multiple-threat conditions.

To reach a broader audience, NMIOTC also deploys Mobile Training Teams (MTT) worldwide to share knowledge and expertise with member nations. As a result, NATO forces are better prepared for counter-piracy, counter-WMD proliferation, counter-illegal trafficking, counterterrorism, and enforcing law at sea.

**OPERATION** U.S. Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay

**WHERE** Souda Bay Naval and Air Base, Crete

**APPLICATIONS** Operational Support, Forward Logistical Site



U.S. Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay provides operational support to U.S. and allied and coalition forces deployed within the European Command, Central Command, and African Command's areas of responsibility.

NSA Souda Bay successfully implemented joint USN/USAF reconnaissance missions and air refueling support for **Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom**, and additional joint and multinational operations.

**OPERATION** NATO Missile Firing Installation (NAMFI)

**WHERE** Souda Naval and Air Base, Crete

**APPLICATIONS** Tactical Firing Range for Air Defense Systems



NAMFI is the only ground-to-air/surface missile firing range in Europe that provides missile training for NATO forces. This missile firing station is equipped with large scale firing systems for practicing the use of surface-to-air missiles (SAM), short-range air defense missiles (SHORADS), surface-to-surface missiles, and other systems.