

Minister of National Defense,
Ambassadors,
Chiefs,
Distinguished Guests,
Exercise Participants,

Good morning,

It is my turn to warmly welcome you at the exercise INIOCHOS 2018, here at the premises of Hellenic Air Force at Andravida Base.

I am very pleased for the unique opportunity to address such a distinguished audience from outstanding friends, partners and allies, as well as from all branches of the Hellenic Armed Forces.

What has pleased me also a lot is the increased participation of the exercise. In just three years, we managed to evolve INIOCHOS, into a major international exercise, which this year brings together participants from many countries.

Saying that, I would like to cordially thank the Armed Forces of Cyprus, Israel, Italy, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States of America for their significant contribution with assets to the success of the exercise INIOCHOS 2018. I would also like to express my appreciation for the participation of Egypt, with an observer.

I ask our international friends to relay to my counterparts Chiefs of Defense my gratitude for sending their forces and personnel here in Greece.

Dear All,

It is a fact that the versatile environment of East Mediterranean constitutes this area as one of the most sensitive in the world.

And nobody can face this reality alone. We need to coordinate and cooperate.

And this is what we are doing here today.

The Hellenic Armed Forces, having acknowledged their important role as a security provider, under the direction of Minister of National Defense, Mister Kammenos, undertake a number of actions in order to enhance stability in the wider area.

Exercise INIOCHOS is a relatively new but very significant addition in our efforts to foster friendly relations and cooperation between Armed Forces who share concerns and face same challenges.

With this exercise we put another stepping stone in our endeavor to promote stability and peace in the area.

So, today we bring together NATO and non-NATO Armed Forces.

Today we bring together friends that are committed to safeguard peace.

Today, we send a loud and clear message that we cooperate, that we are able to act efficiently together in a highly demanding and challenging operational environment.

Dear participants of INIOCHOS 2018,

Besides strong partnerships, our ability to meet the full extent of the security challenges and threats, heavily depends on capable Armed Forces.

In this respect, exercise INIOCHOS, creates realistic training conditions, enhancing our interoperability and addressing our need for advanced tactical air training.

I am aware of your exceptional performance, as well as of your efforts to meet the objectives of INIOCHOS 2018, and for that I would like to warmly congratulate you all.

We are witnessing air assets, from many countries, to cooperate harmoniously together. And this is done in conjunction with the participation assets from the other two Branches of the Hellenic Armed Forces.

To make it simple. You participate in a high level multinational - and joint - exercise and you must be proud that you derive the maximum operational benefit from it.

Keep in mind that through the cooperation of our Armed Forces we ultimately bring all of our nations closer together.

I am confident that departing from Andravida you will carry home the messages of common operational capability, friendship and collaboration that you promoted these days here.

I wish you all a safe return to your bases.

Closing, I would like to thank the Hellenic Air Force for the successful execution of this extremely important exercise and all those involved with the excellent organization of this significant event.

Excellent Job.

Thank you.