

# ALPHA SYMPOSIUM LUNCH

At the welcome request of our Patron, Mr John Hatzistergos Attorney General of NSW, ALPHA will host an International Symposium lunch honouring, Mr George Bizos SC, renowned human rights lawyer from South Africa who is currently on an educational speaking tour of Australia.

ALPHA's lunch to honour Mr. Bizos SC, his life and achievements will be held at Ottoman Cuisine, Dawes Point on 7 March, 2010 at noon – seats are strictly limited. To whet your appetite, set out more fully below is a digest of the extraordinary life of Mr. Bizos SC –

## The Young Man

George Bizos SC was the son of Antonios Bizos, the mayor of the small village of Vasilisti, south of Kalamata on the Messinian peninsula of the Peloponnese, Greece.

In May 1941 at the tender age of thirteen, George Bizos helped his father in his quest to assist seven New Zealand soldiers (Don Gladding, Mick Karup, Peter Martin, John Lewis and three others), who were hiding in the hills near their home, to escape Nazi-occupied Greece to Crete.

The escape did not go well and the young George was set adrift at sea for three days until he managed to attract the attention of the crew of the British destroyer, HMS Kimberley, which was on its way to the Battle of Crete. After the battle, HMS Kimberley dropped him off at Alexandria, Egypt.

The young George was thereafter sent to South

Africa as a refugee. George landed in Durban and from there he went, by train, to Johannesburg. He disembarked at the Braamfontein railway station because it was feared that the Ossewabrandwag would have a demonstration at the central station.

The local Greek community helped to integrate George into society. The Student-at-Law, Lawyer and Court of Appeal Judge George Bizos gained entry into the law faculty at the University of the Witwatersrand. It was here that he says he first became politically active. He joined the Bar in Johannesburg in 1954.

George Bizos has been a senior member of the Johannesburg Bar since 1978. He is a member of the National Council of Lawyers for Human Rights, which he helped found in 1979. He was a judge on Botswana's Court of Appeal between 1985 and 1993. He is Senior Counsel at the Legal Resources Centre in Johannesburg in the Constitutional Litigation Unit.

## The Political Activist

In 1990 George Bizos SC became a member of the African National Congress (ANC) Legal and Constitutional Committee. At the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) he served as advisor to the negotiating teams and participated in drawing up the Interim Constitution. He was involved in the drafting of legislation, and particularly the Truth and Reconciliation Bill and amendments to the Criminal Procedures Act, to bring it into line with Chapter 3 of the

Constitution, guaranteeing fundamental human rights to all citizens of South Africa.

## Bizos as Counsel and Notable Trials

George Bizos SC was counsel to a wide range of well-known people, most notably, Nelson Mandela. During 1963-64 he was part of the team that defended Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki and Walter Sisulu in the Rivonia Trial. The trial resulted in the defendants being sentenced to life imprisonment but spared the death penalty. Although it is sometimes said that he claims to have drafted Mandela's famous speech spoken at the trial, Bizos SC says that his main contribution was to advise the use by Mandela of the words "if needs be" before Mandela stated that he was prepared to die. Bizos SC believes that this may have contributed to Mandela's avoidance of the death penalty by having him not appear to seek martyrdom. This trial heralded the arrival of a group of tough human rights lawyers – Joel Joffe, Arthur Chaskalson and Harold Hanson.

Bizos SC has been counsel at various inquests into the deaths of people in detention.

In the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings, Bizos SC was the leader of the legal team that opposed applications for amnesty on behalf of the Biko, Hani, Goniwe, Calata, Mkonto, Mhlauli, Slovo and Schoon families. He was appointed by then President Mandela to the Judicial Services Commission (JSC) which, in terms of the South African Constitution, recommends candidates for appointment as judges. The JSC also proposed reforms to the judicial system which lead to the end of apartheid. He was reappointed to the JSC by President Mbeki.

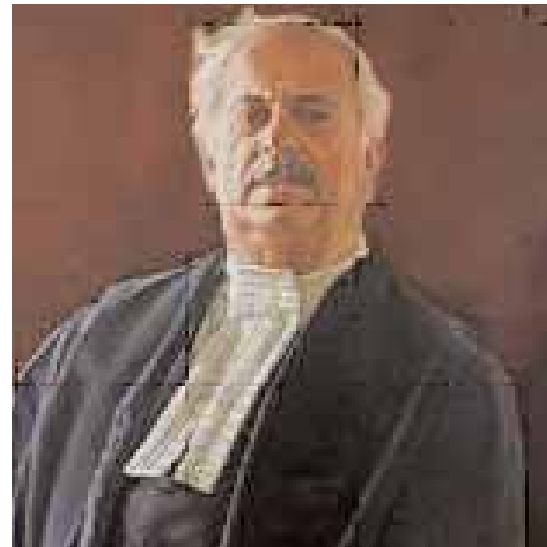
Bizos SC was the leader of the team for the South African Government to argue that the death penalty was unconstitutional, and counsel for the National Assembly in the Certification of the Constitution by the Constitutional Court.

Bizos SC has received many awards, South African and international,

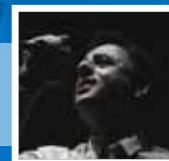
for his work in promoting democracy and human rights. He has written two books – No One to Blame? and Odyssey to Freedom.

ALPHA invites you to join us at lunch to celebrate the life of George Bizos SC and in our philoxenia of this truly inspiring man.

*The Archon and Committee of ALPHA*



## OUT OF THE BLUE PRESENTS ZAMBETOLOGIES A TRIBUTE TO THE LEGENDARY *George Zambetas*



Featuring Tony Karagiannakis and special guests The Orpheas Choir

**A NIGHT OF MUSIC!**  
All proceeds in aid of an orphanage in Haiti

WEDNESDAY MARCH 3rd

THE WINTLE ROOM

TICKETS: \$30 Members & Visitors

SHOWTIME: 8pm

TICKETS ON SALE AT RECEPTION

The Archon and Committee of ALPHA jointly with our Patron, the Honourable John Hatzistergos MLC, NSW Attorney General and Minister for Citizenship, cordially invite you to attend a special luncheon to be held in honour

of:- Mr George Bizos SC

Renowned South African Greek lawyer

**On Sunday, 7 March 2010**

at Ottoman Cuisine

Pier 2, 13 Hickson Road, Dawes Point

from 12 noon

Cost is \$90.00 for a multi course meal and drinks

RSVP by Wednesday, 3 March 2010

via [www.alphalaw.com.au](http://www.alphalaw.com.au) or phone (02) 9223 1972

\*\*\*Numbers are strictly limited\*\*\*