

## Group claims February attack on Golden Dawn offices in Piraeus

A group calling itself "Organization Zero Tolerance" has claimed responsibility for an attack on the offices of extremist Golden Dawn in Piraeus last month.

In a proclamation published on the Indymedia website on Friday, the group referred to Golden Dawn as a "neoNazi gang of bouncers and murderers whose only purpose is to serve the state and capital."

In reference to the attack on February 13, the group said that Golden Dawn offices were the "true centers of lawlessness" rather than the squats recently raided by police.

## Issue of Greek state sector layoffs remains open

During a meeting with Minister of Administrative Reform Antonis Maniatakis Monday in Athens, representatives of the country's international lenders discussed the issue of a public sector overhaul, but stopped short of demanding a reduction in the number of civil servants.

Sources told Kathimerini that representatives of the so-called troika did not explicitly press the government on the issue, but they did remind Greek officials of the country's obligations under the bailout agreements, according to which the majority of the 25,000 public servants that are set to be placed in a labor mobility scheme by the end of the year must eventually exit the state sector. The issue will be discussed in more detail during a fresh meeting between the two sides, probably later this week, the same sources said.

Though having ruled out layoffs, Maniatakis indicated recently that he would toe the line. "We are and we will be consistent in meeting all the commitments we have made and everything we have signed," he said. Ministry officials meanwhile ruled out "indiscriminate, across-the-board sackings," noting that if there have to be layoffs, oathbreaking and incompetent staff will be the first to go.

## Cyprus President Anastasiades expected to visit Greece next week

Cyprus's new President, Nikos Anastasiades, is due to visit Athens next week for talks with Greek leaders and officials, according to reports in Nicosia.

Phileleftheros newspaper reported that Anastasiades will discuss the economic crisis, gas and oil exploration and the Cyprus problem with Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras and other officials.

The visit to Athens will be Anastasiades's first official trip abroad. Cyprus's new Foreign Minister, Yiannis Kasoulides, is due to visit Greece ahead of Anastasiades. He will meet his Greek counterpart Dimitris Avramopoulos.



## China promises new investments in Greece

Speaking during the signing of an agreement between the Chinese Cosco and American Hewlett-Packard for the transportation of products of the latter to Southeastern and Central Europe through the port of Piraeus and the TRAINOSE rail network, Chinese ambassador Du Qiwen expressed his country's wish to make more investments in Greece.

The Chinese ambassador even made Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras laugh when in broken Greek, he likened this collaboration with «a child of Piraeus, as in the song by Melina Mercouri,» adding that his country would want these partnerships to become «two and three and four children...»

U.S. ambassador in Athens Daniel Smith said: «I firmly believe that HP's vote of confidence in Greece will contribute to the creation of jobs and the economic recovery of the country, and will also send a strong message to other companies to invest in Greece. It is my desire to pursue more investments in Greece by U.S. and international companies.»

Prime Minister Antonis Samaras expressed his absolute satisfaction with the signing of this agreement: «I was informed along with the other guests on the progress of these investments, despite the recessionary conditions prevailing in our country, and about Cosco's future plans that will shield the investments and create new impetus for the movement of containers, putting Piraeus on the international map of global transport. Such investments help our country in tackling unemployment, which remains the top issue on the government's agenda.»

«There are no magic solutions to unemployment. Only dynamic collaborations and moves like this, to the benefit of our society. I want to thank both of these companies, as the current signing will symbolize a new beginning for Piraeus and the Greek economy, and provide evidence that we can cope in the way we Greeks know in this difficult period, giving the right of hope and optimism especially to young people,» the premier added.

The deal was sealed with the completion of the Ikonio line, which connects Piraeus' port with the railway stations of Europe, which in turn will help realise the creation of the necessary transport chain on the part of TRAINOSE.

Due to an unforceable technical problem, the already announced article on Sydney Olympic will have to be postponed for a latter day. Watch this space for more info...



## Tsochatzopoulos gets eight years in jail

Former Defense Minister Akis Tsochatzopoulos was sentenced to eight years in jail and fined 520,000 euros on Monday. Tsochatzopoulos appeared before a criminal appeals court in Athens charged with failing to declare his assets properly over the last few years.

He was found guilty of not filling in properly his derivation of wealth (pothen esches) forms between 2006 and 2009.

The ex-minister failed to declare 47,000 euros of assets

in 2006, 33,000 in 2007 and 20,000 in 2008. Also, he did not notify tax authorities that his wife Viki Stamati, also in custody, bought in 2009 the couple's luxury home close to the Acropolis.

The court ordered that the property be seized. Judges also ruled that he cannot appeal his sentence. Tsochatzopoulos faces a separate trial for the alleged embezzlement of taxpayers' money when he was defense minister in the late 1990s and early part of the last decade.