

ekosmos

Hellenic News, Culture & Lifestyle



WHAT'S ON!
what's hot and happening today



The 31st Greek Festival of Sydney and the Hellenic Lyceum proudly present

NURTURING HELLENIC HERITAGE THE AUSTRALIAN WAY EXHIBITION

Since the 19th century, each generation of Greek Australians has blended their Australian upbringing with their Hellenic heritage, creating a sense of duality and a unique Hellenic Australian culture. The Hellenic Lyceum, Sydney, invited 15 artists across different media to interpret and visually showcase this cultural duality. Using their perspective as Australian born Greeks or Australians married to Greeks, a thought-provoking and diverse result is ensured.

Date: Thursday 7 March – Monday 25 March

TIME: 9.00am – 5.00pm

VENUE: NSW Parliament House,
Macquarie Street Sydney

ENTRY COST: Free

CONTACT: www.helleniclyceum.com.au



Downer says Cyprus bailout talks must conclude before peace push

Cyprus peace envoy Alexander Downer said on Tuesday that the UN will launch a new bid for talks on reuniting the island only after it has secured a bailout for its nearly bankrupt economy.

Downer returned to Cyprus for a first meeting with Nicos Anastasiades, the newly elected Greek Cypriot president, before holding talks in the island's north with Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu.

«It's my judgment... that Cypriots need for the moment to conclude the negotiations – particularly the president – with the troika» of international lenders, said Downer.

«Those economic issues are bigger economic issues than most countries face. Those economic issues need to be dealt with,» the UN envoy told reporters.

Cyprus needs 17 billion euros to save its Greek-exposed banks and keep its recession-hit economy afloat.

The Australian diplomat said he would be back in April after doing a tour of regional capitals and briefing UN chief Ban Ki-moon on the state of play.

«Next week I'll be in New York; I'll be seeing the secretary general... I think we have an increasingly clear picture about how President

Anastasiades wants to take this process forward.»

Downer congratulated the president on February's «decisive» election victory but said he was faced with «huge challenges» of turning the economic around.

«That's not our business but suffice it to say we are very sympathetic with the challenges he and the people of Cyprus, more broadly, have to face of an economic nature.»

UN-backed peace negotiations are currently in limbo with direct talks put on hold for more than a year after a failure to bridge the gap on core issues of power sharing, property rights and territorial adjustments.

In the past, Ban has warned the two sides he could end UN efforts – which began in September 2008 – to broker a deal unless the two sides show more commitment to a solution.

This failed to break the deadlock and there have been no direct negotiations since March 2012.

Cyprus was split in 1974 when Turkish troops invaded in response to a Greek-inspired coup in Nicosia aimed at uniting the island with Greece. Only Ankara recognises the authorities in the Turkish-occupied north.

Athens municipalities launch legal action over land ownership

Two municipalities in Athens submitted appeals to the Council of State on Tuesday, arguing that the government's decision to transfer ownership of 30 percent of the land at the Elliniko and Aghios Cosmas sites in southeastern Athens to the country's privatization fund is illegal. The municipalities of Alimos and Elliniko-Argyroupoli claimed that the move to pass the ownership to the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund (TAIPED) on a 99-year lease so the land, including parts of the old Athens airport, can be sold to investors is unconstitutional. The area totals more than 6 square kilometers. Residents have also appealed against the process.

Zakynthos hospital issues SOS

The General Hospital on Ionian island of Zakynthos is close to breaking point and may need to shut down unless it receives more funding, an association representing staff at the facility warned on Tuesday. Running at 60 percent of capacity, mostly with elderly patients requiring immediate care, the hospital has run out of heating oil, has had to reduce meals served to patients, cannot play cleaning staff, has had to cancel several surgeries and is running out of drugs, the association said, adding that the start of the tourism season at Easter will mean more visitors to the island and more strain on its only hospital.

Tsekou denies blackmailing Zachopoulos over affair in 2007

Ex-Culture Ministry official Evi Tsekou on Tuesday denied that she tried to blackmail the department's former general secretary, Christos Zachopoulos, who tried to commit suicide in 2007 in a scandal that rocked the conservative government at the time.

Tsekou, who admitted having an affair with Zachopoulos, told the

court she had recorded some of their personal moments because she was upset that their relationship was going to end and that she had been barred from a permanent job at the ministry.

She insisted, however, that she did not give the footage to publisher Themis Anastasiadis, who she claimed had stolen the video.

