

Speech Introduction – Captain Tsakos Benefit

My good friend Captain Panagiotis Tsakos

Distinguished honorees and guests,

Fourteen years ago, I met Captain Panagiotis Tsakos in Athens, Greece, at a meeting with the late Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in North and South America.

We had come on a mission of mercy to help Orthodox Christians and their neighbors in Russia at the request of patriarch Alexy ii. They were in great need of food, clothing and medicines.

The international Orthodox Christian charities (IOCC) had just been founded by John Rangos and myself. We were approaching ship owners in Greece to assist with the transportation of this humanitarian assistance.

Captain Tsakos was the first to volunteer.

My first impression of Captain Panagiotis was that he was a doer. Despite his no nonsense approach, i found him to be a warm and friendly person.

I recall a very special time when Captain Tsakos extended his gracious hospitality to Andrew Manatos and myself.

We had been invited by His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew to the Phanar for a special meeting with former President Clinton, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and their daughter.

Captain Tsakos did not hesitate to fly us to Istanbul in his private jet for this meeting.

He is always offering his kindness to others.

As a self-made man, rising up the ranks to captain, he was determined to succeed and succeed he has.

Panagiotis Tsakos is a problem solver, a results oriented man of decisiveness, yet a caring humanitarian.

Born on the island of Chios, Greece Panagiotis Tsakos embarked on a maritime career, following his graduation from the Livanio Marine Academy.

In 1970, he began Tsakos Shipping and Trading.

From his headquarters in Athens, he manages and operates a diversified fleet of over 70 vessels.

His firm the Tsakos Group has affiliate offices in Chios, London, Montevideo, China and Korea.

Captain Tsakos is a member of the board of many prestigious maritime organizations.

He is also an avid protector of the environment being involved as a founding member of the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association and their affiliates in Uruguay and the Philippines.

Panagiotis has not forgotten his roots.

He has a strong commitment to his Hellenic heritage.

Founded in memory of his mother who stressed the importance of the Hellenic language, culture and history, the Maria Tsakos Foundation in Montevideo, Uruguay, promotes Hellenism in South America and works to strengthen the ties between the countries of Greece and Uruguay.

Working with the United Hellenic American Congress (UHAC) and the coordinated effort for Hellenes in Washington, D.C., Captain Tsakos is very supportive of ethno-religious concerns.

He works to strengthen the civic and social relationships between the United States, Greece and Cyprus.

His contributions to Hellenism and Orthodoxy are too numerous to list, but for his many works the honor of “Exarch Lord” has been bestowed upon him.

He is a board member of UHAC,

Distinguished member of the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund,

And an ardent supporter of the World Council of Hellenes.

Yet, for all his accolades, including tonight’s prestigious honor, captain Panagiotis Tsakos is a humble, straightforward man, who loves his wife and children, family, country and faith.

A man, despite his many accomplishments has remained true to himself and his heritage and dedicated to the professionalism of Maritime commerce.

It is an honor and a privilege to be his friend and to present the “*ship’s lookout statue*” to Captain Panagiotis Tsakos as part of his induction into the International Maritime Hall of Fame.