
DOCUMENTATION

Greek Parliament Head: 'No to Blackmail!'

July 17—The President of the Greek Parliament, Zoe Konstantopoulou, gave a strong speech during the July 11 plenary debate over whether to approve prior actions for negotiations for a third bailout. Konstantopoulou was one of six parliamentarians to vote “present,” a form of abstention, because, as she put it, “the government is being blackmailed to consent to conditions that do not represent it, that do not come from it, that it is struggling to reverse and prevent.”

Here are major excerpts:

The Greek people entrusted this government with the great cause of releasing them from the shackles of the Memorandum, from the vise of surveillance and supervision imposed on society under the pretext of debt.

This debt furthermore is illegal, unfair, odious, and unsustainable, as demonstrated in the preliminary findings of the Truth Commission on Public Debt, and as the creditors already knew in 2010. This debt was not incurred as a cyclical phenomenon. It was created by the previous governments through corruption in procurement, bribes, misleading terms, corporate stipulations, and astronomical interest rates, all to the benefit of foreign banks and companies. . . .

After the Second World War, Germany enjoyed the greatest remission of debt so as to allow it to get back on track. This was done with the generous partnership of Greece.”

[Today] . . . Germany is promoting and enforcing a policy that constitutes a crime, not only against the Greek people, but a crime against humanity. . . .

Ladies and gentlemen,

The artificial and deliberate creation of conditions of humanitarian disaster so as to keep the people and

the government in conditions of suffocation and under the threat of a chaotic bankruptcy constitutes a direct violation of all international human rights protection treaties, including the Charter of the United Nations, the European treaties, and even the statutes of the International Criminal Court.

Blackmail is not legal. And those who create conditions that eliminate freedom of the will may not speak of “options.” The lenders are blackmailing the government. They are acting fraudulently, since they have known since 2010 that this debt is unsustainable. They are acting consciously, since their statements anticipate the need for humanitarian aid in Greece. Humanitarian assistance for what? For an unexpected and inadvertent natural disaster? Is it an unpredictable earthquake, flooding, a fire?

No.

Humanitarian aid [would be required] because of their conscious and calculated choice to deprive the people of the means of survival, closing the tap of liquidity in retaliation for the democratic choice of the government and the parliament to call a referendum and to turn to the people to decide their own future. The Greek people honored the government that entrusted them, and the parliament that allowed them the right to take their lives and fates in their own hands. With bravery and pride they announced

NO to blackmail.

NO to ultimatums.

NO to the Memoranda of servitude.

NO to the repayment of a debt they did not create and that is not attributable to them.

NO to new measures of impoverishment and exhaustion. . . .

The Greek people are the second to suffer this form of warfare in the Eurozone, preceded by Cyprus in March 2013. This attempt to impose measures rejected by the people in a referendum, using the blackmail of closed banks and the threat of bankruptcy, constitutes a violent overthrow of the Greek constitution and deprives the parliament of the authority granted to it by the constitution.

Everyone has the right and obligation to resist. No resistance in history was easy. But we undertook the popular vote, and we trust the people on the difficult matters. It is to the difficult matters that we must respond. And we must not fear.

This statement was translated by Nicholas Evangelos Levis for AnalyzeGreece! from the Greek text on Left.gr. The full translation is available [here](#).