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PRESS RELEASE

ACCI and HCMC Host Event on Capital Market as Strategic Business Development Tool

The Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Hellenic Capital Market Commission (HCMC) successfully co-hosted an event titled "*Capital Market Today: Challenges and Opportunities for Capital Market Financing, and Corporate Sustainability.*" Its objective was to provide businesses with insights into financing opportunities through the Capital Market, corporate sustainability practices, as well as key topics in digital finance and cybersecurity against online fraud.

In his opening remarks, ACCI President Mr. Yiannis Bratakos emphasized the vital role of the capital market in Greece's economic development. He described it as a strategic tool that not only fosters growth and institutional maturity, but also enhances transparency, corporate credibility, and investor confidence in a competitive global environment. "Reintegrating the capital market into Greece's core development strategy is essential. It offers a stable, long-term investment vehicle that requires collaboration between the State, regulatory bodies, and the business community," Mr. Bratakos noted.

He highlighted that the capital market is more than a funding mechanism; it acts as an institutional framework promoting maturity, accountability, ESG compliance, and strong corporate governance. These traits, he stressed, are essential to building reliable business partnerships, both at home and abroad, and positioning Greece as an attractive investment destination.

Participating in the capital market is a strategic outlook decision that creates new opportunities for partnerships with institutional investors and expands access to the international financing ecosystem. According to Mr. Bratakos, encouraging more dynamic SMEs to access capital markets, while upholding strict oversight and reliability, is a dual challenge and opportunity. He acknowledged the pivotal role of the HCMC in achieving these goals, and expressed his gratitude to its President, Ms. Vassiliki Lazarakou, and her team for their commitment to transparency and institutional integrity.

"The ACCI will continue to serve as an institutional advisor to the State, supporting sustainable entrepreneurship and acting as a bridge between national policy and market needs," he concluded.

Ms. Vassiliki Lazarakou, President of the HCMC and a member of the Board of the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), thanked Mr. Bratakos and the ACCI for co-organizing the event under a new initiative launched by the HCMC in 2024. This initiative involves

strategic partnerships with major chambers of commerce, like the ACCI, to deliver seminars on key topics such as capital market financing, investor protection, crypto-asset transactions, and the regulatory changes under the upcoming Markets in Crypto-Assets Regulation (MiCA). This event is part of the Commission's commitment to empowering businesses through better understanding of market operations, corporate governance, and emerging investment areas, such as crypto-assets, or risks that investors should be aware of, primarily online fraud.

In recent years, the Hellenic Capital Market Commission has prioritised information and, subsequently, investment literacy, since informed investors make better decisions, thus more effectively protecting their capital. The President of the HCMC discussed the Commission's actions in cooperation with ESMA and the other European Supervisory Authorities (such as, briefing paper on savings, investments and pensions), and with the International Organisation of Securities Commissions - IOSCO (e.g. campaign on issues such as investor resilience, crypto-assets and sustainable finance), as well as the Commission's actions in 2024 either as a follow-up to its Strategic Plan, or in the context of the country's National Strategy for Financial Literacy. She placed particular emphasis on the Memoranda of Understanding with the largest educational institutions in the country, and on more specific targeted actions, such as the cooperation for the creation of investment simulators, as well as on the launch of digital outreach initiatives, designed to better inform investors and strengthen public engagement.

The event was structured into two thematic sections:

Financing through the Capital Market and Corporate Sustainability

Mr. Michael Fekkas, First Vice President of the HCMC, described capital market access as a critical enabler of business growth, especially in the context of increasing demands for transparency and sustainability. He emphasized the Commission's work in aligning Greece's regulatory framework with EU initiatives like the Listing Act and ESG standards to make the market more accessible and competitive.

Further insights were provided by Mr. Nikos Gerantonis, Director of Listed Companies, and Mr. Aris Giannopoulos, Head of the Listed Companies Supervision Department at the HCMC, who explored the opportunities for raising capital through the capital market and their alignment with sustainable development principles.

Digital Finance and Crypto-assets – Preventing Online Fraud

Ms. Natassa Stamou, Second Vice President of the HCMC, discussed the regulatory challenges posed by crypto-assets, citing their complexity and the need for heightened technical expertise which is still limited in this rapidly evolving field. She stressed the HCMC's readiness to respond to these challenges in line with the forthcoming MiCA Regulation and implementing legislation."

Mr. Costas Hatzopoulos, Head of the Department of Citizen Information, and Ms. Maria Andrikopoulou, Economist at the same HCMC Department, provided comprehensive

presentations on the evolving crypto-asset landscape, its regulatory context, and the Commission's efforts to safeguard investors through targeted information campaigns.

The event was moderated by Mr. **Fanis Matsopoulos**, Member of the Administrative Committee and Head of Business Consultancy at the ACCI. It concluded with an engaging Q&A session and a networking cocktail, where attendees exchanged views and shared experiences.

The ACCI and the HCMC reaffirmed their commitment to continued cooperation in enhancing financial education and promoting entrepreneurship through sustainable and modern financing tools.