

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4129

To promote the United States-Greece defense partnership, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 24, 2021

Mr. DEUTCH (for himself and Mr. BILIRAKIS) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To promote the United States-Greece defense partnership,
and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “U.S.-Greece Defense
5 and Interparliamentary Partnership Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) The United States and Greece are strong
9 allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
10 (NATO) and have deepened their defense relation-

1 ship in recent years in response to growing security
2 challenges in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

3 (2) Greece participates in several NATO mis-
4 sions, including Operation Sea Guardian in the Med-
5 iterranean and NATO’s mission in Kosovo.

6 (3) The Eastern Mediterranean Security and
7 Energy Partnership Act (title II of division J of
8 Public Law 116–94), authorized new security assist-
9 ance for Greece and Cyprus, lifted the United States
10 prohibition on arms transfers to Cyprus, and author-
11 ized the establishment of a United States-Eastern
12 Mediterranean Energy Center to facilitate energy co-
13 operation among the United States, Greece, Israel,
14 and Cyprus.

15 (4) The United States has demonstrated its
16 support for the trilateral partnership of Greece,
17 Israel, and Cyprus through joint engagement with
18 Cyprus, Greece, Israel, and the United States in the
19 “3+1” format.

20 (5) The United States and Greece have held
21 Strategic Dialogue meetings in Athens, Washington
22 DC, and virtually, and have committed to hold an
23 upcoming Strategic Dialogue session in 2021 in
24 Washington, DC.

1 (6) In October 2019, the United States and
2 Greece agreed to update the United States-Greece
3 Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement, and the
4 amended agreement officially entered into force on
5 February 13, 2020.

6 (7) The amended Mutual Defense Cooperation
7 Agreement provides for increased joint United
8 States-Greece and NATO activities at Greek military
9 bases and facilities in Larissa, Stefanovikio,
10 Alexandroupolis, and other parts of central and
11 northern Greece, and allows for infrastructure im-
12 provements at the United States Naval Support Ac-
13 tivity Souda Bay base on Crete.

14 (8) In October 2020, Greek Foreign Minister
15 Nikos Dendias announced that Greece hopes to fur-
16 ther expand the Mutual Defense Cooperation Agree-
17 ment with the United States.

18 (9) The United States Naval Support Activity
19 Souda Bay serves as a critical naval logistics hub for
20 the United States Navy’s 6th Fleet.

21 (10) In June 2020, United States Ambassador
22 to Greece Geoffrey Pyatt characterized the impor-
23 tance of Naval Support Activity Souda Bay as “our
24 most important platform for the projection of Amer-
25 ican power into a strategically dynamic Eastern

1 Mediterranean region. From Syria to Libya to the
2 chokepoint of the Black Sea, this is a critically im-
3 portant asset for the United States, as our air force,
4 naval, and other resources are applied to support
5 our Alliance obligations and to help bring peace and
6 stability.”.

7 (11) During a September 2020 visit to Souda
8 Bay, then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo an-
9 nounced that the USS Hershel “Woody” Williams,
10 the second of a new class of United States sea-bas-
11 ing ships, will be based out of Souda Bay, the first
12 permanent United States naval deployment at the
13 base.

14 (12) The United States cooperates with the
15 Hellenic Armed Forces at facilities in Larissa,
16 Stefanovikio, and Alexandroupolis, where the United
17 States Armed Forces conduct training, refueling,
18 temporary maintenance, storage, and emergency re-
19 sponse.

20 (13) The United States has conducted a long-
21 standing International Military Education and
22 Training (IMET) program with Greece, and the
23 Government of Greece has committed to provide \$3
24 for every dollar invested by the United States in the
25 program.

1 (14) Greece's defense spending in 2020
2 amounted to an estimated 2.68 percent of its gross
3 domestic product (GDP), exceeding NATO's 2 per-
4 cent of GDP benchmark agreed to at the 2014
5 NATO Summit in Wales.

6 (15) Greece is eligible for the delivery of excess
7 defense articles under section 516(c)(2) of the For-
8 eign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C.
9 2321j(c)(2)).

10 (16) In September 2020, Greek Prime Minister
11 Kyriakos Mitsotakis announced plans to modernize
12 all three branches of the Hellenic Armed Forces,
13 which will strengthen Greece's military position in
14 the Eastern Mediterranean.

15 (17) The modernization includes upgrades to
16 the arms of all three branches, including new anti-
17 tank weapons for the Hellenic Army, new heavy-duty
18 torpedoes for the Hellenic Navy, and new guided
19 missiles for the Hellenic Air Force.

20 (18) The Hellenic Navy also plans to upgrade
21 its four MEKO 200HN frigates and purchase four
22 new multirole frigates of an undisclosed type, to be
23 accompanied by 4 MH-60R anti-submarine heli-
24 copters.

1 (19) The Hellenic Air Force plans to fully up-
2 grade its fleet of F-16 jets to the F-16 Viper vari-
3 ant by 2027 and has expressed interest in partici-
4 pating in the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program.

5 (20) The United States ejected Turkey from
6 the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program in July
7 2019 as a result of its purchase of the Russian S-
8 400 air defense system. Eight F-35 Joint Strike
9 Fighters were produced for Turkey but never deliv-
10 ered as a result of its ejection from the program.

11 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

12 It is the sense of Congress that—

13 (1) Greece is a pillar of stability in the Eastern
14 Mediterranean region and the United States should
15 remain committed to supporting its security and
16 prosperity;

17 (2) the 3+1 format of cooperation among Cy-
18 prus, Greece, Israel, and the United States has been
19 a successful forum to cooperate on energy issues and
20 should be expanded to include other areas of com-
21 mon concern to the members;

22 (3) the United States should increase and deep-
23 en efforts to partner with and support the mod-
24 ernization of the Greek military;

1 (4) it is in the interests of the United States
2 that Greece continue to transition its military equip-
3 ment away from Russian-produced platforms and
4 weapons systems through the European Recapital-
5 ization Investment Program;

6 (5) the United States Government should con-
7 tinue to deepen strong partnerships with the Greek
8 military, especially in co-development and co-produc-
9 tion opportunities with the Greek Navy;

10 (6) the naval partnerships with Greece at
11 Souda Bay and Alexandroupolis are mutually bene-
12 ficial to the national security of the United States
13 and Greece;

14 (7) the United States should, as appropriate,
15 support the sale of F-35 Joint Strike Fighters to
16 Greece to include those F-35 aircraft produced for
17 but never delivered to Turkey as a result of Turkey's
18 exclusion from the program due to its purchase of
19 the Russian S-400 air defense system;

20 (8) the United States Government should con-
21 tinue to invest in International Military Education
22 and Training (IMET) programs in Greece;

23 (9) the United States Government should sup-
24 port joint maritime security cooperation exercises
25 with Cyprus, Greece, and Israel;

1 (10) in accordance with its legal authorities and
2 project selection criteria, the United States Develop-
3 ment Finance Corporation should consider sup-
4 porting private investment in strategic infrastructure
5 projects in Greece, to include shipyards and ports
6 that contribute to the security of the region and
7 Greece’s prosperity;

8 (11) the Mutual Defense Cooperation Agree-
9 ment with Greece should be extended for a period of
10 five years and include deepened partnerships at
11 Greek military facilities throughout the country,
12 and, as appropriate and necessary, the United
13 States should partner with Greece in order to in-
14 crease rotational deployments and presences of for-
15 ward-based troops at Greek bases;

16 (12) the United States Government should re-
17 store congressionally appropriated military construc-
18 tion funds for construction projects at Naval Sup-
19 port Activity Souda Bay focused on a warehouse
20 storage facility and an airport passenger terminal
21 that were redirected to United States border wall
22 programs in 2019; and

23 (13) the United States Government should es-
24 tablish the United States-Eastern Mediterranean
25 Energy Center as authorized in the Eastern Medi-

1 terranean Energy and Security Partnership Act of
2 2019.

3 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR EURO-**
4 **PEAN RECAPITALIZATION INCENTIVE PRO-**
5 **GRAM.**

6 There is authorized to be appropriated for the De-
7 partment of State \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years
8 2022 through 2026 for European Recapitalization Incen-
9 tive Program (ERIP) assistance to Greece to assist the
10 country in meeting its defense needs and transitioning
11 away from Russian-produced military equipment.

12 **SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON LOAN PROGRAM.**

13 It is the sense of Congress that—

14 (1) as appropriate, the United States Govern-
15 ment should provide direct loans to Greece for the
16 procurement of defense articles, defense services,
17 and design and construction services pursuant to the
18 authority of section 23 of the Arms Export Control
19 Act (22 U.S.C. 2763) to support the further devel-
20 opment of Greece’s military forces; and

21 (2) such loans should be considered an additive
22 security partnership tool, and not a substitute for
23 European Recapitalization Incentive Program assist-
24 ance.

1 **SEC. 6. TRANSFER OF F-35 JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER AIR-**
2 **CRAFT TO GREECE.**

3 The President is authorized to expedite delivery of
4 any future F-35 aircraft to Greece once Greece is pre-
5 pared to move forward with such a purchase on such terms
6 and conditions as the President may require. Such trans-
7 fer shall be submitted to Congress pursuant to the certifi-
8 cation requirements under section 36 of the Arms Export
9 Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2776).

10 **SEC. 7. REPORT ON EXPEDITED EXCESS DEFENSE ARTI-**
11 **CLES TRANSFER PROGRAM.**

12 During each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026, the
13 Secretary of Defense, with the concurrence of the Sec-
14 retary of State, shall report not later than October 31 to
15 the appropriate congressional committees and the Com-
16 mittees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House
17 of Representatives on Greece's defense needs and how the
18 United States will seek to address such needs through
19 transfers of excess defense equipment to Greece for that
20 fiscal year.

21 **SEC. 8. IMET COOPERATION WITH GREECE.**

22 (a) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is
23 authorized to be appropriated to the Department of State
24 \$1,800,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026
25 for International Military Education and Training

1 (IMET) assistance for Greece. The assistance shall be
2 made available for the following purposes:

3 (1) Training of future leaders.

4 (2) Fostering a better understanding of the
5 United States.

6 (3) Establishing a rapport between the United
7 States Armed Forces and Greece’s military to build
8 partnerships for the future.

9 (4) Enhancement of interoperability and capa-
10 bilities for joint operations.

11 (5) Focusing on professional military education,
12 civilian control of the military, and protection of
13 human rights.

14 **SEC. 9. CYPRUS, GREECE, ISRAEL, AND THE UNITED**
15 **STATES 3+1 INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP.**

16 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a group,
17 to be known as the “Cyprus, Greece, Israel, and the
18 United States 3+1 Interparliamentary Group”, to serve
19 as a legislative component to the 3+1 process launched
20 in Jerusalem in March 2019.

21 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Cyprus, Greece, Israel, and
22 the United States 3+1 Interparliamentary Group shall in-
23 clude a group, to be known as the “United States group”,
24 of—

1 (1) not more than 6 United States Senators,
2 who shall be appointed jointly by the majority leader
3 and the minority leader of the Senate; and

4 (2) not more than 6 Members of the United
5 States House of Representatives, who shall be ap-
6 pointed jointly by the Speaker and minority leader
7 of the House of Representatives.

8 (c) MEETINGS.—Not less frequently than once each
9 year, the United States group shall meet with members
10 of the 3+1 group to discuss issues on the agenda of the
11 3+1 deliberations of the Governments of Greece, Israel,
12 Cyprus, and the United States to include maritime secu-
13 rity, defense cooperation, energy initiatives, and coun-
14 tering malign influence efforts by the People’s Republic
15 of China and the Russian Federation.

16 **SEC. 10. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**

17 In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional com-
18 mittees” means—

19 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
20 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
21 resentatives; and

22 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
23 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

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