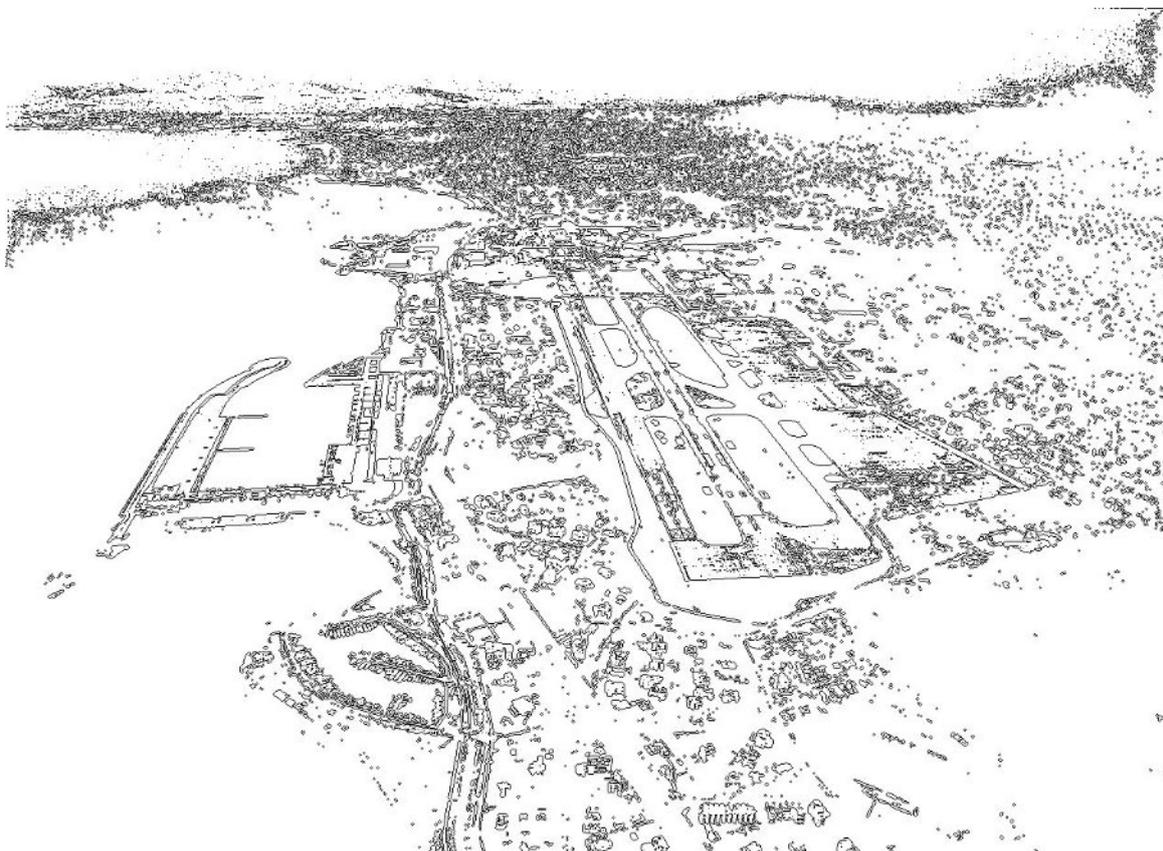


CITY OF HELLINIKON - ARGYROUPOLI

HELLINIKON: DEVELOPMENT FOR WHOM?

Speech by Christos Kortzidis, mayor of Hellinikon - Argyroupoli



Symposium

FORMER AIRPORT OF HELLINIKON & AGHIOS KOSMAS WATERFRONT THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF A METROPOLITAN PARK FOR ATHENS

Organizers

City of Alimos
City of Glyfada
City of Hellinikon - Argyroupoli
National Technical University of Athens
Technical Chamber of Greece
Committee for the Metropolitan Park of Hellinikon

April 20, 2013
Hellinikon Olympic Indoor Arena, Basketball Court

Speech by Christos Kortzidis, mayor of Hellinikon - Argyroupoli

Hellinikon, April 20, 2013

Dear friends,

We welcome you to our symposium today, through which we seek to highlight our position for the development of the former airport and the coast of Hellinikon in an even better, more intensive and more documented way.

Through the works of our symposium, with the special contribution of the scientists, the representatives of organizations and collectives and citizens, we seek to basically highlight two objectives.

The first, that our proposal is the one that actually contributes to development. To development for the benefit of society, with protection of the environment, with improvement of quality of life of people, with creation of jobs with rights and decent wages, with significant positive contribution to the economy of the area and of Athens more broadly, which will be attracting a number of visitors, native and foreign, to a beautiful place of culture, sports, research and education, recreation, easily and freely accessible.

In contrast, the proposal of the government is but a link in the chain of its more general politics that destroys this development and subjects everything to market needs, as we say. That is, to the bizarre needs of a tiny minority that holds in its hands the overwhelmingly large part of wealth and of the power to maintain it, and reserves for the people and the youth the role of the subjugated beggar who will be reaching out in search of a meal.

The second issue that we would like to stress in today's symposium, is that our proposal is realistic, is feasible, is realizable. It is possible to find and allocate the analyzed, and without any waste, necessary resources, for the creation and maintenance of the metropolitan park. Starting now, today, and for a span of 10, 15 or 20 years.

In contrast, the politics of the governments has already wasted a decade, either by presenting various proposals or plans on paper, or by fake assumptions, or by inertia, always trying to convince about their good intentions and the inexistence of alternatives to their choices.

Also the politics of the governments wasted important resources. Not generally. Important resources that have been spent on this very space where we are at, of the airport and the coast, either during the period of the Olympic venues, of the Olympic Games, or important resources that have indeed been raised from this space, during the period after the Olympic Games. That is the responsibility of the governments is great, since the 2000 approximately and onwards, for the waste of time and resources that they have caused in this space.

And now they come and attempt to place this responsibility on us. And they tell us: "But why do you react to the development? Do you want this space to be staying undeveloped in this way? Do you like it remaining as is and decaying? But why do you ask us to create a metropolitan park? Can we waste resources that we do not have?"

We know them well, dear friends.

They will try in any possible way to undermine and misrepresent our struggle, to put us against other people. We are also aware that for them it holds that *post verba verbera*. We have experienced this and we experience it every day.

But we will not surrender. We will not submit ourselves to their power. We strongly believe in something that a great man has said. In no matter how difficult position you might find yourself in, do not lose your faith that ultimately justice will prevail.