

## **Yannis Stournaras: Sustainability in banking**

Introductory remarks by Mr Yannis Stournaras, Governor of the Bank of Greece, at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) workshop on “Sustainability in Banking”, Athens, 12 July 2016.

\* \* \*

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,

It is a great pleasure to welcome Ms. Sabina Dziurman, Director of the EBRD in Greece, to the Bank of Greece. I would also like to welcome all speakers and participants to today’s workshop on sustainability in banking.

With this opportunity I would like to note the EBRD’s function and contribution in Greece. Since the establishment of its representative office in Greece a year ago, EBRD has invested around €340 million mainly through participating in the recapitalisation of the four significant Greek banks as well as financing energy and industry projects.

In today’s workshop two perspectives regarding sustainability in banking will be juxtaposed:

- The perspective of an international development financial institution, namely of EBRD.
- The perspective of Greek systemic banks.

The Bank of Greece acknowledges the importance of sustainability both for the financial sector and the economy at large. In this context, the Bank of Greece has been thoroughly studying since 2009 climate change with emphasis on the assessment of its environmental and social impact.

At this juncture, as Greek banks gradually begin to restore their intermediation role, they surely need to consider environmental and social issues, such as funding of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and cleaner production methods.

Moreover, sustainable banking also entails promoting sustainable restructuring solutions for non-performing exposures (NPEs) both for non-financial corporate entities and households. The efficient management of NPEs is one of the key challenges that the Greek financial sector faces and of utmost importance for the rebalancing of the Greek economy towards tradeable and export-oriented sectors. In turn, this will also free-up scarce resources for the financing of sustainable investments.

I look forward to an exciting discussion and a very fruitful exchange of views.