

MONITOR (Economic MAGASINE)

Interview with the President of the Foreign Investors Association of Albania

1. What is the main target of this conference and what was the interest of foreign investors about it? Mr. Thomas Papaspyrou,

TH P; Well, this conference aims to respond to the increased interest of the international business community towards the natural resources and the potentials they represent in Albania. Our scope was to deliver a clear picture of these potentials in the framework of the strategic vision of the country to achieve a sustainable development through investments. Since most of these natural assets have been long ago studied and elaborated, our approach intertwined in this objective the experience built in Albania by the best local experts in many years. We revived this experience and we are going to bring it back to the attention of both investors and state agencies this indisputable input in the field of scientific research and expertise. So, if I could paraphrase our objective, I would say: "This is not a show. This is a multidimensional real opportunity, built in cooperation with many other partners, to provide Albania with serious and committed investors and provide investors with a great future".

I am glad to evidence that our message was clearly perceived and the response was convincing. In the new legal and economic environment, Albanian authorities have another chance to increase transparency, develop their country through competitive practices which lead to a more efficient resources management. This is what we strive for in this win-win approach.

2. Which sectors appear to be more potentially attractive to foreign investors? Can you mention some of large foreign companies trying to enter Albania?

TH.P; It's hard to single out which is the best promising sector in Albania. Albania is very rich in all kinds of Minerals, in Oil and Gas, and a wonderfully rich water potential for the Hydro energy sector. The agriculture is another maiden sector where bio standards promise a great future to any investor in both green house and crops cultivations. Albania is rich of resources and we are proud of this. We are promoting something which is very promising in investment terms. I would like to highlight several names of Foreign Companies coming for the first time in Albania through this Conference as; MARUBENI Corporation from Japan, SIBELCO from Bulgaria, MERLIN Consult from Turkey, IMM Marketing Ltd from England, S-t3 Singh from Singapore, Land Investment and Development from England, Komosunshine Nig Ltd from Africa etc.

3. What advantages Albania provides to foreign investors, compared to other regional countries?

Th.P; I would like to say that there are numerous advantages that Albania counts today. As the President of FIAA I would mentioned;

1. The Political Stability, economic growth and the remove of the Administrative Barriers.
2. Albania's Geographical proximity and the Easy access and crossroad to EU Markets.
3. As well as adaptable, flexible and law cost workforce and many others.

4. What messages will be conveyed to the Albanian government, aiming to improve the business climate and better attract foreign investors?

Th.P; Our message to the Albanian Government is; To continue its efforts towards the reforms that already have started in many fields, in order to meet the criteria required for the EU Convergence. As I said we hope we can help the Albanian government to identify new partners for the development of the natural resources making all parties aware of the increased interest towards Albania's potentials. We wish this event will convince foreign companies for the renewed commitment of the Government towards an improved business climate in favor of FDI's. Please note that this is a process and nothing is considered more vital than a hand-by-hand cooperation in a mutual trust and confidence building approach.

Thank you