

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Special Operators of
the Bulgarian,
Cypriot,
French,
Israeli,
and the United States Armed Forces,
taking part in the multilateral exercise ORION 22,
and also to the personnel from Austria,
Egypt
and Montenegro,
observing the exercise.

I sincerely hope you enjoy your stay thus far
and I want you all to feel like home.

I am very pleased to be here among you today on the
occasion of
the Distinguished Visitors day of the exercise.
Our countries are proud to have you in their ranks.

As you probably know,

I also come from the Special Forces; so we speak the same language.

Dear all,

The international security environment is fast-evolving.

The threats and challenges are many and complex.

Of course, since February 24th, with the Russian invasion in Ukraine,

the overall security situation has become even more complicated.

In this demanding security environment, Greece,

as a pillar of stability,

promotes the consolidation of peace and security,

based on cooperation, the International Law,

and good neighborly relations.

And this is why we promote close cooperation with allies

and partners that share the same values,

and we strongly believe this is the best way to overcome current

and future threats and challenges.

This is the compass that guides Greece's defence diplomacy.

We have a well-established bilateral and multilateral military cooperation with almost all countries in the Balkans, the East Mediterranean and beyond.

We contribute to our common effort to safeguard peace and security in our wider neighborhood by bringing friends and allies together; as we do today with ORION-22.

Of course, exercise ORION is not just an opportunity to bring our Armed Forces and our countries closer; it is also an excellent activity to build our readiness, increase our interoperability, and fine-tune our warfighting skills.

As I promised, exercise ORION this year was directly connected with the multinational Exercise INIOCHOS

to create a realistic battle environment¹,
upgrading it to what I like to call INIOCHOS PLUS.
This has increased the benefits for the training audience of
both exercises,
and has also made ORION 22 unique in this sense.

I am following exercise ORION closely
and I am pleased to witness firsthand the outstanding
cooperation
between our Special Operators in all training serials.

My congratulations for your effort and professionalism.

We fully acknowledge the importance of
having the opportunity to train
and exercise together frequently.

So, I would like to assure you
we will schedule many more similar activities in the future
and we count on your participation.

Once again, my most sincere congratulations to all those who take part in exercise ORION-22.

And to the organizers of today's event.

I wish you every success in the remaining serials and a safe redeployment to your bases.

I look forward to our future cooperation.

And, please, remember you are always welcome in Greece.

Thank you very much.