Address

of the President of the

Federation of Industries of Northern Greece (F.I.N.G.)

Athanassios Savvakis

At the Seminar: "Timing Tigers"

Thessaloniki, 22 May 2017

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great honor and pleasure as President of the Federation of Industries of Northern Greece to welcome an esteemed speaker of worldwide fame in our city: Jim Lawless.

I had the opportunity to attend one of Jim's speeches (luckily I made time and I watched it!). And it was really inspiring. That's why I wanted to share this experience with you by having this seminar – as we call it. But it's not one of these "traditional" seminars about learning something new. It's more a seminar about understanding.

Just as our speaker, Jim Lawless, is not another keynote speaker.

Reading Jim's bio make's you understand that there is something different in the way he approaches things. He is one of that special cases that help us to understand and see things from another perspective, not to learn new things, but learn ourselves.

He is the first Briton to dive below the 100 meter barrier on a single breath of air. He became jockey in just twelve months. He is not a man of words, but a man of action, proving his "Taming Tigers" theory in practice.

Of course, Jim is not only one of the world's leading keynote speakers. He acts as an elite team coach at board level and serves as a non-executive board chairman. He has advised companies globally on creating cultural change and elite teams, and has designed and implemented successful change programmes in companies including Apple, Barclaycard, Atos, Axa, BT. He has inspired people within some of the world's leading companies to take astute risks and adapt for change and high performance.

And what better timing for us here in Greece to change, to take a step towards change and adapt. That's why we have Jim with us here today.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you have already seen, there are no tigers in this room! So there is no reason to panic.

Or are there?

The unstable business environment, the everyday obligations of our businesses (meeting excessive bureaucracy, paying taxes, deadlines), all these small or bigger beasts that hound us every day, are just there in front of us. Isn't that right?

That's why we need to stop for a while, take a step back and put things in the right order. Prioritize our needs and our scope. Actually we have to change our own perspective of things. Of course, in order to do all that, we need a stable environment. Not to worry about what the morning will bring, as we have been doing for the past few years here in Greece.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In times of crisis, we do look for inspiration. The situation of Greece, our country, cannot simply be swept under the carpet. We find ourselves between a rock and a hard place. For almost ten years now, we have been facing a tough reality. And for us, in the entrepreneurial world, it's even worse. For many reasons (it's not the right place and time to speak about that). It's true that we're fed up with being stuck in the middle. So, we all acknowledge that a lot of things have to change, both in our external environment and within us.

I trust that everything begins from changing our own selves. And our own perspective of things. As our speaker will tell us, we can do almost whatever we want. And that's a prospect that even in these hard times, keeps me optimistic. Things – eventually - will change for the better. We, at the Federation of Industries of Northern Greece, have paved the way towards the exit from the crisis that Greece is facing: this is by the establishment of an industrial policy. It does not sound as poetic as we wanted, but it's the undeniable route we have to follow.

Before closing my short address, I'd like to thank the Main Sponsor of this Seminar, BIOSOLIDS S.A., the Sponsor, TIF-HELEXPO, our Supporters ENTERSOFT S.A. and MAKVEL S.A. and our Communication Sponsor VORIA.GR for their precious support.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let's tame our tigers!

Thank you!

Jim, the floor is yours!