



The "South Port" postponed sine die...

Mr Vlachos, who is, as General Secretary for Ports and Port Policy at the Ministry of Merchant Marine (YEN), the most reliable person of all, brings good news regarding the discussed transshipment hub in South Crete.

Within the scope of the meetings that have been organised last Saturday, the Movement of the Messara for the Environment had the opportunity to be present at the meeting that took place with the deputies of the Heraklion prefecture, and to hear Mr Vlachos' declarations. We thank the president of the Region Mr Tsokas and the members of the OLH who expressed the will to let us assist to the meeting.

The first official declaration from the YEN - since Mr Kefalogiannis left the ministry - was clear, and we hope that it brings an end for any future discussion regarding the creation of a transshipment hub in the Messara Bay.

The General Secretary of the YEN declared that the plans of the ministry were considering the creation, by foreign investors looking for routes from Asia towards Black Sea and Russia markets, of a container transshipment hub. The passengers/merchant port and the marina could have been complementary works of the main project but, by themselves, and according to the estimations of the ministry, they are not viable and can't constitute a subject of discussion.

Finally, the YEN admitted, through his representative Mr Vlachos, that the development of the initial plan faces a strong and major problem: the strong reaction and opposition of the local community. Mr Vlachos made it clear that no discussion exists any more regarding the creation of a transshipment hub, since the required consent does not exist.

This last development satisfies, not only the Movement of the Messara for the Environment, but also of all the structures and inhabitants of the South who, during the last three years, opposed to the realisation of this project. This final result justifies all our attempts to stop the project, even if we know that, these last weeks, the international economical crisis and depression, forbidding the search of investors, also played its role.

So we hope - and we will make our possible for that - that the discussions opened by the transshipment hub project will go ahead in order to face the subject of a sustainable development of the South, so that a new impulsion and new perspectives are given to the various economical sectors of the area.