**25 Years Lidl Hellas**

**Martin Brandenburger, CEO, Lidl Hellas**

Dear Ministers

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

It is great honor and pleasure to welcome you to our event at this beautiful venue, where nature dominates, as it should.

This year, we celebrate 25 successful years in the Greek market. And we celebrate with our own people, partners, suppliers, and the Greek public, that has trusted us all these years.

For 25 years, we have been everywhere, offering to the Greek consumers, society, environment, market, and economy. We build trust, we create added value for everyone.

Since 1999 until today, we have invested over 1.4 billion euros in the country.

Yes, we grow along with Greece and its people. And we celebrate everything we have done so far, and everything we continue to do, as a level of empowerment, looking forward to the next day.

We have a clear goal. To cover the daily needs of everyone, with quick, simple, and easy shopping experiences. We achieve this because consumers have easy access to all essential daily products, at the best quality-price ratio, in our 230 stores.

And most importantly: We offer the same prices in all our stores, regardless of location.

We also enhance the shopping experience with innovative solutions, as our first Self-Checkout tills, that the roll out is already launched from our store in Sindos Thesssaloniki. The best self-Checkout System in the Market.

Other innovations are the implementation of the e-ticket (paperless receipt) for all Lidl Plus users, and more benefits from third party cooperations, will be provided through Lidl Plus to our loyal customers until July 2024.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

On this festive evening, I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart.

First of all, our more than 6,700 employees at Lidl Hellas. They are the ones, who drive our company to the top positions in the Greek food retail market. They are the driving force, the soul, and the heart of Lidl Hellas.

It is our strategic principle to offer our people competitive wages and additional benefits that are above the market average.

From December, 2023, we established a minimum full-time wage of 1,000 euros gross for all our employees. We have truly “set the standards” in the market.

Moreover, for the eighth consecutive year Lidl Hellas is a Top Employer in Greece for its commitment to an inclusive and friendly environment with equal opportunities.

In fact, it is ranked in the 2nd higher place among the top employers of choice, according to a recent survey by kariera.gr.

I also want to thank our partners, our distinguished suppliers. We are very proud of our cooperation with selected Greek producers. Thanks to their quality products they give us the ability to bring the aromas and flavors of the land to the Greek family table.

Lidl stands as a reliable and responsible partner to its suppliers with an average payment of 41 days, when the retail market average is 117 days.

With our help and constant support, they become ambassadors of the Greek productive wealth, in the foreign markets, through our stores.

Lidl Hellas grows along with its Greek suppliers.

Specifically, for 2023, we promoted 1,624 products, from 409 suppliers in 31 countries where Lidl operates, including the USA, creating a business turnover of almost half billion euros. The 92 million euros is related to the export range Eridanous. And imagine how this Greek value is multiplied since we are the No.1 retailer in Europe as Schwarz group and No.4 worldwide.

I want to emphasize that on this journey of taste and quality, which addresses all consumers, we did not only focus on the importance of nutritional value and well-being. We are also paving the way for the future of robust production with high nutritional standards.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

Sustainability is deeply rooted in our DNA. And our strategy "Good for the environment, good for people, leading up to “good for you" summarizes all that distinguishes us.

For example, our launch of the “too good to waste” bag for fruit and vegetables until the end of July in all our stores.

We take care of today and make sure that we have enough goods and resources for the generations to follow.

We move toward the future with values that become maps and compasses for each of our choices.

In difficult times, we ensure to stand even more by our stakeholders. Above all, we are a responsible and reliable partner.

Yes, it is true, we have gone through difficult times and had to work under extraordinary conditions.

And it is precisely these initiatives that have led us for another year to the distinction "Most Sustainable Companies". Until today, we have spent over 10 million euros on social and environmental investments.

We have managed not only to withstand dire situations but to be at the forefront of our sector. That’s why we were named "Retailer of the Year 2023" with 18 awards.

Our business is tied to the customers and the quality of life they lead. We offer excellent products at permanently low prices. After all, the Best Buy Award 2023/24 for the best quality-price ratio in Greece confirms that we are at the top of the perception of Greek consumers.

We continue to support the household basket in every way, facilitating in practice the consumers, so they do not need to make compromises in their weekly shopping. And when necessary, we proceed with significant supportive actions beyond the institutional initiatives of the state.

Thus, the "Permanent Price Reduction" initiative of the Ministry of Development, as a measure to combat expensiveness, will continue beyond the semester by our company for branded and private label products.

Despite of this, we are in favor of a minimum of state interventions.

We make the chain of green responsibility "from the field to the fork" a reality. We contribute to innovative cultivation methods.

We reduce the energy we spend and promote new nutritional values. We recycle whatever is left over, more than anyone else. We renew our perceptions, keeping the human firmly at the center of our attention.

And of course, we take care of all those who are in greater need, every fellow human being, who is less privileged.

At this point, I want to thank the state and the prominent organizations with which we implement many synergies, offering substantial support through targeted actions. The Ministry of Environment and Energy, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Labor, UNICEF, ActionAid Greece, The Smile of the Child.

Modern life has many facets. Lidl Hellas wants and can be next to every human moment, creating experiences but also intervening with an opinion in everything that makes up today and prepares for tomorrow.

We are proud Official Partners of UEFA EURO 2024 and are excited to provide access to one of the largest football tournaments.

For example we do this either through the Lidl Kids Team initiative, or by winning tickets for the games.

Now, I may surprise you, but as I said earlier at Lidl Hellas, we want to have a clear view of the life, society, today and tomorrow of consumers.

We are therefore proud of the pan-European campaign "We support quality - We support Europe" for the upcoming European elections in 2024. At Lidl, we support a strong and united Europe with common values!

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

Our greatest investment in Greece has been in the trust and reliability recognized by the Greek consumers and stakeholders.

This precious legacy is the power that drives our thoughts, every step towards the future. Yes, 25 years later at Lidl we are at our best and we celebrate. You deserve it, all of you who walk along with us.

Thank you once again all of you.

I am wondering, and you sure also. Can we do even better?

The answer is yes, we can, staying true to our principle: "Whoever stops becoming better, stops being good"!

So, let's all together make it happen. Our celebration continues.

The journey of Lidl Hellas continues!