

NEWS

from
**Paul
Tsongas**

Release Date: July 15, 1983

Contact: M.H. Thompson, 224-2742

U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

TSONGAS SAYS THAT U.S./GREECE BASE AGREEMENT SHOULD STRENGTHEN TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES

U.S. Senator Paul E. Tsongas said that he was "extremely pleased" about the agreement announced this morning that the United States and Greece have signed an accord allowing U.S. military bases in Greece to remain open.

However, Tsongas said that he considered the base agreement to be secondary to the larger issue of improving relations between the two countries. "We must enter in to an era of reconciliation and begin to mend fences," the Greek-American Senator from Massachusetts stated. He also said that the base agreement should give Turkey "pause" because of the firm commitment to maintain the seven to ten ratio and the symbolic strengthening of ties between the U.S. and Greece.

On a trip last month to Greece with his wife and three daughters, Tsongas met for over an hour with Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou at his residence in Kastri. Tsongas told Papandreou that he was concerned about the tensions between their countries. In a subsequent letter to the Prime Minister, Tsongas spoke of the strong reservoir of feelings for Greece in the Greek-American community and urged him to consider establishing an exchange program to bring second and third generation Greek-Americans to Greece to help "reverse the years of decline of U.S.-Greek relations."