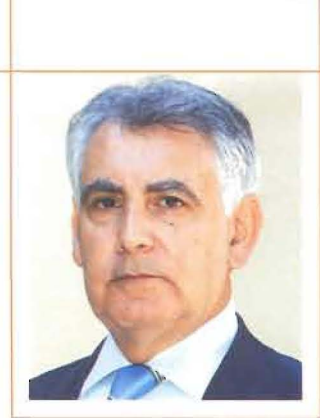


PHARMACEUTICAL ENTERPRISES IN GREECE ACTIVELY SUPPORT SOCIAL WELFARE, ACTING AS A CATALYST TO ENSURE DIRECT ACCESS OF ALL CITIZENS TO QUALITY MEDICINES AT PRICES THAT ARE AMONG THE LOWEST IN THE EUROPEAN UNION.



## Protecting the “Ideal Balance” in the Pharmaceutical Market

BY DIONYSIOS SP. FILIOTIS,  
PRESIDENT, THE HELLENIC ASSOCIATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES (SFEE)

This constitutes an “ideal balance” in the sensitive pharmaceutical market, achieved after decades of effort. It is our duty to contribute to maintaining this balance, to the benefit of Greek society. It is also our duty to succeed, through a constructive dialogue and continuous deliberation with the State, to solve operational problems that have recently accumulated.


The State must find solutions to three specific problems: the streamlining of the IT infrastructure of the

lems by making use of the experience and know-how of its members.

First, the excessive costs within the Greek healthcare system are due to the lack of technological streamlining, which sustains illegal practices and increases total costs. The public pharmaceutical expenditure, which is part of the total pharmaceutical sales, reached 3.8 billion Euros in 2007, according to official state data, and represents only one-fifth of the total health expenditure. The

since then to regulate hospital debts are still ongoing.

An objective bystander immediately realizes that there is an excessive waste of resources in the Greek healthcare system and an inability to pay its suppliers. The solution to this dual problem cannot be the creation of yet another problem. There is no time to experiment with the pricing system. The prices of medicines in Greece are already among the lowest in the EU. Further depressing of prices may lead to exactly the opposite. For example several medicines will be attractive for parallel trade, and old well established medicines will be substituted by newer and more expensive ones. In any case, as new medicines and treatments are added to the armory against disease, tight pricing policies have no real effect on health economics, and create market distortions. What we need in our country is a long-term policy that will offer effective and rational solutions, a policy that will safeguard what has been achieved and build on that.

I believe that this policy must be defined, decided upon, and implemented following deliberation between the State and SFEE. 

**What we need in our country is a long-term policy that will offer effective and rational solutions, a policy that will safeguard what has been achieved and build on that**

healthcare system, which is the biggest issue pending; the accumulated hospital debts to pharmaceutical companies, which have reached unprecedented levels; and the pricing of medicines, which must continue to be determined in a way that allows the smooth operation of the pharmaceutical market. SFEE can contribute significantly in solving these prob-

streamlining of IT infrastructure of the health system in other countries has succeeded in reducing the total health expenditure by 30%..

The second problem is that of hospital debts, which have reached unprecedented levels. Hospital debts to pharmaceutical companies reached 2.68 billion Euros on December 31, 2008, but attempts made