

Greek Government Wins Confidence Vote Amid Heated Bailout Talks



Athens, February 11 (RHC)-- The new Greek government has won the parliament's confidence vote amid deepening division between Athens and the European Union over the country's bailout. Early on Wednesday, the first leftist government in the history of Greece secured the confidence vote of the parliament as the negotiations between Athens and the EU over the debt-ridden country's bailout program seem to have reached a critical point.

Ahead of the confidence vote, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said he will abide by his electoral promises and does not aim to extend the country's bailout program that has caused mounting dissatisfaction in the Greek society.

"No matter how much (former Greek Prime Minister Antonis) Samaras and (German Finance Minister Wolfgang) Schaeuble ask us... we will not ask for an extension to the bailout," said Tsipras, adding, "We are seeking a political solution within the European framework."

The remarks came shortly after European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker advised the Greek government not to presume that the eurozone would simply accept Tsipras's proposals. The Greek

government "must not assume that the overall mood in Europe has changed so much that the eurozone will unconditionally adopt the [Greek] government program," said Juncker.

In recent days, Tsipras, whose leftist Syriza party stormed to victory in elections on January 25th, has toured Europe to renegotiate the terms of the country's ?240-billion (\$270 billion) bailout it received in 2010 in return for imposing harsh austerity measures.

The measures have forced people to endure multiple tax increases, along with cuts in pension and salary, in exchange for bailout loans by the eurozone countries and the International Monetary Fund.

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