

Greece Warns Against Rejection of Reforms



Athens, March 9 (RHC)-- Greece's finance minister has warned that the country may hold early elections or a referendum if the eurozone does not agree to its bailout plans.

Eurozone ministers must accept Greece's proposal of seven major reforms to secure the country's next tranche of bailout or "there could be problems," Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* quoted Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis as saying on Sunday.

The group of eurozone ministers, the Eurogroup, is meeting in Brussels on Monday to discuss the terms of a four-year economic reform plan, though Athens has stressed it is not after securing a third loan. The measures include plans to simplify bureaucracy, raise revenue from online gambling and hire an army of tax sleuths to help clamp down on tax dodgers.

The government of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, whose leftist Syriza Party stormed to victory in the January 25th elections, has tried to renegotiate the terms of the country's bailout it received in return for imposing harsh austerity measures.

Back in February, finance ministers from the eurozone gave the green light to the reforms submitted by Athens in exchange for a four-month extension of its bailout deal after a similar move by the European Commission.

Greece received two bailouts in 2010 and 2012 worth a total of ?240 billion (\$272 billion) from a troika of international lenders -- the European Central Bank (ECB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union (EU) -- following the 2009 global economic crisis.

Meanwhile, public support for the leftist government dropped from 83 percent last month to 64 percent, according to a recent poll.

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