

Petros Ioannou remarks

I like to start by thanking Mrs. Sophia Balakrishnan for her generous gift to USC. I also like to thank the administration of USC, President Nikias, Dean Yortsos and the committee who selected me to have this honor. Special thanks to all the guests who join us here today; Dr. Kishan Baheti from NSF who supported my research over the years, consul general of Cyprus Andreas Kyprianides and his wife Mika, and all of you colleagues and friends, not to forget my son Andreas who is also a Trojan, who are honoring me with your presence.

I feel very honored and flattered to be selected as the first holder of the A.V. 'Bal' Balakrishnan chair at the Viterbi School of Engineering at USC. All of us who worked in the area of Controls, Communications, Aerospace and Applied Mathematics know how great this man was in science and how much he contributed.

What I did not know myself is that Bal was a Trojan and his career started from these grounds. There is something in Controls called 'closing the loop', which we frequently use in the field, that I found very symbolic as the Balakrishnan name and spirit and fame came back to where it started many years ago. He returned the torch to be carried on by future generations and I am so proud to be the first to hold it.

My wife and I met Mrs. Balakrishnan about a month ago and we were both very impressed and touched by her devotion to her husband and her efforts to keep his memory and legacy alive. I promised to Sophia that I do my best to help in that direction as much as I can.

I also like to transmit a message from his friends in Greece, in particular, Evris Billis who asked me to announce that his colleagues and friends in Greece will never forget Bal and Sophia and the good times they had at ComCon Conferences. For them Bal, in addition to be an admired scientist, was also a great human being, a real gentleman. I have no doubt that people in other countries who interacted with Bal have very similar nice words to say.

I have to close by saying that this chair is particularly special as it is named after a colleague who offered so much to science and is so well known in the scientific community.

Thank you again for the honor to become the first holder of “The A.V. ‘Bal’ Balakrishnan Chair.”