

Greece fully lifts capital controls imposed during bailout chaos – PM



PM@ (Updates with statement on lifting)

ATHENS, Aug 26 (Reuters) – Greece is set to fully lift remaining capital controls, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said in parliament on Monday.

“From today, capital controls are a thing of the past,” Mitsotakis told lawmakers.

Athens imposed capital controls in June 2015, when Greece’s government had come to the end of its bailout extension period without agreeing on a further extension with its creditors.

The restrictions have been gradually eased since then. The cap on cash withdrawals was fully lifted in October 2018. But limits on money transfers abroad still remained. The newly

elected conservative government has been keen to move swiftly to reassure markets that it intends to adopt business-friendly policies to attract investment, key to boost Greece's economic recovery.

Athens had imposed the capital controls as Greece was embroiled in dispute with its lenders over bailout terms and its banks were bleeding cash.

At the time, the European Central Bank decided to pull the plug on emergency funding to Greek lenders, forcing a three week shutdown of banks and a 60 euro per day cap on cash machine withdrawals.

Finance Minister Christos Staikouras told lawmakers he would submit legislation to fully lift the restrictions effective Sept. 1. (Reporting by George Georgiopoulos; Editing by Alison Williams)