

# **ADDRESS AT THE CHAMBER EVENT WITH THE LEADERS**

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**By Phidias Pilides, President of the  
Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

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**Chateau Status, Nicosia, 8 July 2015**

Excellencies Community Leaders Mr Anastasiades and Mr Akinci

Excellency Former Community Leader Mr Christofias,

Excellency Special Adviser of the Secretary General of the U.N. on Cyprus Mr Eide,

Dear Mr Markopouliotis, Head of the European Commission Representation in Cyprus,

Dear friend Fikri Toros, President of the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce,

Dear friend Rifat Hisarciklioglu (Ριφάτ Χισαρτσικλιόγλου), President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey,

Honourable representatives of political parties,

Excellencies Heads of Foreign Missions,

Distinguished guests,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry to this evening's important event organised in collaboration with the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce. The event is within the framework of the EU co-funded bi-communal project "Leading by Example", implemented by our Chambers.

It is a true honour for us that the two Community Leaders, Mr Nicos Anastasiades and Mr Mustafa Akinci have accepted our invitation and are here tonight to speak about their vision for a post-settlement economy of Cyprus. We consider the topic to be of utmost importance because the economy we are going to create after a just, functional and sustainable solution that will reunify Cyprus, will have a direct impact not only on the daily lives and well-being of all Cypriots but also on the integration of all communities on the island and the sustainability of the solution. Our vision is to create a functional and competitive economic framework free from bureaucratic procedures that will favour business activity and innovation and will also attract foreign investment.

The "Leading by Example" project in the framework of which today's event is organised, aims at contributing towards enhancing dialogue, trust, cooperation and reconciliation between civil societies, including the business communities and to encourage the involvement of Cypriot civil society in decision making processes at the political

level. We truly believe that today's event is a significant contribution to the aims of the project and will be followed by a number of other joint events that will be organised by the two Chambers.

Our Chambers are convinced that the present situation cannot continue any longer because if it does the ultimate losers will be the Cypriots themselves, as they will be deprived of the economic benefits that a fair and viable solution of the Cyprus problem will bring with it.

A number of studies and focus group sessions conducted both by our Chamber and by others, have shown that the economic benefits that will accrue from a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem will be significant. If one considers the effects of the economic crisis on both Communities in Cyprus and the difficult economic situation the island is presently going through, a just, functional and viable solution gains additional importance. It will secure a single international personality, safeguard the basic freedoms and human rights, increase foreign investment and open presently unexploited markets across the world, including of course the vast Turkish market. It will stimulate economic sectors that are now moribund or experiencing problems such as construction, shipping, agriculture and tourism amongst others. The result will, in turn, be beneficial for employment and will lead to a drastic reduction of unemployment and migration, particularly amongst the youth.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that our two Chambers are convinced that a comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem will bring considerable benefits not only to the economy of Cyprus, but also to the entire region. Unified Cyprus, will prosper within an enlarged European Union where democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms will be respected.

We have now in front of us a unique opportunity to resolve the Cyprus problem in a just, functional and viable manner and we cannot afford to miss this opportunity. The two Chambers express their commitment to actively contribute to the process and are ready to support the efforts of the political leadership in any way possible.

With these remarks, I would like to deeply thank the two Leaders for accepting our invitation, the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce and particularly Mr Fikri Toros, President of the Chamber for our excellent cooperation, the European Commission for all their assistance in making tonight's event possible and of course all of you for honouring us with your presence tonight. We look forward to hearing the thoughts of the two Leaders on their vision regarding a united Cyprus economy after the settlement.

Thank you very much.

28/06/2015

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