



**Your Excellencies, Honourable Members of the Government, the National and European Parliament, dear friends,**

We are grateful and we appreciate enormously the honour you are making to the Republic of Cyprus with your presence here today in honouring the 52<sup>nd</sup> birthday of the Republic of Cyprus and its assumption of the presidency of the European Council.

The relevantly short history of the Republic of Cyprus, has not been a happy one on the contrary, since the dawn of its coming to existence in 1960, Cyprus and its people had to pay a big price for a conflict of which were no party to. In the 60's we were caught up in the middle of the Cold War conflict between East and West and presently we are the victim of the Turkish expansionism and of the sick dream of the leadership of Turkey for the revival of the notorious Ottoman Empire.

Through out its 10 thousand year history, Cyprus has never before been faced with such terrible, fatal and terminal dangers, as it is now! Turkey invaded Cyprus under the pretext of protecting the Cypriot Turkish speaking community in 1974 an illegal act of aggression and in total disrespect of the international law, she has slaughtered thousands of innocent people, displaced nearly 40% of the Greek speaking population, it has destroyed most of our cultural and religious monuments and since then is applying a brutal policy of ethnic cleansing. For 38 years, Turkey occupies illegally and without any decent excuse, our lands, our homes, our villages our towns!

Our Turkish speaking compatriots have methodically been pushed to emigrate and are replaced by settlers from Turkey! These days our Turkish speaking Cypriot brothers are facing a real threat for permanent extinction from the land of their fathers and fore fathers. In fact in every four residents in the Turkish occupied Northern Cyprus, three

are settlers from Turkey and only one is an original Cypriot and lawful resident. The people who supposedly Turkey came to Cyprus to protect from the Greek Junta and the Cypriot Fascists in 1974, are in fact been speedily exterminated by the occupying Turkish army and the Turkish settlers.

The people of Cyprus, from all communities, Greek, Turkish, Maronites, Armenian etc, have lived together for hundred of years in piece and full harmony. What has stared trouble, inter-communal killings and hate between them was the foreign intervention, mainly from Britain, Greece and Turkey.

As a pure Cypriot, as a man who took arms to protect my country and my people, I can assure you that what the people of Cyprus always wanted and this is still their overwhelming wish, is to be left alone, to live in peace and harmony under one state, under one common government, in a united and prospering common country! The Cypriots, all the Cypriots, we want our country back, because is ours and we are not and will never be, willing to give it up, neither to Greece, to Turkey or to anybody else to this respect.

Since the year of the Turkish Invasion and occupation and though many times we were engaged in peace talks with the puppet Turkish Cypriot leadership with the aim of ending the destruction and re-unite our country and people, this has not been achieved yet. It has not been achieved not because the Republic of Cyprus has refused to make concessions to our Turkish speaking compatriots, thus making them feel safe and share the present and future wealth of our common country. A solution of the Cyprus problem has not and it will not be achieved as long as Turkey keeps to her plans to annex the whole of the island eventually. The Republic of Cyprus has always been ready to welcome back our Turkish speaking compatriots in our state, in our life in our future. The R.O.C thought, will never give up its statehood and will never accept Turkish domination of any kind! Our Turkish speaking Cypriot brothers had already a bitter taste from it!

Since May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 Cyprus is a fully pledged, active and constructive member of the European Union. Though heavily hurt and with her wounds still bleeding Cyprus has answered the challenge and finally achieved to join the big family of the nations of Europe in their historical attempt to unite the continent into one strong and meaningful political entity aiming to bring permanent peace, security and welfare to all European citizens!

Cyprus joined the E.U in a genuine effort to achieve peace and reunification of its people and its sovereign territory with the support of the democratic and peace loving fellow member states.

I regret to say that this support and the expected solidarity have not come about and it is not what the people of Cyprus expected. Besides been neutral in most cases, the official European Union has not been instrumental in helping to solve the Cyprus problem and terminate the Turkish occupation of what is legally and politically today, European soil! On the contrary the European Commission and the European Parliament have initiated full membership entry negotiations, with Turkey, a country which has never shown any respect to the European laws and European values. In fact somebody can not stop thinking that instead of holding Turkey accountable for her

occupation of European soil, the European Union is directly and indirectly rewarding her for her aggression and arrogance. It is not a rare event for Turkish officials to employ even threats and insulting language and show total disrespect towards the E.U and its institutions.

Turkey is refusing to recognise the Republic of Cyprus, though according to the Ankara accord she undertook to do so, while she expects to become a member of the Union. The Republic of Cyprus supports Turkey's European aspirations with the hope and the condition that as full pledged member, she will show respect to the European values, principals and laws. Unfortunately this is not the case at the moment.

**Dear friends, esteemed guests,**

The Cyprus Presidency of the European Council, finds the Union in the middle of an economic and political turmoil. This is the time where we the people of Europe have to stand together! Together we are stronger and together we can do things, we can do a lot! Nothing though can be achieved unless the European Union becomes the Union of the people of Europe! Nothing can be achieved and have long reaching effect if the people of Europe are not in the centre and their security, welfare and wellbeing the priority. The motto of the Cyprus Presidency is ..." more Europe for the people of Europe"!

The European Union will have no meaning or future if its effect is not felt even by the last European citizen! Solidarity, understanding, sharing both rights and responsibilities, protection of human rights, freedom of movement and settlement, the right to work, to education, to medical treatment and last but not least the right to freedom and security, which my people, the people of Cyprus have been brutally denied!

In a while you will be presented a token of how the People of Europe, the young European citizens understand and expect the Union to be! Young Bulgarian European citizens, will dance Cypriot and Bulgarian dances, to Cypriot and Bulgarian Music! The European Union should be for uniting and bringing people together if we want it to have a justified future, not dividing them and exploding them.

Closing this rather long and emotional speech I invite you all to raise a toast to " a "European Re-united Republic of Cyprus" and to a "Strong and eternal European Union for the People of Europe".