

Newsletter

Special points of interest:

- Leading by Example (LbE) aims to increase dialogue, trust, cooperation and reconciliation between civil societies, including the business communities, throughout Cyprus, as well as to increase the involvement of Cypriot civil society in the decision making process at political level.
- Nicosia Economic Forum.
- Presidents Phidas Pilides (CCCI) and Fikri Toros (KTTO) speak at a meeting of the EU Ambassadors accredited to Cyprus.

Inside this issue:

Launch Event of the LbE Project 1

Nicosia Economic Forum 2

Meeting of the EU Ambassadors accredited to Cyprus 3

Leading by Example 1st ISSUE

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Launch Event of the Project

The launch event of the project "Leading by Example" was successfully held on July 10th 2014 at Chateau Status Restaurant. The project is funded by the European Commission under the 'Cypriot Civil Society in Action' programme and implemented by the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce (KTTO) (lead partner) and the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) (partner). During the event welcome speeches referring to the objective and activities of the project were delivered by the Presidents of the two Chambers while Ms. Michaela Di Bucci Head of the European Commission Unit Task Force for the Turkish Cypriot Community stressed in her opening speech that the project will increase dialogue, trust and cooperation between the business communities throughout Cyprus. The Project 'Leading by Example' was designed by KTTO and CCCI so that the newly created bi-communal business group known as 'Malta Busi-

ness Group' (MBG), which consists of 10 leading entrepreneurs from each community and operates under the auspices of the two Chambers, would gain organizational capacity, reputation with stakeholders, credibility with final beneficiaries, visibility in relation to key audiences (especially young people, the two leaders and politicians) and, finally, widen its members.

As part of the project 'Leading by Example' a series of activities will take place that will include the creation of a permanent secretariat to support the Malta Business Group (MBG) and provide management services to the project, the implementation of a set of confidence-building measures, as well as measures that will further strengthen business cooperation between the two communities and facilitate business and other exchanges ranging from common market places, to the facilitation of transport and the exchange of views between the Chambers of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey on the eco-



Left to right : Mr Fikri Toros, President of KTTO and Mr Phidas Pilides President of CCCI during the Launch event.

nomic benefits of a solution and the investigation of opportunities for joint initiatives. Furthermore, the project will involve the facilitation of inter-communal internships for young unemployed professionals in enterprises from both communities and the implementation of a public awareness program. This will include the organization of workshops, lectures aimed at audiences from both communities, the presentation of films and books by Cypriot writers and meetings with political leaders to exchange information and views. Finally, the project will involve sectorial meetings and meetings of organizations of civil society such as mediators, accountants, engineers, advertisers, environmentalists, consumers' associations and others and the participation of young entrepreneurs in discussions at universities, colleges, etc. The project has a duration of two years.



Nicosia Economic Forum

The Nicosia Economic Forum was founded on June 2, 2014 in Nicosia. Its founding members are the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce (KTTO) the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) and the Union of Hellenic Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UHCCI). At the inaugural meeting of the Forum in June, the Chambers expressed their strong conviction that a lasting, just, viable and functional solution to the Cyprus problem would increase stability and security in the region and would create huge opportunities for cooperation and economic exchanges between the three countries focusing not only on their own markets but also on the vast European and Middle Eastern markets and beyond.

The second meeting of the Forum was held on 14 September 2014 in Istanbul and the four Chambers reiterated their determination to support the ongoing political process towards a just and lasting solution that the leaders of the two Cypriot communities had courageously re-started. In its second meeting, the Forum

members put forth a proposed list of possible projects to transform the Buffer Zone between the two communities from a zone of division to one of unity. The Forum's next step will be to establish a set of priorities from the ideas on this list, and produce concrete and actionable projects such as:

- i.** Establishing an Arbitration Centre to resolve disputes between the businesspeople of the two communities. A study group of experts from all parties will present a unanimously agreed upon draft to the Forum. The Forum will also look into the possibility of involving credible third parties in this effort.
- ii.** Setting up an Incubation Centre that would host and enable the growth of promising enterprises from both communities. A study group of experts from all parties to design a roadmap.
- iii.** Organising a start-up Weekend to bring together young entrepreneurs from both communities. This event will be organised by a study group consisting of representatives from each Chamber and a

proposal will be submitted to the Forum.

iv. Promoting the establishment of a joint Natural Disaster Management Body on the island. Whenever disasters such as fires, flooding and other related disasters are encountered, both communities suffer hugely as a result of a lack of cooperation. The Forum has decided to pioneer the formation of such a management body.

v. Preparing a feasibility study on the possibility of entrepreneurs from both communities to make joint investments.

The participants of the Forum, believe that these steps to enhance co-operation between the two communities are a mere beginning. The prosperity and wellbeing of the entire region rests upon a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem. Finally they believe that the geographical area covering Cyprus, Greece and Turkey deserves a better, common, and prosperous future within the European Union.

**'Five possible
projects in the
priorities of the
Nicosia
Economic
Forum'.**



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**LEADING BY
EXAMPLE**

Meeting of the EU Ambassadors Accredited to Cyprus

An initiate of the Italian Ambassador Mr. Guido Cerboni, whose country holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, has taken place on October 30, 2014 in Nicosia. A meeting of the EU Ambassadors accredited to Cyprus was organized where the Presidents of CCCI and KTTO were invited to speak. Both Presidents presented the cooperation of the two Chambers and their efforts to help the process for a just, functional and sustainable solution to the Cyprus problem.

This cooperation was intensified after Cyprus' accession to the European Union in 2004. The Chambers were involved in the implementation of the Green Line Trade Regulation but the cooperation also extended to the successful implementation of a number of UNDP funded projects that involved the conduct of B2B meetings between GC and TC businesspeople, joint training activities, research studies on GLT and economic interdependence between the two communities, market research and business partnership grants, the preparation of a bi-communal business directory, the setting up of a bi-communal business portal, the running of communications campaigns, the development of a post-solution Chamber cooperative framework, the production of two short films entitled "The Nine o'clock News in the year 2030" and "Cyprus: What If..." respectively, depicting clearly the economic benefits of a solution, both available on youtube and many other activities. Presently the Chambers are implementing the "Leading by Example" project under the



Nicosia, 30 October 2014

'Cypriot Civil Society in Action IV' Programme funded by the European Commission. Reference was also made to the two Chambers' role in the establishment of the Malta Business Group and to practical cases of cooperation of the two Chambers in times of crises management such as the electricity deal facilitated by the two Chambers after the explosion that destroyed the main power station in the GCC and the intervention of the two Chambers in facilitating the cleaning of the oil spill in the Karpas peninsula.

Recent developments that were mentioned was the setting up of the Nicosia Economic Forum whose role is described in detail above. The Chambers believe that the European member states have a lot to offer to keep the two Communities in Cyprus both motivated and encouraged for a comprehensive settlement on the island. The recent developments, which led to the disruption of the settlement talks has proven yet again that the resolution of the longstanding conflict is of paramount necessity and urgency! This unfortunate incidence has also shown that

in order to sustain the peace process, political efforts need to be complemented by those of the business and other civil society groups.

The support of the EU Ambassadors was also asked in order to implement the joint projects of the two Chambers aiming to normalise the relations and build trust between the two communities on the island.

The realization of these projects would contribute greatly to enhance cooperation, prepare and mobilize the two communities for a comprehensive settlement on the island, which is the ultimate aim of the Chambers.

Concluding, the Chambers stated that they are convinced that a comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem will bring considerable benefits not only to the economy of Cyprus, enhancing the welfare and prosperity of all Cypriots but also to the entire region and particularly the geographical area that encompasses Cyprus, Greece and Turkey within an enlarged European Union where democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms will be respected and a common and prosperous future will be ensured. They believe that a solution will increase stability and security in the region and will create huge opportunities for cooperation and economic exchanges between Cyprus, Greece and Turkey focusing not only on their own markets but also on the vast European and Middle Eastern markets.