



ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ- AVRUPA KOMİSYONU- EUROPEAN COMMISSION
ΑΝΤΙΠΡΟΣΩΠΕΙΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΚΥΠΡΟ- KIBRIS TEMSİLCİLİĞİ- REPRESENTATION IN
CYPRUS

**Closing ceremony of the national programme of Cyprus for the European Year of Development
2015**

**Welcome address by Mr George Markopouliotis, Head of Representation of the European
Commission in Cyprus**

Wednesday, 20 January 2016, 11:30 pm, House of Representatives, Nicosia

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Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends,

I would also like to welcome you to the closing ceremony of the national programme of Cyprus for the European Year of Development.

The aim of the year was to inform, raise awareness and encourage dialogue concerning European cooperation in the field of development assistance and humanitarian aid provided by the European Union.

Indeed, as far as Europe is concerned, humanitarian aid and development assistance are interrelated. Humanitarian aid aims at saving people's lives and addressing their basic needs in crisis situations — and allow me here to highlight the admittedly important work carried out by Christos Stylianides, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management who has delivered excellent results in this respect. Cooperation on development issues supports countries over the medium and long term so they can overcome poverty and have sustainable economic growth.

In 2015 we put the spotlight on our partner countries. We presented our work and those who benefit from it. Yet, in our fast-changing world, the lines between developing and developed countries have become increasingly blurred. A number of former developing countries have become emerging donors, while others remain stuck in poverty. Meanwhile, new sources of finance and new development partners have come forward. Consequently, the traditional development approach which was based on the donor-recipient relationship slowly gives way to a model of cooperation, common responsibility and mutual interest.

It is worth noting that helping developing countries worldwide build peaceful and prosperous societies is not just a matter of fairness. It will also make for a safer world with more economic and trading potential for Europe.

The European Year for Development has given us an excellent opportunity to inform citizens about the results of the assistance pledged by the EU. And we have truly accomplished a lot. Together with its Member States, the European Union is the world's biggest donor of development aid — it is sufficient to say that in 2013 we spent 56 billion EUR for this purpose, an amount which accounts for more than half of the world's official development assistance.

These funds help us to conduct significant work in areas such as trade and finance, agriculture, security and climate change, thus contributing to the eradication of poverty in developing countries — these are actions that have a substantial impact on millions of lives.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate Cyprus and all the parties involved in the implementation of this highly successful national work programme, as evidenced by the dedicated actions which will be presented shortly. These actions encouraged the public debate on development aid in Cyprus and drew the attention of many citizens. Congratulations to all those who have taken part in these actions and added to last year's success.

Thank you.