

## **Closing Ceremony of the Cyprus National Programme**



**for the European Year of Development 2015**

**On Behalf of the Head of the EPIO, Andreas Kettis,**

**House of Representatives, Wednesday 20 January 2016**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As very correctly was mentioned by the previous speakers, the EU has dedicated 2015 to development cooperation and aid in order to highlight the importance of international development and the key role played by the EU and its member states.

The EU not only makes a difference within Europe, it also does it part outside its borders. Together with member states, it is the world's most generous donor of development aid, supporting more than 150 countries and helping to improve the lives of millions of people. In 2013 EU and the member states provided 56,5 billion euro\$ in helping non EU countries to tackle poverty.

The European Year for Development 2015 not only aimed to inform as many citizens as possible about the EU achievements at a global level, it also sought to raise awareness of the benefits of development cooperation for those who received aid, as well as the countries involved. It, thus, fostered a sense of solidarity and joint responsibility.

The European Parliament and especially the Development Committee had a pivotal role in promoting the EU's commitment to fighting hunger and eradicating poverty worldwide.

In this context I would like to congratulate on behalf of the European Parliament Office in Cyprus our stakeholders for the successful national campaign of information and all the relevant actions undertaken during 2015. I would like particularly to refer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its successful role as the national coordinator.

The EPIO in Cyprus advanced the stakeholders work by putting efforts to raise awareness and contribute to public information. Similar campaigns and actions were launched also in the other member states, however it is believed that especially for Cyprus and our region particular importance should be attached to development cooperation in the future.

Thank you