



National Federation of Cypriots in the UK
Working for a Free, United Cyprus

Federation Hosts Dinner in Honour of Annita Demetriou, President of the House of Representatives

On Tuesday 4th May, the National Federation of Cypriots in the UK hosted H.E. the President of the House of Representatives, Mrs Annita Demetriou, for a working dinner in London. Prior to the dinner, the Federation's Executive also held a private meeting with Mrs Demetriou. The occasion came as part of the Mrs Demetriou's first official visit to the UK in the capacity of House President. Alongside a delegation from the House of Representatives, the dinner was attended by leading members of the UK Cypriot community from the Federation's member associations.

In the House President's address, Mrs Demetriou remarked, "in these difficult times that Cyprus is going through, we draw strength to continue our campaign for survival and for a better future for our children in a country where peace and security will prevail." Mrs Demetriou continued "we draw strength from you, because we know that you are tireless champions in this titanic struggle of Cyprus for justice against a stronger and more aggressive neighbour."

Remarking on Cyprus' achievements, Mrs Demetriou noted that "we are a small country, but our membership of the European Union and our strategic importance, as a pillar of security and stability in a highly volatile region, is duly appreciated and valued by our neighbours and by powerful actors in the wider world." Mrs Demetriou emphasised however that "the most important element of Cyprus is its people who know how to fight, create and grow, either within or beyond the borders of our small country, and this makes us proud."

Mrs Demetriou praised the efforts of UK Cypriots specifically, saying that "the dynamic and active Cypriot community in the UK has contributed substantially to the promotion of issues related to the Cyprus problem." In particular, Mrs Demetriou added, "the role of the community in supporting expatriates, particularly those refugees who arrived in the UK after the Turkish invasion, has been important for their economic and social progress. I warmly congratulate the President and Members of the National Federation of Cypriots, for their dedication, consistency and perseverance in their targeted actions to address propaganda by Turkey to upgrade the Pseudo-state."

Mrs Demetriou noted "the intensifying Turkish provocations in the Exclusive Economic Zone and on the territory of the Republic of Cyprus, within and around the ceasefire line and in the enclosed area of Famagusta." For her part, Mrs Demetriou said that "I have sent letters of concern to Presidents of Parliaments and international parliamentary organisations, condemning Turkey's illegal actions in Famagusta and the usurpation of property of Greek Cypriot refugees, through the so-called "Property Commission". These letters ask them to exert their influence so that Turkey reverses these actions and returns to the negotiating table to resolve the Cyprus problem for the benefit of Cyprus, as well as for the benefit of Turkey and the wider region."

Concluding, Mrs Demetriou reassured the Federation and the representatives of the Federation's Member Associations of "the will and readiness of all my fellow MPs and myself personally to strengthen the cooperation of the Parliament with the National Federation of Cypriots in the

United Kingdom, for the better promotion of issues related to Cyprus and the Cypriot diaspora. We will always be at your side, assisting you in any initiative and action you undertake."

President of the National Federation of Cypriots in the UK, Christos Karaolis, in his opening remarks, affirmed that "we continue to support the tireless efforts of President Christodoulides to restart negotiations from the point at which they stopped in Crans Montana, to find a just and lasting solution that will end the Turkish occupation and that is based on the agreed UN framework, EU acquis and international law." Mr Karaolis added, "We support these efforts in practice by ensuring that the Cyprus issue remains on the British Government and Parliamentary agenda, as well as systematically challenging Turkish propaganda here in the UK."

To keep the Cyprus issue on the Parliamentary agenda, Mr Karaolis said that running the "Hands Off Cyprus email campaign allows voters to easily and directly engage with their MPs; to raise awareness about the continued occupation; and to urge MPs to take action." Alongside the campaign, Mr Karaolis said that the Federation also continues "to actively engage with the British Government and Foreign Office directly on the Cyprus issue."

Mr Karaolis elaborated on the Federation's work in countering Turkish propaganda in the UK, noting that "last year TV adverts for occupied Cyprus were the third most complained about adverts across the whole year, after a campaign by the Federation." Additionally, after "direct intervention of the Federation a number of publications that advertised holidays to occupied Cyprus, apologised and agreed not to do it again." Concluding his remarks, Mr Karaolis thanked the House President for her "long-term and tireless efforts to secure a better future for Cyprus and its people."

To close the dinner, the Federation's President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer presented Mrs Demetriou with a plaque as a token of appreciation for her efforts to raise awareness of the ongoing occupation of Cyprus in international parliaments and her support for the National Federation of Cypriots in the UK.

Prior to the dinner, the Federation's Executive Committee held a meeting with the House President. The meeting involved friendly exchanges on efforts to resume talks for Cyprus' reunification, as well as issues that affect the Cypriot diaspora living in the UK.

Also present at the dinner was the Bishop Iakovos of Claudiopolis, representing His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas; High Commissioner of Cyprus to the UK, Andreas Kakouris; Secretary General of the Cyprus House of Representatives Tassoula Ieronymides; Chief International Relations Officer of the House of Representatives Christiana Solomonidou; International Relations Officer Loukia Mouyi; Deputy High Commissioner Spyros Miltiades; Consul General in London, Odysseas Odysseos; Deputy Mayor of Barnet Tony Vourou; Cllr Maria Alexandrou; Federation Vice-Presidents, Andreas Papaevripides (POMAK President) Michael Ellinas; Federation Treasurer, Bambos Charalambous; President of the Greek Orthodox Communities, Marios Miniades; President of NEPOMAK UK, Adrian Patsalos; Federation Executive Secretary, Andreas Karaolis and representatives of the Federation's member associations.