



ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ
ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ

Address by the Minister of Education and Culture Mr Costas Kadis

Inauguration of the exhibition «Crisis – Challenge: From Cyprus to Strasbourg».

Palais d' Europe, Council of Europe, 22 November 2016

It is with great pleasure that I present the art exhibition, «Crisis – Challenge: From Cyprus to Strasbourg». This exhibition includes selected works of art that received awards in the framework of this year's 5th Pancyprian Secondary Education Visual & Plastic Arts Competition, which is the biggest art initiative in Cypriot schools. This exhibition includes also works of art created by primary education pupils who were actively involved in art activities in the framework of our objective for the 2015-2016 school year, which aims to enhance *awareness among students against racism and intolerance and to promote equality and respect in the context of the Council of Europe campaign against hate speech*.

Events like this one emphasise the role and importance of art in developing young people's critical thinking. The students involved in this creative activity had the opportunity to share and discuss their concerns, develop attitudes and behaviours, acquire knowledge and skills and experience the joy of achieving a great outcome. They succeeded, in a way, to transform Crisis into Art. They also analysed and interpreted the meaning of «Crisis» as a situation that affects them more as a Challenge than as a problematic situation without solution.

The pinnacle of this exhibition is the work titled "Immigrants" that has been awarded the 1st prize in the 2016 Saatchi Gallery / Deutsche Bank Art Prize in London as well as the "2016 European Citizen's Prize". The 30 young talents of St. Luke School in Colossi, Limassol and their inspired teacher created a project, which focuses on the refugee crisis and the desire of the refugees to live peacefully.

In today's world, challenges are endless. Living conditions for many citizens around the world are often hard and inhuman. Europe more than any other time is called upon to ensure the prevalence of peace, protect human rights and enhance the timeless universal values as fostered by its multicultural civilisation.

Esteemed guests,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my warm thanks and appreciation to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for hosting this exhibition at the Palais d' Europe. I would also like to express my gratitude to the President of the European Court of Human Rights for hosting the exhibition at the European Court of Human Rights, from December 1-23.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Cyprus to the Council of Europe, who facilitated the organisation of a successful event and provided valuable assistance to the coordinator of this exhibition, the European and International Affairs Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture, in cooperation with the Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education.

In closing, I would also like to express my special thanks to our students and their teachers for participating in this European event. The result of their work make us hope that the future generations can create a better world that is founded on the principles of social justice and solidarity. Cypriot youth have demonstrated that they are not simply spectators of events around them. To the contrary, they have opinions, sensitivities and a say, uniquely expressed through this exhibition that takes place during the Cyprus Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.