



Nicosia, 31<sup>th</sup> October 2023

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Ambassador  
of the Republic of Poland  
to the Republic of Cyprus

Your Excellency,

It is my great honour to present to you, Your Excellency, the Letters of Credence signed by H.E. Andrzej Duda President of the Republic of Poland, who has appointed me Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of Cyprus.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour and great pleasure to represent my country in Cyprus, a country that is quite distant geographically, but at the same time similar to Poland in many ways. Bilateral relations between our countries have always been close. They are based both on friendly contacts between representatives of the highest authorities and on warm relations between ordinary people. The history of our relations goes back to at least 1364, when King Peter I of Cyprus was among the guests at a congress of monarchs in Krakow hosted by the Polish King Casimir the Great. The Poles will also never forget that between 1940 and 1941 several hundred Polish refugees found shelter in Cyprus. Their long journey to the Polish Army after the tragedy of September 1939 led right through Cyprus. We also appreciate the Cypriot-Polish brotherhood in arms while fighting in Italy during the Second World War.

Poland and Cyprus have been united for centuries by their love of liberty and the historical experience of fighting for independence. Poland supported Cyprus' aspirations for a sovereign state from the very beginning and was one of the first countries to recognise the independence of the new Republic in 1960. Just a few months later, in January 1961, diplomatic relations were established and in June, the first Polish representative presented his letters of credence to the Cypriot President, Archbishop Makarios III. To celebrate the anniversary of this important development, in 2021 the President of the Republic of Poland paid a state visit to the Republic of Cyprus. I had the opportunity to participate in this major event, which we still remember in Poland as particularly meaningful. The Cypriot hospitality and openness made an unforgettable impression on the Polish delegation; we felt welcome by real friends here.

Next year we will be celebrating together the 20th anniversary of the accession of our countries to the European Union. Our membership in the European Union has strengthened our political, economic and cultural cooperation and brought Poles and Cypriots together in a process of uniting the peoples of Europe based on peace and prosperity. It is worth highlighting the excellent and effective cooperation between Cyprus and Poland when, as part of the trio, we jointly held the Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2011-2012. It was then that we first took responsibility for steering EU affairs with an optimistic, constructive and open approach. We will have another similar

opportunity very soon, in 2025 and 2026. This will be a great honour for me to be able to work in Nicosia during this period as this experience will foster closer cooperation between us.

Your Excellency,

Poland has been following the events in Cyprus with great attention, invariably expressing its support for the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus both at the United Nations and in the European Union. This position was confirmed in Nicosia by both the Polish President in 2021 and the Marshal of the Polish Sejm in May 2023. We sincerely hope that the talks on the reunification of the island reach a successful conclusion, and that a solution based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation with political equality will comply with the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. We appreciate your Excellency's personal efforts in this regard. We follow ongoing talks and efforts aimed to appoint the new special envoy of the UN with great interest and hope that will lead to a comprehensive and lasting solution to the problem.

Poland has always stood up for international law and therefore we also expect the existing laws to be respected and we do not agree with their violation. Violations of law must always be met with a strong response from the international community, whether they take place in the Eastern Mediterranean, Eastern Europe or anywhere else in the world.

I would like to thank you very much for the attitude of Cyprus towards the Russian aggression against Ukraine. It is a conflict which directly affects the security of Poland. The Republic of Cyprus has condemned Russian aggression, has provided assistance to Ukrainian refugees and invariably expresses solidarity with Ukraine. We are aware of the cost of this European unity, especially in the context of sanctions that affect economy and society. That is all the more reason for Poland's appreciation and gratitude towards Cyprus.

During my short stay in Cyprus, I already had the opportunity to witness the important role Cyprus plays in the region, being a real bridge between the MENA countries and Europe. In the first days of the Palestinian-Israeli crisis, I experienced how well we are able to work together also in emergency situations, which is a great value of our relations. At this point, please accept, Mr President, my thanks for the support of the partners from the Cypriot Ministry of Foreign Affairs in organising the flights over Cyprus during the evacuation of Polish people from Israel.

Our common experience in recent years shows that we can count on each other when acting in various international fora. I would like to express my gratitude for the support for the Polish city of Poznan, which applied to host the International Astronautical Congress. I am pleased that Poland was able to support Cyprus candidacy for the Human Rights Council from 2025 to 2027, and that we regularly support each other's membership of the IMO. Poland also supports Cyprus candidacy for the UN Security Council in 2035-2036.

Mr President,

Paphos holds a particular place in Polish-Cypriot relations. This is where Polish archaeologists have been present continuously since 1965. Joint Polish and Cypriot discoveries were an important contribution to the inscription of Paphos in the UNESCO World Heritage List. During my mission, I will do my best to further promote this cooperation.

Your Excellency,

The Polish people associate Cyprus with beautiful beaches, magnificent monuments, welcoming residents and a rich culture. It is therefore no surprise that it is one of the favourite tourist destinations of Poles. The popularity of Cyprus is steadily growing. Recent data shows that Poles are already the third nationality group visiting Cyprus. I do know that Cypriots are also interested in Poland, so during my mission I will try to encourage them to travel to Poland. Above all, however, I fervently hope that following the visit by the Polish President Your Excellency will honour us with a visit to Poland.

Mr President,

The more time I spend in Cyprus, the more similarities I see between our countries and peoples. We aspire to the future. We share respect for tradition. We stand together for universal values. Both our countries effectively play an active role in their respective regions. I am deeply convinced that Polish-Cypriot cooperation is important not only for our two countries, but for the future of Europe.

Your Excellency,

May I convey to you and to the people of Cyprus the expression of my highest respect and consideration from the President, the Government and the people of Poland. I wish to assure you that during my mission to the Republic of Cyprus I will do my utmost to make the friendship and cooperation between our countries even stronger.



Marek Szczepanowski