

**SPEECH OF THE NEW HIGH COMMISSIONER OF INDIA,  
H.E. MR. MANISH  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF HIS CREDENTIALS TO  
THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS,  
H. E. MR. NIKOS CHRISTODOULIDES**

Your Excellency, Mr. President,

I would like to extend heartfelt personal greetings and best wishes for your health and success on behalf of the leadership of India, Her Excellency the President Mrs. Droupadi Murmu and His Excellency the Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi.

It is with great honour and privilege that I present to you today the Letter of Credence from the President of India, accrediting me as the High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Cyprus, along with the Letter of Recall of my predecessor, High Commissioner Mrs. Madhumita Hazarika Bhagat. I am deeply grateful for the warm welcome extended to me and for the opportunity to serve as a representative of India in this esteemed nation.

India and Cyprus share a long-standing relationship based on mutual respect, friendship, and shared values of democracy, pluralism, and inclusivity. Our bilateral ties encompass a wide range of areas including trade, investment, culture, and people-to-people exchanges. As I take on this important responsibility, I am committed to further strengthening these ties and exploring new avenues of cooperation for the benefit of both our nations.

Cyprus holds a special place in the hearts of the Indian people, with its rich history, culture, and contributions to humanity. Our 1 cultural co-operation has enhanced thanks to the untiring efforts of your Government. I am eager to deepen our engagement and collaboration, building on the strong foundation laid by those who have served before me.

In today's complex and interconnected world, it is essential for nations to work together to address common challenges and seize opportunities for mutual growth and prosperity. India stands ready to partner with Republic of Cyprus in addressing global issues such as climate change, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development.

India had three force commanders serving in Cyprus since the establishment of the UN Peace Keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). At present, one officer

from Indian Army is serving in the UNFICYP. In the current conditions, UNFICYP's role is imperative in ensuring stability, calm and an environment conducive to the efforts to resume the political process. India plays an important role in the UN Peace Keeping all over the world.

Excellency, India has always supported the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus. India reiterates its commitment for a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation based on UN Resolutions as the solution to the Cyprus Problem. I take this opportunity to reiterate that India will continue its unwavering support to Cyprus and we laud your personal initiatives towards the resolution of the Cyprus problem.

Excellency, I would like to apprise that under the able leadership of our Government, notable initiatives have been taken aimed at promoting public welfare and fostering economic growth. These initiatives encompass a wide range of sectors, including healthcare, education, infrastructure and digital transformation. Through flagship programs such as Ayushman Bharat, Start-up India, Digital India, Make in India, Skill India and Chalo India–Global Diaspora Campaign, the Government of India is working tirelessly to empower its citizens and build a prosperous and inclusive society.

Excellency, I am pleased to refer to the excellent record of our countries in reciprocal support of candidatures in international organizations and specially express gratitude and sincere appreciation for Cyprus' support to India at various international fora, including India's candidature for the post of Member, Executive Board of the TIR Convention (TIRExB) for the term 2023-24; India's Candidature for Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Elections; India's Candidature to the post of Member of Governing Council of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) for the term 2024-28; International Maritime Organization (IMO) Council under Category B for the biennium 2024- 2025; India's candidature for the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property (ICPRCP) for the period 2023-27; India's candidature for the Joint Audit Body of the International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Funds. Republic of Cyprus has always been actively condemning terrorism and supported India on the issue. This solidarity reflects our shared commitment to upholding common principles and advancing mutual interests on the global stage.

Excellency, allow me to recall the significant visits that have strengthened the bonds between our nations in recent years. In 2017, the President of Cyprus made a historic visit to India, which served as a landmark moment in our bilateral relations. This visit provided an invaluable opportunity to deepen our understanding of each other's priorities and explore avenues for enhanced cooperation across diverse sectors. In response to this visit, the President of India had the privilege of visiting Cyprus in 2018, further underscoring the importance that both our countries attach to nurturing our relationship. Moreover, I am delighted to highlight the visit of Dr. S. Jaishankar, the External

Affairs Minister of India, to Cyprus in December 2022. During this visit, significant agreements were signed, including a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Defense cooperation and a Letter of Intent (LOI) on Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement (MMPA), signaling our shared commitment to strengthening bilateral ties. Furthermore, Cyprus's membership in the International Solar Alliance (ISA) is a testament to our joint efforts in promoting sustainable development and combating climate change. In October 2023, Mr. Shantanu Thakur, Minister of State (MoS) for Ports, Shipping and Waterways of India visited Cyprus, engaging in discussions aimed at enhancing cooperation in the maritime sector. This visit underscored the importance of maritime collaboration between our countries and paved the way for future cooperation in this vital domain.

Excellency, for the Indian community, Republic of Cyprus has become a preferred destination for a second home, due to the high standard of education system and business-friendly environment in Republic of Cyprus. Currently, there are around 14 thousand Indians living in Cyprus and they are engaged in various sectors including shipping, IT, Fintech, farmhands, domestic workers, students and are contributing positively to the economy of Cyprus.

Bilateral trade between India and Cyprus has steadily increased over the recent years and currently stands at US\$ 198.05 Million for April 2022 - March 2023. Cyprus is also among the top 10 investors in India with cumulative investments of US\$ 12.64 Billion during April 2000 – March 2023. I would like to work with your Government to find ways and means to enhance trade in goods and services. I am also happy to inform, Your Excellency, that Indian delegation members from Start-up India will participate in the forthcoming Reflect Festival 2024 to be held on 30-31 May 2024 at Limassol, which will further intensify our collaboration in start-up and innovation eco-system.

Your Excellency, I assure you of my utmost dedication and commitment to advancing the interests of India and Republic of Cyprus and to promoting greater understanding and cooperation between our two countries. I look forward to working closely with Your Excellency and your esteemed government and the vibrant Indian diaspora in Cyprus to further strengthen the bond of friendship between India and Cyprus.

In conclusion, I reaffirm my commitment to serve as a bridge between India and Republic of Cyprus, fostering goodwill, understanding and cooperation at every opportunity.

Thank you, Your Excellency, for this opportunity to contribute to the deepening of our bilateral relations.