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| **Address by the President of the Republic, Mr Nicos Anastasiades, on the occasion of UN Day****31/10/2013** |
| The United Nations was established as a result of the collective consciousness that emerged immediately after the devastation, the horrors and the chaos of the Second World War. The Organisation’s mission was and remains the implementation of international law, the maintenance of peace and security, the promotion of development and ensuring social equality worldwide.Today, 68 years later, as the global balance is upset, human rights are undermined, civil conflicts, wars, poverty, malnutrition and underdevelopment continue to plague much of the world’s population, the role of the United Nations Organisation is critical, timely and important.While recognizing that the political and economic influence and power of states and/or international organisations are asymmetrical and unequal in the current international system, no one can overlook the fundamental principles of the Charter of this Organization, on which tomorrow’s world can be built, as the founders of the Organisation had envisioned in 1945.United Nations Day, which we are honouring at this solemn event, is an opportunity for reflection, mindful of the responsibilities and major decisions, on why it is necessary today that military might should give way to dialogue that respects each other’s differences.Bearing in mind the objective of promoting the principles of the United Nations, we have to admit that what is happening today is endangering the current world order, questioning the effectiveness of this international organisation.It is not my intention to belittle the manifold contribution of the United Nations in numerous cases over the past seven decades. What is important is the decisive reinforcement of the Organisation’s role to ensure the effectiveness of both its decisions and its actions. If decisions or resolutions that are based on international law or which condemn human rights violations are not implemented or enforced, then this could be seen as promoting – or even rewarding – illegality. In such an event, regional differences and conflicts can continue indefinitely, serving the interests and expediencies of perpetrators at the expense of international law and universal principles, as unfortunately is the case in Cyprus.The non-implementation of the relevant resolutions and the inability of the international community to oblige Turkey to respect the rules and principles of international law and the UN Charter, contribute to the continuation of the gross violation of the rights and laws of Cyprus and its people as a whole.While fully respecting the principles and declarations of the United Nations, aiming at putting an end to the division and reuniting Cyprus, restoring the human rights of all citizens and creating conditions of peaceful coexistence and joint achievements of all the inhabitants of our country, I declare the determination to enter into a new round of negotiations leading to a viable and functional solution of the Cyprus problem.We believe that the UN, as the pre-eminent forum for the protection of the territorial integrity of states, is able through the Good Offices of the Secretary-General, to reach a solution of the Cyprus problem, based on Security Council resolutions. A solution that will cure the source of the problem. This is the only way to achieve a mutually acceptable solution.The UN’s involvement in Cyprus may not have succeeded, so far, to solve our problem. But it has certainly prevented the worst. It has kept the Cyprus issue alive on the world stage and prevents the legalisation of partition. Moreover, the involvement of the United Nations in the negotiations on the Cyprus problem stress the international dimension of the problem and eliminate any efforts to demote it to an intercommunal difference.I should also mention that the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus has performed, almost from the time of the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus, a supportive role in the efforts for a solution, while also contributing to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and providing humanitarian assistance to those affected by the consequences of the Turkish invasion. UNFICYP’s presence here, for almost half a century, is the best endorsement of the important and substantial assistance the United Nations Organisation provides to Cyprus. I wish to thank everyone: the United Nations; countries that have contributed troops or other assistance to Cyprus; and the UN representatives, for their valuable service to our country. Particularly, I wish to mention the 174 UNFICYP peacekeepers who lost their lives in the line of duty in our country.Since its independence, Cyprus has benefited substantially from other UN activities. Specifically, the UN development programme (UNOPS and then UNDP) helped the young Republic in its first steps towards economic and social development, through the provision of technical assistance and the implementation of its development programmes.I would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that – despite the current economic difficulties we are facing – I am determined to work towards achieving a viable and lasting settlement, ensuring that all the communities of Cyprus live and prosper in a modern European country that fully respects the principles and values of the United Nations and which safeguards the fundamental freedoms and human rights of all its citizens and their peaceful coexistence and prosperous cooperation. This would reflect in practice our absolute respect and commitment to the values of the United Nations, which are being honoured today.It is my strong belief that the current status quo is unacceptable and its preservation would have further negative consequences for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Therefore, a comprehensive settlement is not only desirable, but should not be further delayed. I am certain that the reunification of Cyprus is not only in the interests of the people of Cyprus but also for the benefit of the entire international community, since a solution to the Cyprus problem will no doubt have a major domino effect on achieving and maintaining the necessary environment of stability, security and peace in our region.I reiterate that we are determined to rise to the challenge of this historic responsibility and exert every effort to offer a more stable, prosperous and conciliatory future in our immediate neighbourhood, and to provide a legacy to be remembered by future generations.Hoping that the day will soon come when the fundamental principles of the United Nations will prevail over the relations between states and nations and mankind will experience in practice the vision of those who founded the United Nations Organisation, I wish to congratulate the United Nations Association of Cyprus and its Chairman for their undertakings and efforts to ensure that the objectives of the United Nations become embedded in each and every one of us and that it translates into our daily lives. |

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