PRESS RELEASE

**The Hague – 2 June 2018: Exhibition “Where have you been?” by Toula Liasi, dedicated to the Missing Persons in Cyprus, opened by H.E. Ambassador Elpidoforos Economou.**

H.E. the Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the Netherlands, Mr. Elpidoforos Economou, opened the exhibition “Where have you been?” in The Hague, on Saturday 2 June 2018. The exhibition by Cypriot artist Ms. Toula Liasi is dedicated to the Missing Persons in Cyprus and is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus.

Ambassador Economou delivered a speech on behalf of Presidential Commissioner for Humanitarian Issues and Overseas Cypriots Mr. Photis Photiou during the opening. ‘The exhibition’, it was noted ‘‘brings to our attention, through the power of art, all the dimensions of the most dramatic aspect of the recent history of Cyprus: the tragedy of the missing Cypriots... ‘With her latest project Toula manages to keep alive and remind us of an open wound of modern Cypriot history, but also she significantly contributes in raising awareness on this vital humanitarian issue.’

“Where have you been?” is an art project inspired by the personal story of Ms. Toula Liasi, who has been living and working in The Hague for nearly four decades. Her only brother, who had been missing since the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, was found in a mass grave and identified through a DNA identification process in 2014, after forty long years. This overwhelming, emotional experience triggered a flood of ideas for this art project that addresses the issue of the missing persons in Cyprus. Three of Ms. Liasi’s earlier major art projects had already been dedicated to her enclaved compatriots, who have been a constant inspiration for her throughout the years.

The exhibition opened with a performance by the acclaimed Dutch trombonist Jörgen van Rijen and a parallel screening of a video installation by Toula Liasi. A reception followed. The opening was attended by more than a hundred guests, among whom Ambassadors, members of the Corps Diplomatique, various artists and representatives of culture, and members of the Cypriot and Greek communities of the Netherlands.

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