

## 29 DECEMBER 2022 - STATEMENT TO THE PRESS BY FOREIGN MINISTER KASOULIDES ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF FOREIGN MINISTER OF INDIA, DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR



It is with great honour and pleasure, that I welcome in Cyprus a good friend and colleague, the External Affairs Minister of India, Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.

Cyprus and India are bound by our parallel historical experiences, such as the anti-colonial movement and our common paths to independence. The excellent level of relations between our two countries is also anchored by our shared vision for a world of peace, freedom, democracy and the rule of law.

Today's meeting was yet another reaffirmation of the excellent relation strengthened during the past 60 years of diplomatic relations between Cyprus and India. This solid partnership continues to diversify and deepen at all levels. People to people contacts have shaped a naturally strong, longstanding bond of friendship.

In the course of our meeting, we had the opportunity to go over the full spectrum of our bilateral relations but also on a wide range of other global and regional issues of common interest.

We welcome the strong momentum in our bilateral cooperation, but as always, we looked at ways to further strengthen our ties, in fields such as trade, commerce, investment, maritime affairs, tourism and education.

In this regard, it is our intention to continue our annual political consultations, which are held uninterruptedly for the last 3 years. We believe that this consultations mechanism between our two Foreign Ministries provides a solid platform for dialogue, creating common understanding and enabling us to coordinate our efforts.

Today we have signed 3 important agreements, with the aim to foster our cooperation in effectively addressing issues of mutual concern. The MoU on Defence and Military Cooperation will help develop the relevant dialogue. Furthermore, today with the International Solar Alliance Agreement, we join a collective platform, along with a number of other

countries, that aims to address an issue that affects the globe, that of the energy transition. We have also signed a Declaration of Intent on Migration and Mobility which demonstrates our willingness to start a substantive dialogue with the aim of concluding an agreement that will tackle the issue of illegal migration and facilitate mobility in a proper manner.

We also exchanged information and ideas on how our countries can contribute more effectively to the promotion of peace and the strengthening of stability in our wider regions. In this context, I briefed the Minister on the trilateral cooperation mechanisms that Cyprus has established, together with partners in the Eastern Mediterranean region, designed to foster synergies and understanding to the benefit of all.

As a global power with an important and stabilizing role in the neighbourhood of South Asia, India sets an example with its wisdom and leadership, so that peace, security and stability may prevail.

I grasped today's opportunity to extend in person our heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation for India's longstanding principled stance in our continued efforts for the reunification of Cyprus, expressed by your country's support in the UN Security Council, on the issue of Varoshia and the resolutions for the renewal of the UNFICYP's mandate.

The political obstacles that emerged as a result of the partition of India stand as a historical example that serves as a guide to our efforts to reach a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus. As we have seen with the case of India, the country's partition was just the beginning of a perilous journey and certainly not the end. Therefore, a two-state solution for Cyprus and its people cannot be accepted.

In this regard, I thanked my Indian friend for their support in our efforts to reach a viable and comprehensive settlement, in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and International Law.

Furthermore, I expressed my appreciation for India's substantive contribution throughout the years through its participation in UNFICYP, with military and police personnel. Cyprus was very fortunate to have 3 Indian Commanders of the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Cyprus: General Gyani, General Thimayya, who served in Cyprus until his passing in 1965 and General Dewan Prem Chand whose tireless efforts during the Turkish invasion to protect civilians, evacuate foreign diplomatic staff and safeguard the airport in Nicosia, will never be forgotten. Our island, having one of the longest standing UN Peacekeeping missions deployed on our territory, we thank India for the service and sacrifice of its peacekeepers.

We also touched upon a number of regional issues, such as the situation in Ukraine and Afghanistan. Particularly for Ukraine, we expressed our concerns on the severe political, economic and humanitarian implications of the ongoing war and the global spillover on food and energy security. We agreed on the necessity to intensify the efforts of the international community, to achieve a diplomatic solution that would end the suffering of the people and restore peace and stability.

Last but not least, we discussed the framework of the EU-India relations, which over the years have evolved to a strategic partnership with both sides jointly working together to address common challenges, to promote peace and security, as well as effective multilateralism.

My dear colleague and friend Subrahmanyam, once again, it is a pleasure to welcome you to Cyprus. HAPPY NEW YEAR.