

SPEECH OF THE NEW AMBASSADOR
OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN,
MR. ALVARO CASTILLO-AGUILAR,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF HIS
CREDENTIALS TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS,
H. E. MR. NICOS ANASTASIADES

Your Excellency, Mr. President,

It is a great honour for me to present to You today my credentials as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Spain to the Republic of Cyprus.

The relations between Spain and Cyprus are excellent. We are now celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of official diplomatic relations, but History shows how our two countries have shared interests for centuries.

The Mediterranean Sea, from time immemorial, has intertwined the different cultures of the bordering civilizations, that traded and mingled with each other, thus creating cultures where the geological similarities, the climate, and even cultural peculiarities such as the Mediterranean diet or even the personality of its people, had very much in common.

Nowadays, we cannot deny how deeply our geographical situation determines what our priorities as a nation are. The political upheavals in the southern border of our Mare Nostrum, for example, influence such issues as migration or tourism. In particular, the developments in the area, which pose a threat to global peace and stability, have direct consequences on the welfare of our two countries, and thus may require our close cooperation.

As a sign of our mutual understanding, we can recall the launching by our two countries in 2013 of the "Mediterranean Group", which aims at improving coordination amongst the EU southern States, and which can only strengthen our bilateral ties.

Spain and Cyprus share similar positions in a great number of issues, such as migration, the commitment to the EU banking union, or special awareness of the consequences of climate change and desertification.

Cyprus will soon celebrate its 15th anniversary as a member of the European Union. During this time, it has proved to be a reliable partner for all member states. Undoubtedly, these past fifteen years have also intensified our bilateral relations, with a considerable number of high level meetings.

To name just a few recent ones, we may recall Your visit to Spain in April 2017, in the context of the EuroMed7 that took place in Madrid. Or that of Your Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Nikos Christodoulides, who visited Barcelona last October for the third Union for the Mediterranean Regional Forum, and met there with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain, Mr. Borrell —a meeting that I had the privilege to attend, only a few days before coming to Cyprus, as the Minister's Deputy Head of Cabinet. Even more recently, the President of the Chamber of Representatives, Mr. Demetris Syllouris, was invited to a work breakfast with our Minister of Foreign Affairs on October 23th, as a part of his official visit to Spain, where he held fruitful meetings both with the President of the Congress and the Senate of Spain.

Mr. President,

After the last economic crisis, which has been unusually harsh and global, I must congratulate You on the impressive recovery of Your country, which once again has rejoined the path of growth and prosperity.

In this context, I believe that the double taxation agreement between Cyprus and Spain has contributed to the recovery of both countries, and is proving to be a useful framework to promote trade and business, and the interconnection in different fields of common interest, such as infrastructures, energy, or tourism, thus stimulating the economy with the creation of new jobs and wealth.

As far as the Cyprus question is concerned, Spain shares the hope that a satisfactory outcome will be found and that the island will finally be reunified. We look forward to the resuming of negotiations between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, and wish for a settlement in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

Your Excellency, Mr. President,

The relations between our two countries have a long history. You can be assured that, during my term as Ambassador in Cyprus, I will work to deepen the ties even more.

Finally, as I present my Letters of Credence, I would like to convey to Your Excellency the warm greetings of His Majesty the King of Spain, Felipe VI, the Spanish nation and its government, with the kind request that You convey them to the Cypriot people.