

**Address by the Ambassador of El Salvador, Mr Efrén Arnaldo Bernal Chévez,  
presenting his credentials to the PoR of the Republic of Cyprus, on June 9, 2023**

Your Excellency, Mr President Christodoulides,

It is my privilege to be the bearer of friendly greetings from the President of the Republic of El Salvador, His Excellency Nayib Bukele, who has entrusted me with the honour of presenting to Your Excellency the Letters of Credence accrediting me as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of El Salvador to the Honourable Republic of Cyprus.

This is an opportune occasion to express the high appreciation of the Republic of El Salvador for the friendly ties that have united our countries and our peoples for 24 years, when our governments took the wise decision to establish diplomatic relations. Mr President, please accept our warmest congratulations on the recent democratic election process that culminated in your election by the Cypriot people. I also wish to express my readiness to work closely with you, Excellency, in further strengthening friendly relations and identifying new areas of mutual collaboration.

President Bukele is convinced that the development of nations is enhanced through the virtuous path of cooperation, both bilaterally and multilaterally, and through the exercise of the noble principles of international law, such as full respect for the sovereign equality of all peoples.

In this spirit, my country is open to work closely with the Honourable Republic of Cyprus in favour of our common interests and the prosperity of our peoples, through the strengthening of diplomatic, economic, commercial, tourism and cultural ties that unite us, in addition to joint collaboration in different multilateral spaces of priority for our governments. We are particularly interested in the organisation of the first meeting of political consultations and the development of trade and investment between our nations, taking advantage of the Association Agreement between Central America and the European Union.

El Salvador has entered a new stage in its history, marked by the promotion of actions aimed at settling the historical debts that previous governments had with our people. In this

way, the structural factors that have hindered the well-being and full enjoyment of rights of Salvadorans are finally being addressed.

Thanks to the efforts led by President Bukele, and four years of his administration, the progress the country has made is evident. The process of insecurity in which Salvadoran society was living has been reversed, changing from being the most violent country in the world to the safest in Latin America, thus guaranteeing the full enjoyment of rights and freedoms for Salvadoran families; important results are being achieved in terms of sustainable development and social inclusion, as well as in the promotion of peace, which has led to a high level of approval by the Salvadoran population.

This is thanks to the institutional renewal process that El Salvador is undergoing, as well as the implementation of public policies focused on our people, which encompass aspects such as the reduction of inequality, early childhood and youth development, food security and autonomy, investment in strategic projects that support development, among others.

In 2020, when the whole of humanity was faced with the Covid-19 pandemic, El Salvador adopted containment, treatment, vaccination and general prevention measures, as well as fiscal measures to reduce the economic impact on households and businesses. This strategy has earned El Salvador the recognition of the World Health Organisation, making it a benchmark for countries in the region.

Likewise, children are provided with computer tools to facilitate their education, the percentage of gross domestic product allocated to education and health has increased, and greater employment opportunities are created, with a commitment to the development of micro, small and medium-size enterprises and the integration of production chains. At the same time, there has been an increase in the development of projects to attract tourism – where surfing deserves special mention – as well as the modernisation of road infrastructures and mass passenger transport.

In the economic sphere, efforts have been made to increase productivity, reduce remittance transfer costs and seek alternative sources of investment. In this context, Bitcoin has been introduced as legal tender, which has reduced the cost of remittances from our compatriots abroad, leading to an increase of seven billion dollars in remittances, demonstrating the

benefits of democratising our monetary policy in order to enhance the economic and social development of the people.

The Government of El Salvador renews its kind invitation to friendly countries, including the Republic of Cyprus, to join and support the process of national transformation, with a view to progressively advance towards the construction of a great and prosperous nation, offering better opportunities for development.

El Salvador reiterates its commitment to the maintenance of peace, to respect the international law and the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, while advocating dialogue and negotiation as tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States. In this regard, El Salvador trusts that the parties involved will be able to find a negotiated solution to the conflict that is compatible with their national interests and with the legal commitments adopted on the matter, on the basis of goodwill and mutual respect, in the interests of maintaining regional security and stability.

Your Excellency, Mr President, before concluding my remarks, allow me to express to you, on behalf of the Salvadoran people and President Nayib Bukele, my most sincere wishes for peace, well-being and prosperity for the Republic of Cyprus and its people. We trust that our relations will continue to strengthen over time and that our high aspirations for development will serve as a catalyst for joint efforts to produce mutually beneficial results.