

**Address by the Ambassador of Iceland, Mrs Bryndís Kjartansdóttir, presenting her credentials to the PoR of the Republic of Cyprus, on June 9, 2023**

Your Excellency,

It is an honour and a great pleasure to present you with my Letter of Credence as Iceland's Ambassador, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, to the Republic of Cyprus, with residence in Stockholm.

I have the honour to convey personal greetings from the President of Iceland, Mr Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, to Your Excellency, to members of Parliament, and to the people of Cyprus.

Our nations may be distant neighbours, yet they are like-minded and share many characteristics. We are islanders with strong seafaring traditions and cultural identities marked by centuries of foreign rule and powerful neighbours. We note with admiration your commitment to solving the Cyprus problem. Iceland supports the peace talks and we wish you every success in this endeavour.

Cyprus and Iceland have been partners in the European family since our countries established diplomatic relations in 1979. In recent years our bilateral relations have developed and grown on the basis of the European Economic Area where we both belong to the internal market for goods and services. Let me also underline the beauty and importance of our shared values that remain the cornerstone of our security at turbulent times. As Cyprus, Iceland condemns the unlawful and brutal invasion of Russia into Ukraine.

Travel and tourism are important pillars of both of our economies. We can learn a lot from each other in this sector, which has grown immensely in both our countries in a relatively short period of time.

Cyprus is a popular holiday destination for Icelanders who appreciate the mild and favourable climate the excellent local cuisine and your renowned hospitality.

Both our countries have for decades competed in the Games of the Small States of Europe. I know that you have a great national basketball team which has been hard for us to beat.

Iceland is privileged to have been represented in Cyprus by Consul General Michael Psomas since 1996 and his son George Psomas. They have worked hard to strengthen the ties between our two countries even further.

To sum up, Your Excellency, we believe that trade, cultural exchange and tourism will continue to bring Cyprus and Iceland closer together. As Ambassador I look forward to exploring ways and means to further strengthen the ties between our two countries over the coming years. Thank you.

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