

Speech of H.E. Ms. Clélia Chevrier Colacko
Ambassador of the French Republic to Cyprus
At the occasion of the presentation of her credentials
To His Excellency Mr. Nikos Christodoulides, President of the Republic of
Cyprus

I have the honour to present to Your Excellency the credentials by which His Excellency the President of the French Republic, Mr Emmanuel Macron, accredits me as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to the Republic of Cyprus, as well as the Letters of Recall of my predecessor.

It is an honour and a privilege for me to represent France in Cyprus. Our two countries have long enjoyed close and dynamic relations, based on mutual trust and looking to the future. Throughout my term of office, I will strive to deepen and diversify these relations.

France's commitment to Cyprus is deep and constant. As the representative of a friendly country, a member of the European Union and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, I would like to reaffirm France's continued support for the principle and conduct of an open, peaceful and constructive dialogue aimed at achieving a just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus question, within the framework of the United Nations, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, the principles on which the European Union is founded and the *acquis communautaire*.

I would also like to express once again the warm thanks of the French authorities for your mobilization to enable the evacuation of several hundred French nationals from Israel during the terrorist attack last October, and for your dedicated support in planning potential evacuations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Over and above the spirit of solidarity demonstrated by this commitment, this is an important aspect of the strategic cooperation that we have developed in the area of defence, which takes the form of frequent bilateral exchanges and exercises, particularly in the naval domain, and which should be further intensified in other fields and domains.

Our views largely converge on the importance of acting in order to strengthen European sovereignty, whether in terms of our defence, energy or industry, and on a clear determination to make Europe a leader in the ecological and digital transitions. The Presidency of the European Union that you will assume in 2026 will be an opportunity to further strengthen this ambition for a Europe that invests more in its future and shows solidarity between its members in all areas. You know that you can count on France's support in the run-up to this milestone. The informal coordination of the EU's Mediterranean countries through MED-9, which you initiated and which is meeting this year in Cyprus, is also an illustration of this shared European ambition.

We also owe this convergence of views to our shared membership to the French-speaking family. The French authorities are very sensitive to Cyprus's ongoing

commitment to the French language, a language that enables us to discuss and create links, and are pleased that learning French remains compulsory in Cypriot public education. France is particularly grateful for the support given by the Cypriot authorities to the French-Cypriot school. The new branch opened in Limassol has already been a success, with the number of pupils enrolled tripling in just one year. It is a perfect addition to the Nicosia school, which has over 400 Cypriot, French and third countries pupils. Your commitment to the institutional Francophonie is also particularly appreciated.

Economic and trade relations between France and Cyprus have also strengthened considerably recently. They present opportunities for development in several areas, such as energy, sustainable tourism and innovation, which it is up to us to seize.

In conclusion, Mr President, allow me to convey to you, to the Government and to the people of Cyprus, the warm wishes of friendship and prosperity expressed by the President of the French Republic to Your Excellency.