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📅 14 -15 May 2024 📍 London

annual REPORT

This report offers a comprehensive summary of the Cyprus Forum London, capturing the key discussions and insights shared during the event. We extend our gratitude to all participants, including political leaders, professionals, media representatives, academics, and members of civil society, for their valuable contributions.

The views expressed in this report are solely those of the respective authors and do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Cyprus Forum, its organisers, or partners. Our goal remains to ignite dialogue and inspire change by fostering inclusive and meaningful conversations on critical issues. Readers are encouraged to reflect on the perspectives presented and contribute to the ongoing discourse.



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HIGH COMMISSION
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS



 14 -15 May 2024  London

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A woman with long brown hair is smiling on the left side of the frame. On the right side, a man is shown in profile, facing left. The entire image is covered with a dark blue semi-transparent filter. The text 'WELCOMING REMARKS' is centered in white, bold, uppercase letters.

WELCOMING REMARKS

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Kyriacós Kouros High Commissioner of Cyprus to the United Kingdom

In his welcoming speech, the High Commissioner marked the launch of Cyprus Forum London and expressed the wish that this event would be the first of many in the Cyprus Forum London series.

He highlighted that the Cyprus Forum, which emerged only a few years ago, has quickly gained widespread credibility and recognition for its contributions to the policymaking ecosystem in Cyprus. He described it as a pioneering platform in Cyprus, providing a regular venue for open, inclusive, and informed debate. The forum brings together politicians, diplomats, academics, experts from both the public and private sectors, civil society, and the media. This diverse assembly has fostered new avenues of communication that Cypriot society had rarely experienced before, benefiting both speakers and listeners alike. Importantly, the High Commissioner noted that the forum encourages critical thinking and knowledge enrichment, significantly contributing to a healthy and free-thinking society.

For these reasons, the High Commissioner expressed satisfaction at the opportunity for the Cyprus High Commission to host and support the launch of the London series of these events.

He outlined that the early sessions would feature panel discussions focusing on Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean from the geopolitical and geoeconomic perspectives, while later sessions would shift focus to the bilateral relationship between Cyprus and the United Kingdom in the fields of justice and education. The High Commissioner himself was scheduled to participate in a panel alongside the Ambassador of Greece, to talk about geopolitics and future scenarios for the Eastern Mediterranean.



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Alison Kemp

Head of FCDO

Mediterranean Department

Reflecting on her time in Cambridge, Mrs. Kemp mentioned an exhibition organised by the High Commission, the Greek Embassy, and the Italian Embassy at the Fitzwilliam Museum, titled “The Making of the Mediterranean.” This exhibition, which showcased life in Cyprus several millennia ago, reminded her of two significant points: first, that Cyprus has always been a regional crossroads and incubator for innovation, and second, its historical and ongoing strategic significance. She highlighted Cyprus’s role in responding to instability in the Middle East, particularly through the Amalthia Plan, through which UK aid is being dispatched from Larnaca to Gaza.

Mrs. Kemp emphasised Cyprus’s steadfast support for Ukraine in the face of Russia’s invasion and highlighted their shared concerns regarding migration, climate change, energy, and maritime security. Noting the ongoing efforts to find a settlement with the support of the UN Secretary General’s personal envoy 50 years after the island’s division, she reaffirmed the UK’s commitment to supporting these efforts in line with relevant UN resolutions.

Her second takeaway was the strong links between the UK and Cyprus. Mrs. Kemp observed the familiarity and affection many visitors had for Cyprus, underscoring the special qualities of the relationship between the two countries. This relationship is highlighted by significant tourist exchanges, with 1.2 million British visitors to Cyprus annually, and bolstered by the 300,000-strong Cypriot diaspora in the UK. She recalled King Charles’s 2019 celebration of the Cypriot diaspora’s indispensable contribution to the UK.

Mrs. Kemp further noted the robust educational, legal, and maritime links contributing to a trade relationship worth £3.7 billion last year, marking an 185% increase. She anticipated more discussions on these topics later in the day. The British government remains committed to strengthening these ties, including through the upcoming review of the UK-Cyprus Memorandum of Understanding establishing a framework for strategic cooperation, which annually outlines ways to further develop the bilateral relationship.



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Nicolas Kyriakides

Executive President of the Cyprus Forum

Nicolas Kyriakides, the Executive President of the Cyprus Forum, expressed his great pleasure and gratitude as he inaugurated the first satellite event of the Cyprus Forum outside Cyprus, hosted in London. Since its inception in 2020, the Cyprus Forum has played a crucial role in facilitating discussions among policymakers, businesspeople, academics, civil society representatives, and thought leaders. With partnerships including the Delphi Economic Forum in Greece and a presence in Greece, Brussels, Washington DC, and now London, the forum aims to amplify policy conversations relevant to Cyprus. Kyriakides emphasised the importance of leveraging the expertise and dynamic energy of this global hub to promote Cyprus-related policy dialogues.

He extended heartfelt appreciation to esteemed partners whose support and collaboration made the conference possible, specifically acknowledging the High Commissioner, Dr Kyriakos Kouros, the Political Counsellor, Mrs. Melivia Demetriou, and recognising knowledge partners such as the Hellenic Observatory at the London School of Economics and the Southeast European Studies Centre at Oxford University.

Kyriakides reaffirmed the Cyprus Forum's commitment to promoting policies that foster peace, stability, and prosperity in Cyprus and the wider region. He thanked attendees for their contributions, insights, and suggestions during the discussions, expressing hope that the conference would catalyse continued collaboration between British, Cypriot, and other nationalities in the years ahead.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Deputy Minister of Shipping Mrs Marina Hadjimanolis

Following a promotional video, Deputy Minister of Shipping Mrs. Marina Hadjimanolis underscored humanity's historical adaptation to change, framing Cyprus' shipping industry as a prime example. Spanning six decades since the inception of the Cyprus Register of Ships, Cyprus' maritime flag has become synonymous with stability, opportunity, and expansion, placing Cyprus at the forefront of global shipping nations.

Cyprus' proactive initiatives in the maritime sector were outlined, advocating for streamlined procedures and exemplary service delivery to bolster resilience of the sector. Safety was prioritised alongside efforts to foster a skilled and inclusive workforce, promoting gender equality and diversity. Sustainability, the endorsement of the embrace of energy transition and green technologies were emphasised. Furthermore, digital transformation and automation were highlighted as essential strategies in navigating today's dynamic and uncertain times.

Concluding the video, it was stressed that shipping not only navigates change but also shapes a brighter future, asserting its pivotal role in creating a legacy of resilience and progress for all stakeholders involved.

In her address, Deputy Minister of Shipping Mrs. Marina Hadjimanolis underscored the Cyprus Forum's vital role in fostering discussions and collaborations among policymakers, academics, and civil society representatives. She highlighted the government's support for such initiatives, which bolster Cyprus's standing in various sectors, including shipping, tourism, and real estate, driving economic growth and innovation.

Mrs. Hadjimanolis praised the enduring relationship between Cyprus and the UK, particularly their excellent cooperation in shipping, exemplified by the signing of a memorandum of cooperation between the two nations. As an island maritime state, Cyprus values the seas and oceans for both economic and cultural reasons. She noted Cyprus's recent hosting of the first Commonwealth Oceans Ministerial Meeting, focusing on ocean protection and management, which was attended by representatives from 28 Commonwealth countries and 12 observer organizations. Cyprus spearheaded efforts through initiatives like the Commonwealth Blue Charter and the proposed Commonwealth Ocean Declaration, set for adoption at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa later this year.

Reflecting on Cyprus's strategic geographical position and its role as a major shipping centre, Mrs. Hadjimanolis highlighted the establishment of the Ministry of Shipping in 2018, which underscored the nation's commitment to the shipping sector. The Cyprus registry, now among the world's top, celebrated its 60th anniversary last year, with a notable increase in vessels registered under the Cyprus flag.

Cyprus boasts a modern and integrated maritime shipping cluster, recognised as a leading third-party ship management centre, the largest in Europe and among the top three globally. With over 200 resident shipping companies, Cyprus offers a range of services from ship ownership to management and insurance. The Cyprus tonnage tax system, supporting a 14% increase in registered companies over the past year, remains a significant draw for international companies, including many from the UK.

Mrs. Hadjimanolis emphasised Cyprus's efforts to enhance and upgrade its maritime services, focusing on environmental impact, efficiency, and customer orientation. Safety, security, and environmental protection are paramount, ensuring the Cyprus flag maintains its esteemed global reputation. She proudly announced Cyprus's re-election to the Council of the International Maritime Organisation and the awarding of the first IMO Gender Equality Award to Cyprus, recognising its promotion of gender equality in shipping.

Despite global challenges such as geopolitical tensions and recent security threats to vessels, Mrs. Hadjimanolis affirmed Cyprus's active participation in international discussions on shipping decarbonization targets. She reassured the commitment of herself and President Mr. Nikos Christodoulides to support the shipping industry amidst current challenges. Concluding with confidence, Mrs. Hadjimanolis expressed optimism about enhancing competitiveness and promoting growth within Cyprus's maritime cluster, envisioning a future of expanded size and scope.



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PANEL DISCUSSIONS



"Cyprus and Future Scenarios of the Eastern Mediterranean"

Knowledge Partner: SEESOX

- **Ambassador Yannis Tsaousis, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the United Kingdom**
- **Ambassador Kyriacos Kouros, High Commissioner of the Republic of Cyprus to the United Kingdom,**
- **Moderator: George Hadjipavlis, University of Oxford**

Mr. Hadjipavlis opened the discussion on Cyprus and future scenarios for the Eastern Mediterranean, inviting the panel to explore recent regional developments, potential shifts in British foreign policy, and the impact of great power competition, particularly between the United States and the Euro-Atlantic bloc against Russia and China. He also questioned how Cyprus might leverage recent developments to encourage Turkey towards a just and lasting solution to the Cyprus issue.

The High Commissioner highlighted Cyprus's perspective on the Eastern Mediterranean's future, noting the centrality of the Cyprus issue and the inevitability of addressing it in all of these scenarios. He outlined three scenarios: not solving the Cyprus problem, solving it, or continuing negotiations. He marked the 50th anniversary of the 1974 Turkish invasion, discussing the challenges in resolving longstanding conflicts such as the Cyprus issue. He mentioned the UN Secretary General's personal envoy Maria Angela Holguín Cuéllar's recent visit to the island, aimed at finding common ground for restarting negotiations. He emphasised that Cyprus must advance internally and regionally despite the unresolved issue, positioning itself as a stable EU member amidst volatile neighbours.

Addressing the scenarios, he asserted that not solving the issue is not an option, emphasising the benefits a resolution would bring to the region, including Turkey, Greece, and Britain. Ambassador Tsaousis agreed, advocating for a solution within the internationally agreed bizonal bicomunal federation framework as outlined by the United Nations. He rejected the acceptance of the post-1974 invasion status quo and the Turkish rhetoric for partition, or two-state solution, or so-called sovereign equality. He stressed the importance of legality in any steps forward.

Ambassador Tsaousis underscored that resolving the Cyprus issue is crucial for regional stability, noting that the 1974 invasion continues to pose significant problems. He reaffirmed Greece and Cyprus's commitment to promoting stability and cooperation in the Mediterranean, viewing it as a bridge between Europe and Africa. He highlighted Greece's involvement with Cyprus in regional cooperation initiatives with other countries and their role as advocates for international law.

Regarding current crises, Ambassador Tsaousis emphasised humanitarian efforts and security, mentioning Greece's leadership in the EU ASPIDES operation in the Red Sea to safeguard freedom of navigation, preserve energy security and supply chain stability, as well as protect the maritime environment. He reiterated Greece and Cyprus's clear positions on international law regarding Ukraine and Gaza, supporting Israel's right to self-defence while upholding humanitarian law and condemning the invasion of Ukraine.

Mr. Hadjipavlis emphasised the United States' interest in Mediterranean involvement, noting its significance for euro-atlantic security and energy security, as highlighted in the East Med Act. He pointed out that the ongoing occupation of Cyprus challenges energy, maritime logistics, and regional connectivity. He then asked Ambassador Tsalousis and High Commissioner Kouros if the Greek-Turkish dialogue could positively contribute to resolving the Cyprus question.

Ambassador Tsalousis affirmed that Greek-Turkish dialogue is constructive, citing a recent meeting between Prime Minister Mitsotakis and President Erdogan that indicated progress in bilateral cooperation amidst disagreements. He believed continued dialogue could foster a conducive climate for negotiations on Cyprus, addressing bilateral and regional stability concerns.

High Commissioner Kyriakos Kouros concurred, emphasising that Greek-Turkish dialogue is crucial for fostering a positive atmosphere that supports efforts to resolve the Cyprus issue. He stressed the importance of involving Greece, Turkey, and Britain as Guarantor powers to achieve a comprehensive solution, including security arrangements. Both diplomats emphasised the necessity of sustained dialogue and cooperation between Greece and Turkey to advance towards resolving the longstanding Cyprus problem.



"Cyprus and its geoeconomic challenges and prospects"

Knowledge Partner: LSE Hellenic Observatory

- Cleopatra Kitt, Founder, Mediterranean Growth Initiative, Senior Policy Adviser, ELIAMEP
- Charles Grant, Centre for European Reform
- Stelios Sakkas, Research Economist, Economics Research Centre, University of Cyprus
- Louis Loizou, Chair, Hellenic Tech Network (online / live link)
- Moderator: Prof. Vassilis Monastiriotis, London School of Economics

Moderator: Prof. Vassilis Monastiriotis, London School of Economics

Prof. Vassilis Monastiriotis opened the discussion by highlighting the shift from geopolitics to geoeconomics in Cyprus, stressing the country's role as a small open economy with significant dependencies due to its strategic location. He noted advancements in Cyprus's policy towards higher-value sectors like fintech and green initiatives before introducing the panellists: Charles Grant (Centre for European Reform), Cleopatra Kitt (Mediterranean Growth Initiative, online), Stelios Sakkas (University of Cyprus), and Louis Loizou (Hellenic Tech Network, online).

Charles Grant, Centre for European Reform

Charles Grant identified ten significant sources of uncertainty impacting Cyprus, the UK, and the EU. He discussed the implications of leadership changes in Europe, the war in Ukraine, and potential divisions within NATO under a possible second Trump US presidency. Grant highlighted climate change, migration policy, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as additional sources of instability. He also speculated on Turkey's future political landscape and its impact on EU relations. Grant concluded by emphasising the need for strategic planning to navigate these uncertainties.

Cleopatra Kitt, Mediterranean Growth Initiative (online)

Cleopatra Kitt presented data from the Mediterranean Growth Initiative, highlighting the economic relationship between the UK and the Mediterranean. She noted that despite the region's potential, it remains the least interconnected globally, exacerbating conflicts. She presented infographics showing a significant drop in UK-Mediterranean trade post-Brexit, especially with non-Eastern Mediterranean countries. She stressed the need for Cyprus to enhance its export profile to the UK and leverage regional value chains.

Stelios Sakkas, University of Cyprus

Dr. Stelios Sakkas discussed a project simulating the impact of EU sanctions on Russia on Cyprus's economy. He noted that while the initial fear was significant economic damage, the actual impact was milder, although Cyprus's strong ties with Russia led to notable declines in service exports, tourism, and FDI. Sakkas highlighted ongoing economic vulnerabilities and the need for Cyprus to adapt to new markets, expressing concerns about the equity of EU sanctions policies and their impact in all member states.

Louis Loizou, Hellenic Tech Network (online)

Louis Loizou emphasised the importance of the tourism and hospitality sector, identifying opportunities to upgrade the top-tier market. He highlighted the transformation of Limassol into a regional business hub but noted the increased cost of living for locals. He saw potential for growth in the educational sector, particularly in the expansion of private international schools, and in the medical sector with the necessary foreign investments. Loizou concluded by discussing the significant opportunities a potential reunification of Cyprus could bring, particularly in the energy sector, which could enhance the region's profile and attract new business ventures.





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SPEAKER

"The Turkish Cypriot Community's Views on Turkey's role and the prospects for Peace and Reunification"

Knowledge Partner: University of York, Department of Politics

- **Nina Caspersen, Professor, University of York**
- **Sinem Arslan, Research Fellow, University of St Andrews**
- **Moderator: Nicolas Kyriakides, Executive President, Cyprus Forum**



In a fireside discussion moderated by Nicolas Kyriakides, Nina Caspersen and Sinem Arslan shared their perspectives on the complexities surrounding the Cyprus conflict in 2024. Caspersen began by contextualising the international community's unique stance on Cyprus, emphasising the UN Security Council's firm position on non-recognition of the Turkish Cypriot unilateral declaration of independence and its endorsement of a bizonal, bicomunal federation as the path to resolution. She underscored the challenges posed by Turkey's increased interference and the prevalent dissatisfaction with the current status quo among Cypriots.

Arslan followed with a focus on the role of Turkey as both a pivotal player and an obstacle to peace in Cyprus. She highlighted findings from comparative research funded by the Norwegian Research Council, stressing the dynamic nature of patron-state relationships and the agency of local leaders within secessionist entities. Arslan's insights provided a nuanced understanding of how external pressures interact with local dynamics, influencing the prospects for reunification. Throughout the discussion, Kyriakides moderated the exchange, guiding the conversation to delve into the actual findings from the ground as a result of numerous interviews within the Turkish Cypriot community and examine the policy recommendations that flow from them and are aimed at fostering trust and confidence-building between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. The dialogue showcased the overwhelming support for reunification. It concurrently underscored the challenges of addressing the loss of hope and the foundation of distrust between the two communities for such a solution, while navigating geopolitical complexities and foreign intervention. A comprehensive view of the opportunities and obstacles on the path to peace in Cyprus is the ultimate goal of this research, and the two academics offered their initial findings from their research during the CFL.

Following their presentation, Mr. Ahmed Sözen, a guest professor at the Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Innsbruck, in his intervention from the floor, highlighted significant anniversaries in 2024 for Cyprus, including its 20-year EU membership, the 50th anniversary of the Greek coup and Turkish military intervention, and the 60th year of UN peacekeeping presence. Mr. Sözen noted that intercommunal negotiations, ongoing since his birth year, have yet to achieve resolution, underscoring the enduring complexity of the issue. He referenced Cyprus 2015 and 2016 surveys indicating widespread pessimism (70%) among

both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots regarding the Cyprus problem's prospects for a resolution. Despite this, a majority on both sides express a desire for a solution, revealing a persistent underlying aspiration for peace. Mr. Sözen explained that while Greek Cypriots favour as their optimum solution a unitary state and Turkish Cypriots lean towards a two-state solution as the optimum way forward, a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation emerges as the viable option which both communities overwhelmingly put forward as the compromise they can accept and potentially the sole option feasible through simultaneous referendums.

Security emerged as the paramount concern for 70% of respondents on both sides, overshadowing governance and power-sharing issues. Mr. Sözen emphasised the need for a revised security architecture that addresses these concerns comprehensively, for both communities. He cautioned against solely pursuing a comprehensive solution without parallel efforts to build trust, citing past failures of confidence-building measures (CBMs) such as those involving Varosha and Nicosia Airport.

Drawing inspiration from regional agreements like Israel-Lebanon's maritime delimitation despite historical conflict, Mr. Sözen proposed establishing a joint energy committee involving both Cypriot communities and engaging Turkey. Such initiatives could foster cooperation and address mutual interests pending a comprehensive solution. He stressed the urgency of implementing CBMs alongside formal negotiations to enhance trust and intercommunal relations.

Reflecting on these anniversaries, Mr. Sözen highlighted the ongoing journey toward achieving sustainable peace in Cyprus, advocating for innovative and inclusive approaches to overcome longstanding divisions.



Fireside Discussion on public participation of Cypriots in the UK

- Jason Charalambous, Conservative Friends of Cyprus
- Nicolas Kyriakides, Executive President, Cyprus Forum



Regarding political engagement of the Cypriot community in the UK, Charalambous acknowledged that while the community was relatively well represented at the local level, there was still significant underrepresentation in higher levels of public life. He attributed this partly to the historical priority of survival and providing for families among the first-generation immigrants. However, he believed that with the younger generation, there had been a growing realization that professional life and public service could coexist.

He emphasised the importance of having encouraged and mentored younger members of the community to pursue public office and be politically engaged. He also highlighted the need for representation within various political parties and emphasised that there should be organised groups within each of the major political parties in the UK representing the Cypriot diaspora. Regarding Cyprus's image in the UK, he acknowledged an "image problem," particularly due to historical and political complexities. He believed there had been a need to highlight the positive contributions of Cyprus and its diaspora to British society.

In terms of political involvement, Charalambous advocated for more investment in lobbying and influencing policymakers, both from the government side and the community itself. He also stressed the importance of being outward-looking as a community, reaching out to accomplished individuals who might not have been engaged with organised Cypriot groups and seek mentorship opportunities.

Regarding the role of the diaspora, Charalambous emphasised the importance of having built relationships between different diaspora groups, sharing best practices, and integrating with the broader British society while maintaining the Cypriot heritage and identity.

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"Cyprus and Future Scenarios of the Eastern Mediterranean/Part 2"

Knowledge Partner: SEESOX

- Thomas Miller, former US diplomat and three-time Ambassador, former Special Coordinator for the Cyprus negotiations
 - Manal Shehabi, Associate Faculty Member, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Oxford
- Moderator: George Hadjipavlis, University of Oxford

Ambassador Thomas Miller, drawing on nearly three decades of experience in the US State Department with significant involvement in Greece and Cyprus, highlighted the historical perceptions of Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus as peripheral within the European Bureau of the State Department. He contrasted this with a growing recognition of their strategic importance in the Eastern Mediterranean today.

Miller expanded the definition of the region beyond its geographical borders, emphasising its critical energy and security dynamics involving countries like Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, and potentially Libya. He underscored the escalating challenges posed by refugee and migrant flows originating from Africa, Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq, particularly impacting Greece and Italy, and the resultant humanitarian and security concerns.

In terms of energy security, Miller stressed US interest in the region, highlighting the involvement of companies like Chevron and discussing the roles of external players such as the EU, Russia, and China. He expressed scepticism about the EU's mediation capabilities in regional disputes and outlined differing diplomatic strategies, advocating for a nuanced approach rather than a comprehensive "grand deal".

Miller identified potential for dialogue between leaders like Mitsotakis and Erdoğan despite enduring tensions, emphasising the necessity of addressing contentious issues like that of the territorial waters. He proposed adopting the Madrid Peace Process model to establish multilateral working groups on issues like the environment, refugees, business development, and water, as avenue for promoting diplomatic progress.

Dr. Manal Shehabi stressed the multifaceted significance of the Eastern Mediterranean beyond its geographical boundaries, focusing on cultural, culinary, and historical ties that unify the region. She highlighted its increasing geopolitical and economic relevance, citing the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor as pivotal initiatives.

Shehabi addressed the region's economic potential and the evolving interest in it from major powers such as India and the Gulf countries, underscoring their roles in shaping regional dynamics. She emphasised the region's broader impact on the global economic, geopolitical, and energy domains, advocating for collaborative development efforts.

George Hadjipavlis underscored the Eastern Mediterranean's critical role in Euro-Atlantic

security, contextualising its significance with historical narratives and economic developments. He discussed the region's energy landscape, contrasting US and EU strategic approaches and criticising perceived gaps in the EU's planning for the medium and long-term.

Hadjipavlis highlighted the impact of Eastern Mediterranean energy resources on European energy security and critiqued the UK's response to regional events, emphasising that stability of the Eastern Mediterranean is crucial for broader Euro-Atlantic security. He argued that evolving UK-Cyprus relations within the Eastern Mediterranean framework, could be crucial for regional stability and security.



“Building Higher Education Frameworks for Equitable Partnerships”

Knowledge Partner: British Council

- Richard Tomlins, Coventry University
- Richard Parkman, Plymouth University
- Panayiotis Zaphiris, Cyprus University of Technology ([online / live link](#))
- Elena Avgoustidou-Kyriakou, University of Cyprus ([online / live link](#))
- Sotia Karatzia Santangelo, Neapolis University ([online / live link](#))
- Moderator: Ana Paula Nascimento Booth, Senior Consultant, HE Systems and Internationalisation

Dr. Panayiotis Zaphiris, the Rector of Cyprus University of Technology, addressed the impact of Brexit on academic collaborations between Cyprus and UK universities. He highlighted challenges stemming from legal restrictions in Cyprus, particularly concerning undergraduate programs taught in Greek, which complicates collaborations with UK universities at that level. Despite opportunities at the master’s level, financial models of UK institutions pose additional barriers.

Dr. Zaphiris emphasised the difficulties faced in Erasmus programs, noting UK universities’ reluctance to host students under EU tuition requirements. He stressed the importance of transparent communication about these challenges rather than presenting overly optimistic outlooks.

Despite these obstacles, Dr. Zaphiris cited successful collaborations such as the Science Centre of Excellence, funded by the EU and Cypriot government, involving partners like UCL. However, he lamented that such ventures are now more challenging post-Brexit due to funding uncertainties outside the EU.

Another successful example he highlighted was the Industry Exchange Networks scheme between UCL and Cyprus University of Technology. This initiative facilitates practical collaborations between media and graphic design students in Cyprus and computer science students at UCL, addressing real-world challenges without additional funding.

In conclusion, Dr. Zaphiris acknowledged ongoing successes but stressed the necessity of innovative solutions to maintain and develop international academic partnerships despite Brexit uncertainties.

Sotia Karatzia Santangelo shared insights on the evolution and future of transnational education partnerships between the UK and Cyprus. With extensive experience in UK education recruitment across Cyprus, Greece, and the Middle East, she discussed the historical context of articulation agreements and their evolution post-Cyprus’ EU accession.

Following Brexit, Santangelo highlighted a renewed interest in full franchise agreements, allowing Cypriot institutions to offer UK university programs locally. This model provides students with



UK qualifications while studying in Cyprus, offering cost-effective education pathways without compromising quality.

She noted significant interest from Middle Eastern students in European degrees, leveraging Cyprus' geographical and cultural proximity. These partnerships extend beyond student recruitment to include academic exchanges and resource sharing between UK and Cypriot institutions, presenting ample opportunities for collaboration.

Dr. Richard Parkman, Regional Director UK and Europe at University of Plymouth Business School, introduced Plymouth's maritime heritage and its contemporary focus on diverse disciplines, including marine sciences. He emphasised the institution's extensive experience in transnational education and outlined partnership models such as franchised, validated, and collaborative programs.

Elena Avgoustidou-Kyriacou from the University of Cyprus highlighted their collaborations with UK institutions, emphasising joint research, student mobility, and dual degree programs. She stressed the importance of fostering partnerships to enhance educational and research outcomes.

Dr. Richard Tomlinson from Coventry University discussed their global partnerships, including those in Cyprus and Europe, focusing on transnational education and collaborative research. He emphasised Coventry University's commitment to equitable partnerships for mutual development and academic advancement.

Throughout the presentations, themes of collaboration, mobility, and regulatory challenges emerged as pivotal in transnational education initiatives. Despite Brexit implications, speakers underscored the potential for robust collaborations and emphasised the importance of building resilient and beneficial partnerships.





"The justice system and checks and balances in Cyprus: Is the English common law relevant?"

Knowledge Partner: Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law

- Theano Christodoulou Mavromoustaki, Head of Civil Justice, Attorney General's Office Republic of Cyprus
- Adrian Zuckerman, University of Oxford
- Masood Ahmed, University of Leicester
- John Sorabji, University College London
- Moderator: Nicolas Kyriakides, Executive President, Cyprus Forum

Theano Christodoulou Mavromoustaki, Head of Civil Justice at the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Cyprus, emphasised the relevance of English common law to Cyprus' legal system and Constitution, bridging essential gaps as needed.

She discussed the recent implementation of updated civil procedure rules in Cyprus, effective from September 1, 2023, replacing the outdated 1956 rules with the updates being based on the 2018 English civil procedure rules. The transition in Cyprus involves adopting the 2018 White and Green Books and "Zuk on Civil Procedure," underscoring the ongoing influence of English common law still guiding changes in Cypriot law. Theano outlined challenges arising from this shift, particularly the adjustment to new rules alongside managing existing case backlogs, complicating court proceedings.

Key changes highlighted during Theano's intervention included the introduction of pre-action behaviour protocols, a novel concept for Cyprus necessitating structural adjustments. She noted a drafting issue regarding the non-compulsory nature of these protocols, potentially leading to varied interpretations and enforcement. Regarding procedural models, she discussed the adoption of small claims, Fast Track and normal procedures, with ongoing evaluations on the viability of a third procedural option in Cyprus.

Addressing technological integration, Theano cited recent court decisions on video conference testimonies and case management improvements, highlighting a gradual acceptance among younger judges towards innovative practices. She also mentioned the incorporation of EU small claims payment procedures into Cyprus' civil law, aimed at enhancing accessibility and utilization of these mechanisms.

Following Theano's presentation, Nicolas Kyriakides raised concerns about judicial autonomy and the challenges stemming from judicial rather than legislative oversight in rule-making. He sought insights from Professor Adrian Zuckerman on overcoming inertia within public service sectors to promote proactive reforms and efficient resource management.

Professor Zuckerman stressed the critical public service role of judges in upholding rights and

enforcing laws, emphasising the need for effective judicial management alongside adjudication. He critiqued historical judicial neglect of management responsibilities, advocating for a paradigm shift towards proactive management within the judiciary. He urged policymakers to support this shift, highlighting the importance of comprehensive judicial training and clear direction from appellate courts to foster cultural changes in judicial practices.

John Sorabji expanded on the challenges during the initial implementation of new rules in the UK, emphasising the importance of judicial training and gradual cultural shifts in managing cases effectively. He underscored the ongoing need for education and guidance to ensure judges understand and implement rules consistently.

Masood Ahmed emphasised the collaborative efforts needed to facilitate cultural changes within the judiciary, citing successful examples of technology integration and access to justice improvements through partnerships with stakeholders. He highlighted the pivotal role of collaboration with policymakers, legal councils, and practitioners in driving meaningful reforms.

Overall, the discussions underscored the complexities and opportunities in modernising civil justice systems, emphasising the importance of judicial autonomy, effective management, and collaborative efforts in promoting efficient and fair legal proceedings.





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The importance of the Criminal Law Commissioner

• David Ormerod, Chair in Criminal Law, UCL

David Ormerod discussed the pivotal role of the Law Commission of England and Wales in shaping and reforming the legal landscape, particularly within criminal law. Established in 1965, the Commission was created to provide consistent and structured law reform, aiming to move away from ad hoc changes driven by political cycles. Ormerod, drawing from his extensive experience as a Criminal Law Commissioner for nearly a decade, highlighted several key aspects of the Law Commission's importance and effectiveness.

Operating independently and funded by the government, the Commission pursued law reform without political interference. Its members, including a chair from the Court of Appeal, brought significant authority to its work. With a team of approximately 60 experts, including lawyers, economists, and drafters, the Commission ensured high-quality legislative proposals grounded in thorough research and analysis.

Ormerod underscored the Commission's extensive consultation process, engaging over 1,400 individuals and organizations during certain projects. This inclusive approach fostered consensus and refined proposals based on feedback, ensuring robust and widely supported recommendations.

From the government's perspective, the Law Commission delivered value by proposing high-quality legislative reforms that could be adopted, demonstrating a commitment to principled law reform. The Commission's independent recommendations also helped navigate politically sensitive issues effectively.

Anticipating future legal challenges, such as those related to digital assets or autonomous vehicles, was another focus of the Commission. By proactively proposing regulations in advance, the Commission aimed to prevent legal issues before they emerged, contributing to a stable and predictable legal environment.

In summary, Ormerod argued that the Law Commission of England and Wales played a crucial role in maintaining, improving, and future-proofing the legal system. Its independence, expertise, consultation processes, and forward-thinking approach ensured that it remained a cornerstone of legal reform in the country.





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Master of the Rolls

Sir Geoffrey Vos



Sir Geoffrey Vos, the Master of the Rolls, began his address by reflecting on pertinent questions regarding the relevance of a role like his to Cyprus and strategies to manage legal backlogs. While acknowledging the challenges in providing definitive answers, he recalled his previous engagement in Cyprus where topics such as digital assets and justice system modernization were discussed.

Sir Geoffrey delved into the historical evolution of the office of Master of the Rolls, originally known as the Keeper of the Rolls. He expressed a preference for reverting to the title "Keeper" owing to its historical significance and its resonance with contemporary diversity considerations. He traced the origins of the role back to medieval responsibilities that included managing royal correspondence and overseeing official document recording.

Over centuries, the role underwent significant transformation. By the 19th century, the Master of the Rolls became increasingly integral to judicial functions, particularly within the Court of Appeal. Sir Geoffrey highlighted his tenure as the 98th Master of the Rolls, a position he held for two decades, emphasising its pivotal role in overseeing civil justice matters and driving legislative reforms through various committees and councils.

In his capacity as Master of the Rolls, Sir Geoffrey outlined diverse responsibilities, including chairing committees on civil procedure rules, the Civil Justice Council, and the Online Procedure Rules Committee. He underscored the critical role of these committees in formulating rules that govern civil proceedings and adapting them to the digital era. Sir Geoffrey stressed the significance of these initiatives in ensuring efficient and accessible justice delivery across England and Wales.

Regarding the relevance of a Master of the Rolls for Cyprus, Sir Geoffrey queried its direct applicability outside the English context. He suggested that Cyprus might benefit from establishing a head of Civil Justice instead, emphasising the need for effective leadership to address legal backlogs and spearhead the digitization of the justice system.

Drawing on his experience, Sir Geoffrey proposed several strategies to tackle legal backlogs. He advocated for stringent criteria for granting permission to appeal at all judicial levels to expedite case resolutions and deter frivolous appeals. Additionally, he recommended mandatory mediation for small claims and adjudication of straightforward cases through streamlined, paper-based processes to enhance court efficiency.

Sir Geoffrey underscored the importance of judicial independence while engaging with government bodies on administrative matters. He discussed his role in overseeing court administration and advocating for adequate funding to support judicial functions effectively. He highlighted the judiciary's responsibility to maintain independence while collaborating constructively with the executive and legislative branches to ensure sufficient resources for the administration of justice.

In conclusion, Sir Geoffrey cautioned against directly transplanting the English judicial model to Cyprus. Instead, he encouraged Cyprus to adopt a bespoke approach that embraces digital innovations and upholds judicial independence. He suggested exploring alternative models for judicial councils suitable for the digital age and addressing broader constitutional questions as part of ongoing justice system reforms.

A photograph of a group of people at a formal event, overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The scene includes a woman in a purple top looking towards the camera, a man in a suit, and a woman with curly hair in the foreground. A professional video camera on a tripod is visible on the right. The text "OUR PARTNERS" is centered in white, bold, sans-serif font.

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