

PRESS CONFERENCE FOR “DIALOGUE NIGHT” - Cyprus

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN COOPERATION WITH THE ANNA LINDH
EURO-MEDITERRANEAN FOUNDATION FOR THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN CULTURES
NATIONAL NETWORK WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR FOR
INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE 2008

Conference Hall, Ministry of Education and Culture, 15 May 2008

The Ministry of Education and Culture as the National Coordination Unit in Cyprus of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, supports the “Dialogue Night” to be held on the 22 May 2008 in the 37 countries of the European Union and Mediterranean. The “Dialogue Night” falls under the “1001 Actions for Dialogue” and is an initiative supported by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures within the framework of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.

The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures was established in 2002 with the decision of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation Partnership with the aim of highlighting the common cultural heritage of the Euro-Mediterranean countries and people with the scope of promoting intercultural dialogue and cooperation. The Foundation is hosted in Alexandria and works as a network of networks in all 37 states which make it up. The whole network is currently made up of over 1000 organisations from countries of the European Union and the Mediterranean, including Cyprus.

“1001 Actions for Dialogue” includes a wide array of cultural activities, which will be implemented with the support of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation on the same day, 22 May 2008, in all 37 states who participate under the common network “Dialogue Night”. The concept of this “Night” is to provide publicity to intercultural activities and cooperation between the states that participate within the network in order to jump start dialogue and further promote intercultural dialogue within society. The outcomes of the parallel actions will be presented at the Ministerial meeting of the Ministers of Culture to be held in Athens at the end of May.

In Cyprus the “Dialogue Night” includes a wide array of activities (music, poetry, athletics, teleconferencing, treasure hunts and critical workshops and debates on racism) that are being organised by the cooperation of six organisations of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation Cyprus National Network and supported by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The activities are being held in Nicosia and Limassol and are under the auspices of the Minister of Education and Culture. They are all free to the public.

The aim of all the activities is to promote and create awareness amongst the wider public – in particular youth – of issues related to the significance of intercultural dialogue in our everyday life. Specifically the activities aim at furthering our skills at peaceful coexistence and intercultural cooperation between people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds whilst parallel strive to increase our knowledge regarding our common cultural heritage.

- **Multicultural Poetry Festival** - Interested in poetry? Want to find out the connections between Yiannis Ritsos and Nazim Hikmet? Join Mike Hajimichael and Zeki Ali and learn all about these connections. This will be of interest to you should you be a university student engaged in poetry and literature or merely if you are interested in poetry and discussions on multiculturalism.

Dialogue Night Date: May 22, 2008
Time of activity: 13:00
Place of activity: UNESCO Amphitheatre, University of Nicosia

- **Dialogue through Sports: Play for Peace** - aims at increasing dialogue among Cypriots island-wide through sports, arts and compassionate communication. The goals are to emphasize team spirit through basketball games, to empower youth through artistically visualizing a future Cyprus and to enhance communication skills through Non-Violent Communication workshops.

Join us for a fun and competitive basketball tournament to celebrate Dialogue Night. Bring along your sports outfit, kids and friends. Meet other basketball players, look at the amazing children's' artistic drawings on their future community and enjoy the foods and drinks.

Dialogue Night Date: May 22, 2008
Time of activity: 17:30
Place of activity: Ledra Palace Hotel

- **Cultural Heritage Treasure Hunt** - Want to find out more about Nicosia and its history? Want to see Nicosia in a different light? Join us and walk with us through the old town

and find out more about its historical evolution with the possibility of winning an award and having fun

Date: 22 May, 2008
Time of activity: 16:30
Place of activity: Freedom Square (at the beginning of Ledra Street)

- **Culture Up your Life - CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC** - provides the University of Nicosia students' the opportunity to present their views on 'Eliminating the cultural gap on campus'. Students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds came together for a weekend in Omodos to identify and discuss problems related to the cultural gap that exists on campus, and recommend ways to bridge it. Having as a goal the improvement of relations among students coming from different backgrounds, the participants came up with numerous recommendations and an action plan that could positively affect University policies. This project's long-term goal is to eliminate the cultural gap on campus through the creation of a society within the university that will promote respect of cultural diversity. This event is open only to University of Nicosia students and staff.

Dialogue Night Date: May 22, 2008
Time of activity: 13:00
Place of activity: UNESCO Amphitheatre, University of Nicosia

- **Young Voices –East West Dialogue Project – FOR OBSERVERS ONLY** - aims to bring selected groups of younger people, located in representative societies from within Europe and the Middle East, into contact with each other. Through a video conferencing session we aim to provide the space for creative interaction, exchange, debate and deliberation on issues of mutual concern regarding conflict resolution.

Date: 22 May, 2008
Time of activity: 16:00
Place of activity: University of Nicosia, Conference Room Main Building (+2)

- **Musical Footprints** is a multi-dimensional event aiming to increase the awareness about the 'Others' culture and tradition, through the recognition of the multicultural character of local society. Furthermore, it strives to improve the Dialogue between cultures, mutual understanding and cooperation of various communities in Cyprus (Limassol) arguing the contribution to common wellbeing by each community. In addition, it aims to promote the

arts as a media for multicultural creation and cooperation among young people, in local, national and regional level. It will do this through the following activities:

Concert performed by young groups (rock, pop, reggae), youth choirs performing international songs (in different languages) and one professional well known local jazz band.

Bazaar, with crafts and food, in cooperation with foreigners' associations (European, African, Asian countries with emphasis on the Mediterranean ones). Various NGOs working with immigrants, families, people with special needs and youth will be invited to distribute their material.

Dialogue Night Date: May 22, 2008
Time of activity: 19:30
Place of activity: Limassol Castle

The Ministry of Education and Culture, regards the initiative of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue "1001 Actions for Dialogue" of utmost importance and acknowledges the fact that the "Dialogue Night", will fully promote the goals of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 between the countries of Europe and the Mediterranean. To this extent it has decided to support it decided to support the activities to be held in Cyprus. It is with great pleasure that the six activities endorsed by the Anna Lindh Foundation for the "Dialogue Night" fall in line with the goals and philosophy of the Action Plan of the Ministry of Education and Culture for the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008. The cooperation between the organisations who have taken up the activities of the "Dialogue Night" and the Ministry of Education and Culture reinforces our commitment for cooperation with Civil Society organisations to further foster and promote our common goals.

I would like to thank the organisers for their work in organising the six activities and in particular the coordinator of the "Dialogue Night" in Cyprus Mr Anthos I. Shekeris, and all those working for the fruitful implementation of the "Dialogue Night". I would like to wish you all every success with your endeavours.

Further information regarding the 1001 Actions and the specific activities in Cyprus can be found at www.alfcyprus.org.