

Opening Ceremony of the Confucius Institute at the University of Cyprus

The Confucius Institute at the University of Cyprus started its operation in the beginning of 2014 and was established in collaboration with the Beijing Institute of Education (BJIE), the University of Cyprus (UCY) and the Confucius Institute Headquarters. The Opening Ceremony of the Confucius Institute at UCY was held on Monday, 27th of October 2014.

The Opening Ceremony was addressed by Mr Costas Kadis, Minister of Education and Culture, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Cyprus Mr Nicos Anastasiades, Mr Liu Xisheng, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Cyprus, Mr Manthos Mavrommatis, Chairperson of the Council of University of Cyprus, Professor Constantinos Christofides, Rector of the University of Cyprus, Mr. Luo Jie, member of Education Work Committee of Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Chairman of the BJIE, and Professor Jinxiu Zhang on behalf of the BJIE and the General Director of the Confucius Institute Headquarters. The greetings focused on the role that the Confucius Institute at UCY will play as a cultural bridge between Asia and Europe.

The President of the Republic of Cyprus in his address stated that UCY is the appropriate academic institution for the creation of cooperation links, on the scientific, research and cultural level between Cyprus and China. He noted that the collaboration between the BJIE and UCY will lead to innovative and progressive partnerships in the academic, research and education area; thus opening the way for further strengthening of the already strong relations between the two nations.

Mr Manthos Mavrommatis, Chairperson of the Council of UCY thanked the People's Republic of China, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Cyprus and the Confucius Institute Headquarters for their assistance in providing both financial and human resources for the establishment of the Confucius Institute at UCY.

Professor Constantinos Christofides, Rector of the University of Cyprus, in his speech focused on the contribution of the Confucius Institute at UCY, on the mutual understanding and the respect of cultures of Europe and Asia and specifically Cyprus' and China's. He also noted that the Confucius Institute at UCY is one more step towards the internationalization of the UCY. He indicated that in this effort UCY needs the support of the wider society and the state for teaching Chinese as a foreign language at the undergraduate level. He ended his greeting with a Confucius' quote: "Without feelings of respect, what is there to distinguish men from beasts?" meaning the value of learning for the cooperation and peace among nations; an important value for creating a better future and a peaceful environment.

During the Opening Ceremony, the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the BJIE presented a gift to the President of the Republic of Cyprus; a portrait created by artists of the BJIE.

The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Cyprus presented the Rector of UCY two Chinese vases as a present for the Confucius Institute, wishing its smooth functioning.

A performance programme culminated the Opening Ceremony.

