



## **Seminar: 'Intelligent Energy.....Protecting the environment'**

### **Welcome address of the President of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Mr Manthos Mavrommatis**

**18 June 2009**

Your Excellencies, Dear Minister of Commerce, Members of Parliament, Commissioner for the Environment, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you here today to this most important seminar on renewable energy and I would like to express my thanks to the organisers of this event for this timely initiative to organise the seminar.

Prioritizing the exploitation and use of renewable energy is the only way for the world to deal with its growing energy and environmental problems and achieve sustainable development. Unfortunately, in Cyprus, although we were pioneers in the use of solar energy with the extensive use of solar collectors for heating water, in the course of time, we failed to continue on this path, and today we make great efforts to meet the proposed targets set by the European Union. Under the Kyoto Protocol, Cyprus has no emissions limitation commitments, however, energy efficiency measures have now been set for all Members States of the EU, and the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2009 in Copenhagen will most definitely change the viewpoint and concerns for pollution and global warming, internationally but for Cyprus also.

Climate change concerns coupled with high oil prices and increasing government support are driving increasing renewable energy legislation, incentives and commercialization. It is therefore important to explore the

energy saving opportunities and search for international collaboration in energy technologies.

Furthermore, international environmental legal regulations, and other standards such as BS 7750 and ISO14001 can encourage innovation, energy saving, differentiation and thus give every company a competitive advantage.

I sincerely believe that new government spending in this field, regulations and policies, should help industries both in Cyprus and abroad to weather the 2009 economic crisis.

In addition, we must also consider that although renewable energies are an integral part of our fight against climate change, they will also contribute to growth, job creation and increase our energy security.

Cyprus has a long way to go in meeting the 2020 targets in the years to come. While this is a great challenge, it is at the same time a great opportunity for new businesses to start up. The private sector of Cyprus is very dynamic and versatile, and I am sure that everyone who is present here today has a strong and clear interest in cooperating with foreign counterparts in joint business ventures. In the next years, there will be large investments in the area of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) here in Cyprus and I am sure that today's seminar will greatly contribute towards a closer cooperation between Cypriot and Nordic companies.

I look forward to the presentations on the environmental technology status and future visions for the protection of the environment, from our distinguished speakers from both the private and government sectors.

Thank you.