

22 April 2023

**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT OF ACTA Mr VASILIS STAMATARIS  
AT THE OPENING OF  
Travel Expo Cyprus 2023**

Deputy Minister for Tourism,  
Ambassador of Greece to Cyprus,  
Dear guests,  
Dear Exhibitors from Cyprus, Greece and elsewhere,  
Dear friends,

It is with great pleasure that the Association of Cyprus Tourist Agents (ACTA) welcomes you to this year's Travel Expo Cyprus 2023. We welcome in particular our friend, the Deputy Minister for Tourism, Mr Costas Koumis and the Greek Ambassador, Mr Ioannis Papameletiou who accepted our invitation to open the Expo.

As you can see, apart from the fact that this year's event has a new name (until last year it was called 'TAXIDI') it has also been significantly upgraded.

The aim of the changes we made is to elevate the fair into a regional meeting for travel and tourism, in order to transform Cyprus into a tourism and travel hub. Our goal is to attract exhibitors from Greece and Cyprus and other countries, particularly from our region.

This year about 40 exhibitors are taking part, and we thank them publicly. We are certain that through their presence here they will have an opportunity to inform Cypriot and foreign visitors about the packages they will be offering this summer as well as other trips to and from Cyprus.

Dear friends,

ACTA and its members are optimistic about this year's travels. After everything we have been through in the past years with Covid and the repercussions from the war in Ukraine, this year our sector can be seen to be recovering significantly.

This is already made evident by travel flows in the first months of 2023, and from the great interest displayed by the travelling public for the summer. According to data from Hermes Airport, travel flows from both our airports in the first three months of 2023 exceeded 1.5 million passengers, a record number compared to corresponding periods of previous years and up 9% compared to 2019.

A record rise was also observed in the first three months of 2023 in tourist arrivals to Cyprus: 394.000 travellers, representing an increase of 61% compared to 2022 and 10% as against 2019.

The UK market remains at the top for Cyprus, with 30% of total arrivals, and there have been significant increases in arrivals from Poland, France, Greece and Israel.

A result of these positive developments has been an increase in tourism revenues, which significantly boost the Cypriot economy.

As regards outgoing tourism, which is aimed first towards Greece and then other European countries, there has been an increase, which is indicative of public interest in travels abroad.

Indicatively, the main countries from which Cypriots returned in March 2023 were Greece with 30.3% or 34,455, the UK with 14.4% or 16,386, Bulgaria with 4% ή 4,527 and Italy with 3.5% or 3,959.

The purposes for which Cypriot residents travelled abroad in March 2023 were first holidays, at a rate of 68.2%, and business travel held a percentage of 26.1%, studies 4% and other reasons, 1.8%.

Dear friends,

ACTA and its members are particularly satisfied with the positive developments forecast for this year's tourist season and traveller flows.

Through the right moves to promote and project Cyprus abroad as made by the Deputy Ministry for Tourism and private sector organisations, we believe that this year too we will be able to cover losses from other countries such as Russia and Ukraine.

ACTA will continue to work closely with the government, airline companies, and hotel and tourist businesses, with the aim of strengthening tourism in our country. Within this framework, we will set down new proposals for enriching our tourism product and improving the face of tourism of our country.

At the same time we give the assurance that ACTA and its members will this year, as always, be ready to serve all travellers responsibly and reliably, for their travels both to and from Cyprus.

With these thoughts, I would like to wish success to the exhibitors and happy travels to the visitors.

Thank you very much.