

25 April 2025

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF ACTTA MR CHARIS PAPACHARALAMBOUS
AT THE OPENING OF TRAVEL EXPO CYPRUS 2025**

Your Excellency Deputy Minister of Tourism,
Your Excellencies Ambassadors to Cyprus,
Distinguished guests, exhibitors and colleagues,
Dear friends,

It is with great pleasure that the Association of Travel and Tourism Agents of Cyprus (ACTTA) welcomes you to this year's, 26th Travel Expo Cyprus 2025. We extend a special welcome to our friend, the Deputy Minister for Tourism, Mr Costas Koumis and the Greek Ambassador, Mr Ioannis Papameletiou who accepted our invitation to jointly open the exhibition.

As you will see, this year's Travel Expo Cyprus 2025 is greatly improved. We hope of course that 2026 will be even better with new innovative changes, as it is our vision to transform the Exhibition to a regional celebration of tourism, which will utilise to the full the strategic position of our country both geographically and as far as tourism is concerned. This effort would certainly be helped by an improved space that will be worthy of our efforts and the expectation to attract various events, exhibitions, conferences, etc.

We thank publicly all the exhibitors for their presence at Travel Expo Cyprus 2025 and we are certain that through their participation they will have an opportunity to inform the Cypriot public about the exciting experiences they offer at some of the most enchanting destinations on earth – and indeed with unique offers throughout the Exhibition. Proposals for holidays are also presented for those who wish to spend their holidays in beautiful and diverse Cyprus

I feel I must thank in particular the foreign delegations, namely, Sweden, Finland, Slovakia, Poland, India, and of course Greece and EOT whose presence here gives a special character to the exhibition.

Dear friends,

We are quite optimistic about this year's travels. Our sector has recovered dynamically and we have had two successive record years regarding the travels of Cypriots abroad, which came to 1.75 m. travels in 2024 – a number 4.4% higher than last year and over 11% higher than 2019.

There has also been an increase in the first quarter of 2025 and the prospect of reaching 2m is not unlikely.

In the framework of broader tourist movements in Europe in general, an increase has been exhibited also in tourist arrivals, which, during the first quarter of this year have reached 450,000, another record figure. We also expect (given the appropriate extraneous factors) that this trend will continue and we will have another record year in 2025 with figures that will fluctuate at around 4.25 m. arrivals.

These forecasts are in line with recent estimates by Hermes Airports which anticipate total passenger movements at 13 m, i.e. 6.5 m passengers.

As a result of these positive developments, we are also expecting a significant increase in revenues from tourism, which greatly reinforce the Cyprus economy.

Dear friends,

ACTTA and its members are greatly encouraged by the positive developments that are anticipated for this year's tourist year and movements of travellers.

Positive results do not come on their own and undoubtedly the actions of the Deputy Ministry for Tourism, with which we maintain close and excellent cooperation at all levels have proven to be of catalytic importance. We welcome the close cooperation of the Deputy Ministry in matters of planning and promoting Cyprus abroad, not only with ACTTA but also with all the rest of the private sector organisations. We also welcome the increase in promotional funds, which after much time and effort the state has adopted. Without a doubt, these funds will prove to be an excellent investment rather than an expense.

At the same time, I feel I have an obligation to point out that an increase in tourist flows, particularly when the proportion between the summer and winter seasons has not changed (and for it to change, a great deal must be done in conjunction with all parties in the framework of a specific plan) inevitably creates additional needs and a burden on sectors where there are already long-term deficiencies, weaknesses and institutional frameworks which require to be immediately updated and for the incomprehensible distortions and failures of implementation to be alleviated.

The aim of higher quality tourism and the creation of a developmental model for the industry in line with the changes of the times must be a sine qua non and prevail over any petty political or short term interests.

Perhaps, in future, we will have to measure success not in the number of arrivals but based on our adjustments to the constantly changing environment and on the evaluation of experiences as this is recorded by the travellers.

In conclusion, I wish to underline, dear Deputy Minister and colleagues in the industry, that ACTTA will continue to work closely with the executive and legislative powers, the airline companies, the hotel and tourist businesses and all concerned parties with the aim of strengthening our tourism policy and enriching our tourism product with the ultimate aim of improving the face of tourism in our country, further upgrading of connectivity, and alleviating the current strong seasonality.

At the same time, we wish to give an assurance that ACTTA and its members, are, as always, this year, ready to serve with professionalism, reliability and responsibility all persons travelling to and from Cyprus, with the traveller always at the centre of our concern.

With these thoughts, I wish every success to all the exhibitors and happy travels to all visitors.

In closing, I would like to thank our staff and the colleagues on the board of ACTTA for the continuous and significant assistance they provide, Display ART for their enormous efforts in organising the exhibitions, our communications sponsors, the magazine Down Town, like.com.cy και en.philenews.com and the exhibition's sponsors EUROBANK CYPRUS & HERMES AIRPORTS

Thank you very much.