



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Inauguration Ceremony of the new Larnaka International Airport. Now is the time to experience it!**

Following an impressive opening ceremony and in the presence of hundreds of officials from Cyprus and abroad, the new Larnaka International Airport was inaugurated by his Excellency the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Demetris Christofias, on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

The President, as well as the other speakers, highlighted the great significance that the new terminal at Larnaka will have for Cyprus; an impressive project that sets new standards in air transportation and represents a new era for the island.

The opening ceremony began with the blessings given by the Archbishop of Cyprus, Chrysostomos and His Eminence the Bishop of Kition, Chrysostomos.

The Chairman of Hermes Airports, Mr. Nicos Shacolas, proudly welcomed all the guests and in his address emphasized that both the new Larnaka and Pafos Airports were delivered without delays at a total cost of €642,7 million, and without imposing any extra costs on the government which collects one third of the total income generated by the two airports. Mr. Shacolas referred to certain new projects that are currently under development, as well as future projects that may be required in the near future. He mentioned that studies are being carried out with regard to the construction of an Airport Hotel and also an entertainment Centre offering cultural, touristic and commercial activities that will enhance development of the island. The total cost of all these projects is estimated at €1 billion.

The Vice President of Hermes Airports, Mr. Daniel Rigout, made an address on behalf of Bouygues Bâtiment International, the French company that undertook the construction of the two airports.

The Mayor of Larnaka, Mr. Andreas Moiseos, expressed his delight at the construction and imminent operation of the new Larnaka International Airport, a great prize for the city of Zinonas and Cyprus in general.

The European Commissioner for Health, Mrs Androulla Vassiliou, also gave a speech on behalf of the European Commission.

The Minister of State in charge of European Affairs, Mr. Pierre Lellouche came to Cyprus especially for the opening and also gave a speech.

The Minister of Communications and Works, Mr. Nicos Nicolaidis, expressed his congratulations to all the people who contributed to the success of this landmark project which is considered one of the main features of the Government's policy to establish the island as a regional centre for transport and commerce, bringing continued benefits to the Island's economy.



During the ceremony there was a short video presentation showing the impressive technical features of the new Larnaka International Airport, the high quality of the construction materials, the artwork and the general sense of place projecting the history and culture of Cyprus, along with the state of the art equipment which can easily compete with comparable airports in developed countries.

The new Larnaka Airport is three times bigger than the existing one and will serve 7,5 million passengers per year. It boasts 16 air bridges, 67 check-in counters, 5 baggage carousels, 2.450 parking spaces, VIP and business lounges, duty-free shops as well as comfortable and functional areas offering a wide range of shops and cafeterias.

At the impressive opening ceremony, which was broadcast live by CyBC TV, the Police Philharmonic Orchestra played throughout the arrival of the distinguished guests. Children from the 'Marios Tokas' school of music also performed various songs.

The celebrations culminated in a dance theatre performance titled 'Islanding' written and performed especially for the opening ceremony by the internationally acclaimed Cypriot choreographer, Lia Charaki and the well-known composer, Kostas Kakoyiannis. The performance was a journey through the Cyprus of the past and the present, a trip through history, culture, nature and tradition with the aim of reviving the magic of the island and its unique identity. There were more surprises in store when the popular singer, Nicolas Metaxas performed a song that he had also written especially for this occasion. The ceremony was brought to a close with a tour of the airport and a reception.

Thirty-five years after the Turkish invasion and the loss of the Nicosia Airport, the new Larnaka International Airport represents the fulfilment of a great vision that takes Cyprus into a new era. Now, every Cypriot has the right to feel very proud. The New Larnaka International Airport has become a reality.

Now is the time to experience it!

November 7, 2009