



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE



CYPRVS AETERNA

Nicosia, 3 April 2024

***H.E. Ms. Roberta Metsola,
President of the European Parliament,
Brussels.***

Dear Madam President,

It has been a great honour and pleasure welcoming you once again at the House of Representatives on April 2nd. Your strong message about the importance of citizens' participation in the forthcoming European Elections has been well received by Cypriots and especially our youth. Your firm stance for the reunification of Cyprus and your support to the ongoing efforts to reach a just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem are deeply valued and appreciated.

As we have already discussed, Cyprus has been confronted in recent years with disproportionate migratory pressures. In fact, the Republic of Cyprus ranks first among EU member-states in numbers of asylum applicants per capita, thus straining the country's competent services and infrastructure, while obviously entailing serious security concerns. Even though Cyprus has considerably enhanced efforts to deal with this challenge through a holistic strategy, the burden remains heavy on the limited resources available, due to the incessantly increasing numbers of arrivals, all the more so as a result of the escalating tension in the Middle East.

In fact, all frontline European states face similar challenges in their efforts to manage the flow of migrants in the Mediterranean, while fully complying with all international and EU legal obligations. In this regard, it is of critical importance to accelerate the full implementation of the EU Action Plan for the Eastern Mediterranean route. Strengthening partnerships with key countries of origin and transit, both on the level of member states and of the EU, is essential to effectively address this pressing challenge.

In recent weeks, a sharp rise of Syrians arriving from Lebanon to Cyprus has been recorded. I cannot stress enough how urgent a decisive and direct engagement of the EU with the Lebanese authorities is, to stem this flow.

In view of the forthcoming vote on the Pact on migration and asylum in the European Parliament, I am prompted to reiterate also in writing my suggestion to hold a special discussion on the external dimension of the migration crisis and the necessary steps forward. This discussion could be held as an urgency item on the agenda of the forthcoming April 2024 EU Speakers Conference in Palma de Mallorca. Alternatively, a meeting of Presidents of Parliaments of front-line EU Member States headed by you as President of the European Parliament could be held on the sidelines of the Conference. Should neither of these be deemed possible, an online meeting could also be held.

Looking forward to your reply, I remain at your disposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'A' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

***Annita Demetriou,
President of the House of Representatives,
Republic of Cyprus.***