

**WELCOMING SPEECH ON BEHALF OF MR GEORGE SHAMMAS,
CHAIRMAN OF CYPRUS ENERGY REGULATORY AUTHORITY,
IN THE SECOND CONFERENCE
UNDER THE TITLE:
“POWER OPTIONS FOR THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION”
(POEM 2013)
7-8 October 2013, Hilton Hotel, Nicosia**

Dear guests,

On behalf of Mr George Shammas, Chairman of Cyprus Energy Regulatory Authority, I would like to thank you for the invitation to address a welcoming speech in this important conference under the title: “Power Options for the Eastern Mediterranean Region”.

Undoubtedly, the wide region of the Eastern Mediterranean faces determining challenges regarding the energy field, which is considered to be a key pillar both in the European and the global effort to promote a new, sustainable development model. This model will cover the needs of today’s generation in a most responsible way towards the environment and the needs of the next generations.

This conference is expected to offer a wide range of knowledge on the oil and natural gas industry, as well as on the promotion of the Renewable Energy Sources and the optimal methods of the developing energy markets of the region.

During this period of the unprecedented international financial crisis, the energy field of electricity and natural gas in our country faces its own difficulties. In Cyprus, the electricity system is based solely on liquid fuels and within 2013, we are detecting some signs that are appearing for the first time in the last 35 years, during which the demand was 20% lower.

However, the advances in the Eastern Mediterranean and the new developments that emerged, have allowed us to look at the future in a more optimistic way.

After the discovery of substantial natural gas fields in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Israel and the crucial positive development in December 2011 confirming the existence of natural gas fields in Block 12 in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Cyprus, as well as the confirming drilling, despite someone's disappointment, signaled the beginning of a new era for Cyprus, which now qualifies to claim a key spot in the energy map of the area, through its transformation into a regional energy centre.

The Cyprus Energy Regulatory Authority, as an independent body, considers that by making cautious, consensual and collective steps and by professional and transparent management of this major national matter, there is a perspective to envision the energy future of the country and the surrounding area with optimism.

During this conference, the business world of Cyprus will be given the chance to express his point of view on the energy projects that are under study and are expected to be implemented in Cyprus in the next years creating a remarkable number of job opportunities.

The close cooperation between Greece and Cyprus for energy matters, and the further advancement of an energy cooperation with Israel, Egypt and other countries of the South-Eastern Mediterranean, which aim to wisely utilize natural heritage, can transform Cyprus into a trustworthy energy bridge between Europe and the Middle East, and this will contribute to the

reinforcement of the European energy supply safety and the improvement of the financial situation and the economic prosperity of the people in the area.

At this point, I would like to thank and congratulate Dr. Poulikkas for all his hard work this year as well, in order to organize successfully this important conference.

Thank you for your attention.