



**ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ
ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ**

March 23rd 2017

**Doorstep Statement by the Minister of Education and Culture, Mr. Costas Kadis
Ministerial conference "Securing democracy through education"**

Filoxenia Conference Centre, Nicosia

It is a great honour and pleasure to welcome today in Cyprus the Ministers of Education from various member states of the Council of Europe and from south Mediterranean countries. They all came to Nicosia to participate in the two-day ministerial conference titled "Securing democracy through education".

I would firstly like to welcome to Cyprus the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Ms. Gabriella Battaini Dragoni and to thank her for the excellent cooperation we have had during the preparation of the Conference.

The Conference is organised by the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture and it is under the Cyprus Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The themes that we will discuss are extremely relevant nowadays:

- First, we will examine how we can increase the effectiveness of our educational systems to combat radicalization, discrimination and extremist violence.
- Second, we will discuss the framework to develop "safe learning environments" for teaching controversial issues, with respect to diversity and dialogue.
- Third, we will reflect on the results accomplished from a series of policies related to refugees and people with a migrant background. We will also discuss the possibility for taking further actions, in order to move, from policies and practices with regards to dealing with emergency situations, to policies and practices that lead to long-term integration.

We are aware that common problems require common actions in order to be solved as well as that education can play a catalytic role towards this direction.

The Cyprus Chairmanship considers that the establishment of synergies is necessary for the promotion of democracy and security. That is why Cyprus utilises the Chairmanship opportunity to strengthen the Council of Europe relations with our southern neighbours, mainly through strengthening the dialogue and developing partnerships. We do believe that the common values and common actions in the field of education can form the foundation for peace and prosperity in our region.

I truly hope and believe that the Conference will provide a forum for creating alliances to address our common challenges.