



**Address by the President of the Republic Demetris
Chirstofias at the initiation ceremony of the European
Project SmartEN Marie Curie ITN
Smart Management for a Sustainable Human
Environment,
at the Cyprus University of Technology
Apollonia Hotel
Friday 23 April 2010, 7.30 p.m.**

The approval of the proposal submitted by the Cyprus University of Technology to the SmartEN Marie Curie Initial Training Networks (ITN) Project, which focuses on the smart management for sustainable human environment, constitutes a landmark in the course of the Cyprus University of Technology and the tertiary education of our country in general. It is a significant distinction for the Cyprus University of Technology particularly for the Department of Civil Engineering & Geomatics which is coordinating the project.

Our presence here tonight, at the initiation ceremony of the project, is a demonstration of the support the State lends to the efforts of the Cyprus University of Technology to distinguish itself. We are present at this event to share with you the joy of this success.

Dear friends,

The action Marie Curie ITN of the European Commission aims at improving the potential for professional career of researchers who are in the fifth year of their research. Hundreds of proposals were submitted in this framework of this action, which renders the ranking of the proposal submitted by the Cyprus University of Technology among the top ten. It has thus made this distinction a remarkable achievement for the researchers themselves, the academic institution they represent but also for tertiary education in Cyprus in general.

The best investment of contemporary societies is the support of research activities and the utilization of research results. Research activity therefore consists the moving force for human development and progress. In the SmartEN programme participate associates from outstanding foreign universities, research centres and enterprises from European countries and scientists from Asia and America. New scientists are employed in the programme and numerous researchers are involved. This proves in practice that research activity and research centres play a vital role in the implementation of the goal set out by the European Union, that is to become the most competitive Society of Knowledge while at the same time it contributes to the exodus from the world financial crisis by creating employment positions.

The fact that the tertiary education of Cyprus and the establishment and functioning of Universities and research centres, have started substantially to grow in the last 20 years, makes distinctions like today's even more important. This distinction stands out within the competitive frame of the European Union but also globally.

The accession of the Republic of Cyprus has boosted the development and the financing of research in Cyprus. It has led to the increase of available funds for research within the frame of the European and other research programmes. It is with satisfaction that we see the academics, researchers and students of our country being active members of the greater European Research Space with important successes and distinctions.

Despite the difficulties faced due to the world financial crisis, the goal of transforming Cyprus into a qualitative and upgraded regional centre of tertiary education and research, is being materialized, through the implementation by the Government of specific policies for the upgrading of university education and research, within the frame of the Educational Reform.

Our three public and three private Universities, a fourth private university which is underway in Pafos, as well as the operation of research centres carrying out remarkable work,

render the academic and research community of Cyprus an important part of the European and world research community.

It is worth noting that aiming at the promotion of research, the Government is in the final stages of shaping the strategy for the development of research and innovation for the next decade, thus continuing the policy of investing in research and innovation.

I call on all who are engaged in research to intensify their efforts and continue their excellent work for even more and greater successes. We will be by your side. The Council of Ministers has quite recently appointed the new Board of Directors and the new Scientific Board of the Research Promotion Foundation. We will shape our policy for further development of research in close co-operation with them.

This great distinction awarded by the SmartEN programme to the Cyprus University of Technology -which has been operating for only a few years, and especially its newly established Civil Engineering and Geomatics Department which co-ordinates such programmes with people involved from all over the world, is an example to be followed.

I warmly congratulate, pay respect and express my appreciation to the academic and research personnel of the Cyprus University of Technology and especially to the co-

coordinator of the Programme, Professor Toula Onoufriou as well as to those engaged in the SmartEN programme from the co-operating Universities. Within very few years, the Cyprus University of Technology has become an academic institution which nurtures life in Limassol and in Cyprus as a whole in a very constructive manner.

I wish you all every success in the difficult and highly significant work you are carrying out. May you continue your research in a creative and inspired frame of mind, contributing to the Cypriot society as well as internationally. The Government will always aid quality research efforts by supporting the academic and research community in Cyprus with every means at its disposal.
