

Address by the Mayor of Limassol, Mr Nicos Nicolaides at the 14th Cyprus-Russian Festival (01-02 June 2019)

Excellencies, President of the Republic,
Ambassador of the Russian Federation,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Municipality of Limassol, I warmly welcome you to the 14th Cyprus-Russian Festival.

For 14 consecutive years, our city proudly hosts and coorganizes, together with the Embassy of Russia and VESTNIK KIPRA, what has become the biggest and most prestigious intercultural festival in Cyprus.

I would like to take this opportunity, to, once again, express our deep appreciation to our Russian and Russian-speaking friends, who have chosen Limassol to be their home - away -from -home. We are more than glad to be fellow citizens with you, living together in our beloved city. A city that has been shaped with your contribution as well. In all aspects, socially, economically and most importantly, culturally.

The cultural richness of our city is defined and supported by its multi-cultural composition: tens of thousands of friends from other countries have become an integral part of our society. Limassol welcomes all our friends from different countries. The Municipality has established an on-going dialogue with all these different communities, in order to exchange cultural experiences, but also in order to find solutions to problems facing each group, but primarily in finding solutions to common problems, in order to better our life as Limassolians.

We are sure that events like the Cyprus-Russian Festival help a lot in this respect, offering a platform for this intercultural exchange. The festival each year brings together more than 12 000 people of different nationalities, from all over Cyprus, and many visitors and tourists as well. The event offers a unique opportunity for people to meet new friends, to learn more about culture and traditions, and to engage in activities, concerts, contests and exhibitions.

The Cyprus – Russian festival, may have started as a tribute to Cyprus - Russian friendship, but over the years it has developed into a tribute to international friendship and intercultural understanding and cooperation.

I would like to thank and congratulate our dear friend Natalia Kardash, the **founder and organizer of** the Cyprus – Russian Festival, **for her tireless efforts to support the festival for so many years, and for continuously introducing new ideas and new events to it every year.** I would also like to thank her for her multilevel contribution to the strengthening of the Russian-Cyprus friendship.

The Limassol Municipality, being a staunch supporter of international friendship, is deeply committed to continue to support the Cypriot-Russian friendship and the Cyprus-Russian Festival for the years to come.

I wish you all an enjoyable weekend.