

26/09/2023

Archbishop Elpidophoros - Remarks at the Federation of Cypriot American Organizations Annual Testimonial Dinner



Your Excellency President Christodoulides,

Secretary Pompeo,

President Papastyliau and Esteemed Board of Directors of the Federation of Cypriot American Organizations,

Representatives of the many distinguished Chapters,

Honored Guests,

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Tonight, we gather together in solidarity with the Federation of Cypriot American Organizations – to remember the cause and the mission of peace and justice in Cyprus. This decades-old wound in our world needs more awareness in the public consciousness so that it may be healed. And I believe that the Federation is giving our common cause even greater consideration by its choice of laureate for its

distinguished Freedom Award: the Seventieth United States Secretary of State, the Honorable Michael Pompeo.

You have certainly honored my humble person as well, by inviting me once again to be an Honorary Chairperson of this most significant event, alongside His Excellency President Christodoulides.

As you all know, it is a distinct honor for me to be paired with the President of the Republic of Cyprus. It is an important reminder of the responsibility of the Church in America to use all its influence to bring the issues around Cyprus into constant focus. As Hellenes – whether of Cyprus, Greece, Asia Minor, or the worldwide Diaspora – we have a duty to one another.

To defend and to speak up when injustices occur, and the prolonged, illegal occupation of Cyprus cannot be allowed to go unnoticed by the world. The realpolitik of those who count themselves pragmatists is not what is needed. Rather, we need prophetic voices of justice and righteousness, who will challenge the status quo and speak up for Cyprus, which has been so injured by wounds of conflicts that have their origins in the shifting sands of history that can be traced back for literal centuries.

This is why bestowing the Freedom Award to Secretary Pompeo sends a necessary signal to the world, because his career and public service stand on the side of justice in the international arena. His support for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Orthodox Church of Ukraine are well known to all. And his support for peace and justice in Cyprus is no different.

Tonight, we honor you, Mr. Secretary, and in doing so we are expectant that as you continue to offer your service to the American Nation and to the world, you will never forget Cyprus. Let Cyprus be the prism through which you manifest your manifold and excellent diplomatic skills and talents.

This ancient cultural and civilizational bulwark has gone through many historical phases. But now, it is time for the world to embrace the reality of a unified Nation with peaceful and righteous society. Wounds eventually turn to scars that can be a stronger tissue. And Cyprus will be stronger, in spite of the suffering and division that has existed for so very long.

May the dream of a unified Cyprus come soon, and may we all live to rejoice in the abundant blessings of peace and prosperity that this wondrous Island Nation brings to our world.

Thank you!

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