

**SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT OF CYPRUS MR GLAYKOY KLIRIDI IN THE
UNVEILING OF THE HERO'S MONUMENT OF THE LIBERATING FIGHT OF
EOKA IN 1955-1959 KYRIAKOS MATSIS AND IN THE OPENINGS OF THE
EVENTS ROOM**

THURSDAY 27TH June 2002, TIME 8:00m.m.

It is with national pride and deep emotion that I perform the unveiling of the monument for the hero of fight of EOKA in 1955-59 Kyriakos Matsis today and inaugurate the events room, which aspires to be a creative place for the intellectual and cultural quests of the modern society of Cyprus.

Kyriakos Matsis was one from the most luminous spirits of fighters of EOKA in 1955-59. He was a personality who glittered, who achieved to transubstantiate the ideology into an action of life and patriotism into virtue.

Matsis is not just a simple hero of the fight. He was a constituted personality, who was distinguished by deeply wise thought, fighting idealism, political realism and the passion for freedom.

He was a leader from his youth years. He was a model of morality and performance as a student and later as student of the Agricultural school of Aristotelian University in Thessalonica. He had a clean and free thought. He believed the right without compromises. He was mentally a lad and allocated rich intellectual virtues. On 13th September 1956 he escaped with 6 other fighters from the detention rooms in Kokkinotrimithia. Then, he undertook the leadership of Kyrenia's sector.

In the morning of 19th November 1958, Kyriakos Matsis besieged in his hideout, in the challenge of his conquerors to be surrendered he answered: "Molon lave (come and get me). Now I am alone, come, if you dare, to take me. You will not get me out alive. If I come out, I will come out shooting". These were his last words. This is the way Matsis saved his Thermopyles.

Greek ladies and gentlemen,

Today, the Cypriot Hellenism fights a peaceful fight in order to reverse the horrible consequences of the Turkish invasion and possession, in order to win its rights back, in order to ensure its future in the ground of its ancestors. In the ground that was

irrigated by Matsis blood and all those who gave their life for freedom of this suffering place from those years until today.

For the success of this fight we dedicate all our efforts and have Greece as our precious supporter. Important help is being also offered, by our emigrant brothers, foreign states and personalities.

Our own side insists in a solution in the frames of resolutions of the United Nations, of the Community joint ownership and of the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights.

We will continue our constructive attitude, hoping and being optimistic that in the end a solution will be found, acceptable from both communities, whom they will profit equally.

In the meantime, we continue our European course, that remains our objective. This course is already completed and in the following future Cyprus will belong to the big European family. This will be our bigger achievement after the declaration of the republic of Cyprus. I wish the Cypriot problem would be solved until then in order for our Turkish Cypriot Compatriots to be profited as well, from our integration in the European Union.

We all have a supreme duty in front of us. Our duty is to restore justice in the suffering Cyprus, to change Cyprus into a country of European Union that will contribute in safety, stability, peace and the collaboration between all the states of the region. This big vision will satisfy the expectations of our population and it will ensure the future in this ground, in which it lives and creates for thousands of years.

While Kyriakos Matsis was studying in Greece, he shared his life with science and with the enlightenment for the rights of the Cypriot fight. And when, he graduated as an agriculturist, he returns from Thessalonica to Cyprus, in 1952, with the self-confidence of the pure ideologist and with the elation of a visionary, declares unambiguously his love for Cyprus and his ardent desire for freedom. He joined the army first in the great fight of EOKA in 55-59.

Matsis, enlists and teaches catechism to fighters, plans, prepares and organises, under the guidance of the leaders of the fight Makarios and Digenis. He becomes a

general link of Cyprus, distributes information and orders, while, at the same time, he helps the farmers with his agricultural knowledge.

On 9th January 1956 Kyriakos Matsis was arrested and led to the horrible detention rooms of Omorfita. In these detention rooms his horrible torture began, but his magnanimity also glowed.

One day the English Governor John Harting visited Matsis in order to ask him to reveal the part that the leader of the fight Digenis was hidden. In return, Harting offered him the huge, for that season, sum of half million pounds and his safe escape abroad. Kyriako's reaction and answer was historical: **'I'm so sorry because you have not realised with whom you are conversing. You should know that we don't fight for money but for virtuousness '.**

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