



13.06.2008 ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE COC

**ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CYPRUS OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
KIKIS N. LAZARIDES AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE
EXECUTIVE & TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF THE 2009 GSSE**

When we undertook the organization of the XIII Games of the Small States of Europe CYPRUS 2009, we placed the enhancement of the competition as our first priority. Our goal now is to host the best GSSE ever in the beginning of June 2009. The 1989 Games, which were also held in Cyprus and went down in history as the measure by which to compare all other editions, remain our guide, but we are also taking into consideration all the latest developments in sports and in the organization of international events.

The first day of meeting of the Executive and Technical Committees of the GSSE concluded a short while ago. Later today our guest will have the opportunity to visit the hotels that will host the delegations participating in CYPRUS 2009. Tomorrow we plan to inspect the venues of the Games both in Nicosia and in Limassol. I am happy to announce that the remarks of the delegates representing the National Olympic Committees of the Small States of Europe have surpassed all our aspirations. The level of satisfaction by the work done so far and the general recognition of our efforts gives us the strength to continue in an ever increasing tempo.

Our goal is a perfect competition, with the involvement of the whole of Cyprus—and especially the youth of our country. The XIII GSSE are a matter of national importance to us and we are especially happy to enjoy the support of the Government of Cyprus and all the sports authorities. We have already set the first record, which is especially important: According to the preliminary inscription of athletes that will take part in CYPRUS 2009, as submitted at the meeting of the Technical Committee, we will have a total of 1,136 competitors. The previous record was 793 athletes in Andorra 2005. This means that we will host 300 more athletes



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than any previous edition. Taking into account the team officials, coaches, trainers, referees and judges, journalists, members of the Olympic Family, participants in the Youth Camp and visiting spectators and fans, we expect that from the 1st until the 6th of June 2009 we will host about 2,000 guests in Cyprus. Following Cyprus, the largest delegation will be that of Luxembourg (173 athletes). The sport with most entrants will be athletics (213 athletes), followed by volleyball (154), swimming (147) and basketball (132).

As part of our campaign to enhance and upgrade the GSSE, we presented today our plan of the television coverage for CYPRUS 2009. It is no overstatement that all the delegates were impressed. The official TV producer of CYPRUS 2009 will be the Lumiere Company. We have already come to agreements with specialists and experts in the field, who can offer us the best services and we hope that we can promote our country in the best possible way. I will briefly inform you that we will have live coverage of 21 events, including the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. There will be four live feeds of seven to eight hours each every day, covering the whole of Cyprus, as well as countries overseas. The live feed will reach every single interested party across Europe and to our expats around the globe, through the Hellas Sat satellite. We will have at our disposal 4 large O.B. Vans and 50 high-tech cameras. Two television "packets" of 20 and 40 minutes each will be produced daily and distributed via satellite.

We also presented today several events of a cultural and educational nature, with numerous innovations. For the first time in the history of the GSSE we will hold a Youth Camp with the participation of young athletes from each country. We will implement our Olympic Education Programme to promote the values of Olympism and as side-events to CYPRUS 2009 we will also host media and medical seminars.



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The Executive Committee approved today the regulations of each sport, based on the tentative entry lists and we will be issuing the complete and detailed final competition schedule very soon. The delegates expressed their satisfaction for the level of readiness of the Organising Committee. As one of our goals is also for our athletes to excel in competition, as of early September we will begin implementing our special CYPRUS 2009 Plan in cooperation with the Cyprus Sports Organisation. We seek to successfully defend our top position in the medals table and to achieve this we will make all necessary efforts.

We have also presented an ambitious plan for Mass Media and for communications, which we hope will cover the needs of even the most demanding of our guests. The official website of the Games (www.cyprus2009.org.cy) was launched last month and is already providing visitors with all the necessary information for the Games. For the Press Services, for which you all have a special interest, our efforts concentrate on reaching a level available in much bigger events. The Press Office will be staffed by 25 sports journalists and editors plus 160 technicians, in addition to specialist and non-specialist volunteers. A Main Press Centre will operate in Nicosia offering all necessary facilities to the accredited members of the Press. Local Press Centres will also operate in each venue. A Photo Centre will also be set up for the convenience of photographers. The Press Office will publish a daily newspaper in both Greek and English for the duration of the Games, with results and information from all sports.

Finally, I would like to thank all my colleagues in the Organising Committee for the success of the meetings of the Executive and Technical Committees of the GSSE, the Cyprus Sports Organisation for their valuable help, the sports federations for their hard work and the sponsors of the Cyprus Olympic Committee: Our Top Sponsors Bank of Cyprus, Cyprus Telecommunications Authority and SPE Strovolou; our official sponsors Mitsides Group and Peak Sportswear Ltd.; and our official carrier Cyprus Airways.