



ARMENIAN GENERAL BENEVOLENT UNION

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55 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022-1112 U.S.A. T: 212 319-6383 • F: 212 319-6507/08 • E: agbuny@agbu.org • W: www.agbu.org

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Statement by Berge Setrakian, President of the Armenian General Benevolent Union

Agreement between the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus and the Armenian General Benevolent Union

As President of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) I welcome the Agreement between the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus and the AGBU, signed today, 20 June 2007, to temporarily house the Gymnasium of Aglandjia with over 400 students during the 2007/2008 academic year at the designated premises of the Melkonian Education Institute. The temporary relocation of the Gymnasium is necessary in order not to disrupt the normal functioning of the Gymnasium and to allow the authorities concerned to expeditiously complete the urgently required repairs of the existing buildings of the Gymnasium.

AGBU's positive response to the request by the Ministry of Education and Culture was immediate. Furthermore, AGBU has decided to offer the Melkonian premises free of charge with the intent that the substantial rent offered by the Ministry to the AGBU for the temporary accommodation of the Gymnasium should be instead used to defray the cost of the repairs to the Gymnasium's buildings.

AGBU's offer was extended to the Ministry of Education and Culture as a simple token of appreciation for all the support that the Armenian Community and the AGBU in particular have enjoyed for so many years in Cyprus.

The AGBU, which during the current year has been celebrating its centennial, continues to be the largest Armenian organization world wide, with numerous chapters in 75 cities in 28 countries, and reaches over 400,000 Armenians annually with its active educational, humanitarian and cultural programs, not only in the Armenian Diaspora but also in the Republic of Armenia. The AGBU reiterates its commitment to the Armenian Cypriot community. The AGBU is also considering the development of a project for the benefit of all Cypriots as a token of gratitude toward the Government and people of the Republic of Cyprus for its continued loyalty and support toward the Armenian people.

On this occasion, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the distinguished President of the Republic of Cyprus, H.E. Mr. Tassos Papadopoulos, and the Minister of Education and Culture, H.E. Mr. Akis Cleanthous, for their personal support and cooperation. I look forward to further strengthen our cooperation.

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