

Sex Offences Conference – 21 January 2017

Minister, distinguished speakers and guests. Firstly, sincere apologies from High Commissioner Matthew Kidd who is currently travelling back from ongoing negotiations on settlement of the Cyprus issue in Mont Pelerin and so is not able to join you today. I hope you agree that that is a good enough reason for his absence, and the UK continues to hope and to put every effort into working towards a solution of the Cyprus issue. (Introduce Self)

It is an honour for me to be part of this important conference today and particularly proud that we can share UK experience in the field of dealing with sexual offences through our distinguished speakers, from the Ministry of Justice in the UK. I would particularly like to thank Lynn Saunders, governor of the largest prison for sexual offenders in Europe, for coming here today to speak to us.

Unfortunately, we are seeing an increase in sex offences, not only here in Cyprus but globally. Today, we will hear, not only from Lynn, but from a number of different speakers' perspectives and experiences in dealing with sex offenders in prisons. I hope that this will pave the way for further co-operation between Cyprus and the UK in this important area.

I know how much work Mrs Aristotelous, Nicosia Prisons Director and her colleagues have done so far in reforming the Central Prison and we welcome this. Our cooperation on prison reform/police reform I hope indicates that despite UK developments, Cyprus is a valued partner for Britain and this will continue.

I look forward to hearing everyone's ideas.

Finally, I would like to thank our partners, The Ombudswoman's Office and the Constenteion for working with us to organise the event.

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