

Your Excellency, Dear Mr Minister,

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Support for the weakest - women, children, people with disabilities, civilian victims of military crises, refugees, internally displaced persons and especially communities that host them - is in the core of the Polish aid. This is the essence of the word „solidarity”, which has a special meaning in the history of my country. Therefore, I am pleased to emphasize that the final process of these pre-fabricated houses which consist of many components, was concluded in Poland, in Gdańsk - in the city known as the cradle of Polish Solidarity Movement.

We are and have always been in solidarity with every country struggling with a migration crisis. In 2020 alone, we have allocated over EUR 16 million to humanitarian aid. Most of these funds were spent on the Middle East region, but some in various forms also went to partners in the EU, e.g. Greece. Last year, we donated 200 such homes for displaced people in Syria, 300 for Syrian refugees in Jordan, and 156 for refugees in Greece. We are glad that, at least to a small extent, we can also help Cyprus in this way.

Poland strongly supports the use of available mechanisms limiting tragedies in the Mediterranean Sea and reducing migratory pressure on the frontline countries like Cyprus. We hope that ongoing negotiations on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, strongly focused on external dimension issues, will bring relevant progress in tailor-made and comprehensive cooperation. Together with Cyprus, we share a position on the importance of cooperation with third countries, border protection, prevention of secondary movements or return issues.

We are more than aware of the commitment and efforts that Republic of Cyprus has been struggling with in recent years with the

unprecedented influx of migrants. As soon as Mr Minister Nicos Nouris informed us about the difficulties, we decided to act quickly. As a result, thanks to grants from the Chancellery of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland and the initiative of the Polish Center for International Aid (PCPM) – whose representatives are present here - today we are handing 80 pre-fabricated houses that will provide shelter to 240 people. It is also worth emphasizing that this aid falls on the jubilee year - the 60th anniversary of establishing our bilateral diplomatic relations.

We perceive this gift as both a duty of solidarity with the Republic of Cyprus, our proven partner in the European Union, and as a contribution to building an effective, humane and safe European migration policy.