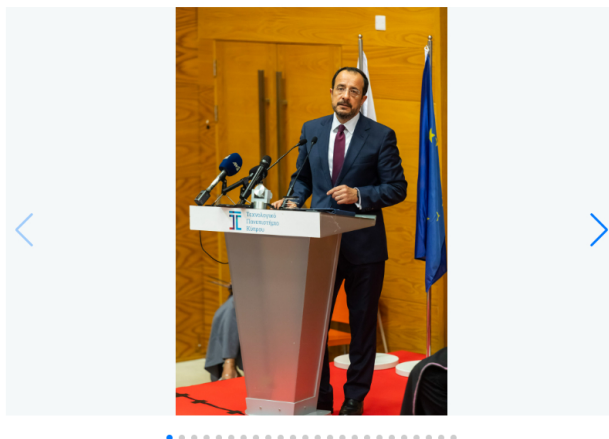


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# Greetings from the President of the Republic, Mr. Nikos Christodoulides, at the Graduation Ceremony of Doctoral Students of the Technical University of Athens

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It is with great pleasure that I participate in today's ceremony-celebration for all of you, our young scientists who are the bearers of knowledge, training and specialization, who constitute the driving force for further social progress and economic development in our country. And I have no doubt that the greatest asset of our country is its human resources and your contribution will be decisive in the great effort we are making so that our country can go even further, even higher.

We are all here tonight to honor all of you who have successfully completed the highest level of academic coursework and are receiving your doctoral degree.

The years that preceded it, years of perseverance, scientific discipline, creative questioning and solving scientific issues with new innovative ideas, highlighted the young PhDs, in whom we invest so that they can contribute decisively to the progress and prosperity of our homeland and beyond.

By completing this course of study, you are not only rewarded for your excellence, your intellectual maturity, and your ability to delve into science. You now acquire something much more substantial: the responsibility that accompanies knowledge. A responsibility that is not limited to academia, but extends to the entire society.

From today, you are called to be not only researchers, but also guides, visionaries, co-shapers of reality. To identify needs and deficits, to propose evidence-based solutions, to support institutions and communities in their transition to a more complex, more technological, more globalized – but also more vulnerable – future. Academic knowledge is not a privilege for personal enrichment. It is a responsibility for social transformation for the benefit of our youth, our children and future generations.

As Socrates so aptly reminds us: "Education, like fertile land, always brings good things" – that is, "Education, like fertile land, brings all good things". The education that you have cultivated with effort now has the power to bear fruit for the entire society. It is the wish and expectation of all of us, therefore, that the seed of knowledge that you have planted will become a lever for progress, solidarity and continuous improvement.

Moreover, this is the goal that the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), where you studied, set as the guiding principle of its operation, and it continues to move in this direction, remaining committed to fulfilling its mission, succeeding in becoming recognized at the local and international level. In just two decades since its establishment, it has evolved into a dynamic organization with an international footprint. It is sufficient to note that in 2025, for another year, it is among the top 600 universities worldwide in the Times Higher Education list, while its Departments continue to stand out in the Shanghai List.

However, your University is not only distinguished for its teaching, but also for its systematic investment in research with a series of scientific achievements and international collaborations that strengthen its reputation as a center of excellence. This recognition underlines the commitment of TEPAK to creating a supportive environment for researchers, something that you have personally experienced. As an example, I would like to mention the very important recognition of the University by the European Commission for the favorable working environment it offers to researchers.

Equally important is the international success of the University with the assumption and renewal of the UNESCO Chair for Digital Cultural Heritage, which is the only one in the world in this field and has been operating at TEPAK since 2018. The contribution of the Chair – unique in the world – to the preservation and promotion of global cultural heritage through technology is of exceptional importance. At the same time, the University is going through an era of extroversion and internationalization, with strategic partnerships with leading Universities from Europe, Asia and the Middle East. In addition, its inclusion in the European University Networks and specifically in the European University of Technology (EUT+) network, constitutes a strategic step for its participation in a pan-European education and research ecosystem.

The development and progress of the University of Cyprus over these 20 years is not limited to academic and research achievements. Of particular importance is the upgrading of its infrastructure – be assured that as a State we will continue to invest, we have also invested in the expansion of the University to Paphos, we are also investing in its expansion to Larnaca, precisely because we consider the Education sector, along with that of Health, to be the most important sectors of governance.

The State's interest equally concerns all of our university institutions. Our targeted policy focuses on their evolutionary path, with the aim of promoting our country as a regional research, but above all, quality university center.

At the same time, through the actions we implement, we seek both the internationalization of higher education and its connection with immediate professional rehabilitation. For the same reason, we have proceeded to the elaboration of a national strategy, with the participation of not only the Ministry of Education but also other Ministries, implementing specific policies.

Of utmost importance for the upgrading of the functioning of our universities is also their participation in the institution of the European University Networks. Participation that increases and strengthens their competitiveness, promoting innovative opportunities for education and cross-border cooperation, facilitating mobility, sustainability, digital transition and social inclusion at the European level.

Undoubtedly, the development of our Universities is also the result of the selfless contribution of their academic and administrative staff. I congratulate them all warmly. Guides, supporters and companions on the path of all of you students, they have been the support for many of you in the most demanding moments of your research journey. You owe them a lot, and the State recognizes their very important contribution.

But tonight I would like to focus in particular on a group of people who often remain in the shadows, but who have been a pillar of support throughout your journey. I am referring to your families, your children, your parents, your partners who have stood by you with patience, love and understanding. Their own sacrifices, moral and otherwise, have contributed to your being able to reach here today. Today, your success is also theirs.

Your graduation marks the beginning of a new path – a path of responsibility, not only to yourself, but also to society. Cyprus, today more than ever, needs people who can transform knowledge into action, science into solutions, research into vision.

As a State, we will continue to be by your side. We will continue to invest in education, in research, in people. Because only in this way can we build a brighter future for our young men and women, for our homeland, collectively, responsibly, with knowledge as our compass.

In closing, I invite you to remain scientifically and creatively restless, dedicated and innovative. To strive for excellence in every aspect of your life. As Kazantzakis so aptly said: "Love responsibility. Say: I, I alone have a duty to save the earth." There is no better exhortation for the scientists of tomorrow. I congratulate you once again from the bottom of my heart and wish you good luck in whatever you choose to pursue. Be bold, be present, be creative.

(PM/NZ/KA)

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