

**Dear President of the Network, Dear Colleagues, Esteemed Guests,**

I cordially welcome you to Cyprus! It is our utter privilege and delight to host the XV Plenary Meeting of the Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities. I wish to extend my profound thanks to the delegations of the Member Authorities of the MNRA attending today for honouring us with your presence.

I cannot but earnestly convey my gratitude and thanks to the former Chairman of ERC, Portugal, and my valued friend, Jose Alberto Lopes, for graciously embracing our function today. Indeed, during our common term, we mutually joined forces and worked together with remarkable zeal, having envisioned common goals and ultimately amplifying this to a highly valued friendship.

At the same time, I would like to express my regret that Professor Ahmed Ghazali, a markedly respected persona, the former Chairman of HACA, Morocco, has not been able to be among us today due to last moment unexpected events. Nevertheless, I still wish to say a few words about him, as a token of my appreciation. Mr. Ghazali has been a source of inspiration for me through his powerful speech in Istanbul in 2010 on the social responsibility of the Regulator as an Actor of Change. His expressed views pertaining to issues like human rights such as, inter alia, racism and hatred have in fact been consolidated in our proposed amendments to the legislation governing the CRTA, currently under discussion at the competent Parliamentary Committee.

Allow me to thank Mr. Claudio Cappon, Vice-President of European Broadcasting Union (EBU) as well as Mr. Themis Themistokleous, Director General of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation and

Member of the EBU Executive Board, for their courteous presence here today.

Last but not least, I sincerely thank our friends from Moldova who have come all the way to Cyprus to join our Meeting today in the capacity of guests.

As the Member Authority holding the Vice-Presidency for 2013, the Cyprus Radio Television Authority undertook to foster in as meticulous and as thorough a manner as possible, the commitments agreed at the Plenary Meeting last year in Lisbon. Namely, we pledge to make all endeavours with a view to playing an even more dynamic role in the adaptation of the Network to the constantly shifting and in fact compelling necessities of the Mediterranean countries.

Essentially, we managed to uphold the notion behind the MNRA, that is, its crucial potentiality to determine political guidelines and strategies. In effect, this denotes the fundamental principle that it is not only indispensable, it is also imperative, to endorse the enhancement of the relations between the member countries. The CRTA has manifestly substantiated this principle through the signing of Memorandums of Understanding with several regulatory Authorities within the Mediterranean framework. Starting from Israel, then Malta and Greece and very recently our colleagues in Morocco, we signed Memorandums of Understanding for General Cooperation and Exchange of Information which entail both the political and the technical perspective of the operation of the Authorities. Clearly, from our targeted collaborations stems a mutual perspective on how the Authorities may improve their task of regulating television and radio programmes. This, in effect, potentially engenders a more comprehensive understanding of the

issues that arise and ultimately yields a more effective decision-making.

Anchored in the vital experience that all Members of our Network carry in their luggage, we anticipate maximizing the constructive synergy that has, at all times, steered the functioning of the Network. To this end, we respectfully urge you all to carry on contributing with your invaluable involvement.

Dear friends, beyond doubt, abundant challenges lie ahead of us and they compel us to keep pace with them. In effect, the decisions that we make today require that we look at the signs of the times with an eye to making our tomorrows more promising and more gratifying.

In light of the above, I trust that our Meeting will prove to be most constructive and stimulating, and I look forward to reaping the seeds that we shall all sow in these two days.

I invite you all to embrace this opportunity to indulge yourselves on our fascinating island through exploring its exquisite Mediterranean beauty, prosperous culture and scrumptious gastronomy. Once you experience our island's wonderful exclusiveness, you will certainly start planning your next trip to Cyprus!

Thank you.