

Brussels/Nicosia, 28 July 2026

To the personal attention of

H.E. Mr António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations

Re: Appeal for the revitalisation of the rich cultural heritage in the Buffer Zone of the Walled City of Nicosia

Dear Mr Secretary-General,

We take the opportunity of your visit to Cyprus to convey to you the joint appeal by Europa Nostra and the Europa Nostra Heritage Hub in Nicosia to the United Nations to give priority to the revitalisation of the rich cultural heritage in the Buffer Zone of the Walled City of Nicosia. We strongly believe that this would be an excellent investment in (re)building trust and mutual respect between all communities living in Cyprus, which is a pre-requisite for achieving the long-awaited re-unification of Cyprus, for the benefit of all its citizens and communities.

We know that our appeal reflects the deep conviction and joint commitment of our Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot heritage colleagues and of many civil society organisations from the still divided city of Nicosia. For many decades, in spite of strong political and administrative obstacles, they have been building bridges and fostering collaboration through culture – both arts and cultural heritage. They have undertaken many bi-communal initiatives and have jointly promoted their shared cultural heritage, in the spirit of the motto of the European Union – **In Varietate Concordia, united in diversity**. Some of these initiatives figure among the proud and much deserved laureates of the [European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards](#) such as the [Home for Cooperation: educational centre in the buffer zone of Nicosia](#) (2014) and the [Study, Assessment and Design for the Structural and Architectural Restoration of the Bedestan](#) (2009) in the category of Restoration, the [Architectural Heritage of the Buffer Zone in the Walled City of Nicosia](#) (2011) in the category of Research, the [Sector 2: Nicosia – The Green Line Project](#) (2026) in the category Citizens Engagement and Awareness-raising, and the [Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage](#) (Grand Prix, 2021) in the category Heritage Champions.

We are pleased to inform you that our [European Cultural Heritage Summit 2026](#) “Heritage as the Soul of Mare Nostrum” took place in the historic heart of Nicosia, from 26 to 30 May. It was organised by Europa Nostra in close collaboration with the Europa Nostra Heritage Hub in Nicosia, with the support of the European Union and under the patronage of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union. During our Summit, we witnessed not only the immense dedication of our heritage colleagues but also the strong political commitment of the Leaders of the two communities in Nicosia, Mr Charalambos Prountzos and Mr Mehmet Harmanci, to bring the two parts of Nicosia closer together. One of the best ways to achieve this is by investing the necessary resources in revitalising the endangered cultural heritage in the Buffer Zone of the historic center of Nicosia which is located within the city’s impressive Venetian Walls. We applaud their determination and we urge the international and European communities, led respectively by the United Nations and the European Union, to express every political support and allocate adequate



The European Voice of
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resources to enable the revitalisation of the historic heart of Nicosia. But beyond the restoration of important heritage sites and buildings we humbly propose that the revitalisation of the Buffer Zone of Nicosia could be an ideal project to be proposed as a Confidence Building Measure between the two Communities of Nicosia.

Dear Mr Secretary-General,

We have the highest appreciation of your strong personal commitment to the positive settlement of the Cyprus Problem. We are also aware of your strong support for the power of culture to foster the values of peace, solidarity and humanism all over the world. We therefore appeal to you to give every priority to unlocking and unleashing the full potential of cultural heritage to contribute to the reunification of Cyprus.

We are grateful for the invitation extended to Androulla Vassiliou to attend a meeting which you are planning to have in Nicosia with persons involved in bi-communal efforts. This is a perfect opportunity to convey to you, in person, our important message. We stay at your entire disposal to assist you and your team in any useful way and thank you in advance for your personal interest and support for our appeal.

Respectfully and cordially yours,



Hermann Parzinger
Executive President of Europa Nostra



Androulla Vassiliou
Vice-President of Europa Nostra
Leader of the Europa Nostra
Heritage Hub in Nicosia

