**WELCOMING SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE MR JUSTICE MYRON MICHAEL NICOLATOS, PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT OF CYPRUS,**

**AT THE 1ST JOINT CYPRUS BAR-ENGLISH BAR COUNCILS CONFERENCE**

**3th JUNE, 2016.**

**Honourable Minister of Justice,**

**Distinguished Presidents of the Bar Councils of Cyprus and England & Wales,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Dear Colleagues,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to address this 1st Joint Conference of the Cyprus and English Bar Councils.

England and Cyprus are among the very few European Legal Jurisdictions applying the Common Law and Equity.

The Common Law and Equity were built upon the European Legal Culture which emanates from the Greek and Roman Civilisations and from Christianity. The Christian principle “love your neighbour as yourself” has become the duty of care towards your neighbour, in the Common Law.

The English Common Law and the Principles of Equity are, in my opinion, excellent examples of what the Human Mind may achieve. Based on Fairness and Logic, respect of Human Rights and Natural Justice, they have served billions of people in the world, in all the five Continents, in the solution of their Legal Problems and the arrangement of their Legal Affairs, with flexibility and foreseeability.

The Republic of Cyprus was lucky enough to be left, in 1960, with an excellent Legal and Judicial System, with established respect for the Administration of Justice and its officers and a widespread knowledge and use of the English Language.

It has also benefited from the vast experience and rich case law of Common Law Countries all over the world. But the main source of guidance for Cypriot Judges and Advocates, comes from the case law of England and Wales and of the Privy Council. There is no right of Appeal, to the Privy Council, from the Courts of the Republic, but there is such right from the Courts of the British Bases, in Cyprus.

Building on the above Solid Foundations, the Judiciary of Cyprus has managed to remain, until today, independent, honest and impartial and to maintain a high standard of Justice.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the wisdom, common sense and notion of Fair Play, of Great Judges of the Common Law such as Lords Atkin, Denning, Reid and Wilberforce (some of whom were Scots, despite the fact that Scotland is not a Common Law country). As a student in London I had the opportunity to learn the Common Law from the Judges themselves, through their elaborate and reasoned Judgments.

A great number of Cypriot students are, today, privileged to study law, in England and Wales.

Apart from the Common Law, the United Kingdom and Cyprus are both Members of the European Union, the Council of Europe and the British Commonwealth, sharing the same Basic values of Democracy, Respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law.

Some of my fellow students in London, are today Justices of the Supreme Court, one is the Attorney General, others are successful Barristers (as there are no Q.Cs in Cyprus).

I am sure that close contacts and cooperation between the Bar Council of England and Wales and the Bar Association of Cyprus will have very fruitful results for both sides. England has the longest tradition and culture in the Common Law, whereas Cyprus has a unique mixed Legal System of both English Common Law in the field of Private Law and Continental Civil Law in the field of Public Law.

I am sure that there are many fields of activity such as Court and Case Management and the establishment of a New Commercial Court in Cyprus, with international jurisdiction, where the two Bar Councils may cooperate, and assist the Authorities.

During my student years, the United Kingdom joined the E.U., in 1973. My personal wish is that it will remain in the E.U. for many years to come, as the E.U. will never be the same without the United Kingdom.

Dear Colleagues,

I wish you all fruitful deliberations and discussions and a pleasant stay in Cyprus for our English participants.