

**Welcoming Note by the Rector of the University of Cyprus  
Inauguration of the Nicosia Aula Cervantes at the University of Cyprus  
16 February 2011 at 12:30p.m.**

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Your Excellency, the Ambassador of Spain

Your Excellencies, the Ambassadors and High Commissioners

Director of the Instituto Cervantes in Sofia

Vice - Rector of the University of Cyprus

Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

Vice - Rector of the University of Nicosia

Dear Students

Distinguished guests

Good Afternoon

Let me begin by extending a warm welcome to all of you. We celebrate today the opening of the Nicosia Aula Cervantes at the University of Cyprus and I am delighted to see all of you joining us in this celebration.

Before I brief you on the main functions of the Aula Cervantes, you should know that it all started as an ambitious project by the former Rector, Professor Stavros Zenios and the Ambassador of Spain to Cyprus, His Excellency Mr. Juan José Urtasun Erro; two people with vision, who knew that both the geographical position of Cyprus and its strong tradition in quality education, could render our Institution the ideal place for the establishment of the Aula Cervantes.

After all, the University of Cyprus has been a pioneer in the promotion of foreign languages in Cyprus, ever since its establishment in 1989, with the Language Centre offering Spanish courses and encouraging simultaneously both student mobility in other European countries and the respect for foreign cultures and traditions.

Hence, it is no coincidence that the University of Cyprus maintains Erasmus Agreements of cooperation with 21 Spanish Universities, while it has also signed Bilateral Agreements of Cooperation with the University of Granada and the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

Moreover, I would like to congratulate both sides and also everyone of you, who the last two years worked hard to make the vision a reality. There is no doubt that without your contribution, we would not have achieved the result we are now celebrating.

The establishment of an Aula Cervantes at the University of Cyprus, through which the Instituto Cervantes will be collaborating with the Centre of Languages, is of great importance to our Institution.

On the one hand, it will certainly enhance the educational and cultural relations between Cyprus, Spain and the Hispanic world, through the promotion of the Spanish language and culture.

On the other hand, it will strengthen even further the bonds between the Spanish and the Cyprus governments, which already share common experiences and practices in the area of education.

The Aula Cervantes, however, will play an even more crucial role: it will act as a means of enhancing the very essence of the European dream at whose foundations is inter-European cooperation and understanding. It is our conviction that European Universities have a particular role to play in this process.

I am confident that the Aula Cervantes will further extend the long-standing, excellent relations between Cyprus and Spain, fostering an even closer relationship. Your presence here is a strong show of encouragement for the good work of the Nicosia Aula Cervantes, which will continue.

Once again, thank you all for being here.

¡Bienvenidos a la Universidad de Chipre y al Nuevo Aula Cervantes!