



**Opening speech by the Minister of Commerce,  
Industry and Tourism  
Yiorgos Lillikas  
at the Seminar organised by the Cyprus Chamber  
of Commerce and Industry and the Employers and Industrialists  
Federation of Cyprus with the assistance of the French Riviera  
Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the Establishment  
of a Technology Park in Cyprus.  
Hilton Park Hotel, Nicosia  
Monday 6 September 2004 at 8:30 am**

Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be here this morning to address this Seminar, the importance of which is clearly evidenced by the presence of such a distinguished audience representing a very wide range of economic and professional activities.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank the organisers of this seminar, namely the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Cyprus Employers' and Industrialists Federation. I would also like to thank the Cyprus Development Bank for undertaking the role of the Project Leader.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the High Level Delegation from the French Riviera Chamber of Commerce and Industry and from the Sophia Antipolis Science Park for their support and assistance in our efforts to establish a technology park in Cyprus.

Today Research, both basic and applied, and Innovation generate the environment for development and progress and create possibilities and opportunities for equal participation in the world market, even to small countries like Cyprus.

The European Union, recognizing the importance of research and innovation and the exploitation of knowledge, has placed as a minimum target the investment of 3% of GDP in research activities. To meet this European objective, the Government of Cyprus has set as a goal for the next few years, the spending of 1% of its GDP in research.

To this effect, the Government is promoting a comprehensive strategy, which will create the environment and the necessary infrastructure for the attraction of investments in research and technological development, which aims primarily at achieving a satisfactory rate of sustainable development and to gaining the maximum benefit from the accession of Cyprus to the European Union.

Within the framework of this strategy, strong encouragement is given for research and technological development both within and outside businesses as well as for the utilization to the maximum degree of the possibilities opening up by the information society. In this connection, the Government of Cyprus has taken various initiatives such as:

1. The agreement signed with the Harvard School of Public Health for a Joint International Initiative on the Environment and Public Health by which the Cyprus Research Institute for the environment and public health will be established in Cyprus.
2. The establishment and operation of four business incubators in Cyprus for fostering innovation. These incubators have successfully started their operation and fourteen teams of inventors submitted their applications to the Competent Program Committee, which has approved six projects, and three of them have already entered the incubators and started their operations. By the end of 2004 it is expected that another ten to fifteen teams of inventors will join the Program.

I am sure that the Director of one of these incubators will give you more details later during this seminar about the Program for the Creation of New High-Tech and Innovative Enterprises.

3. Cooperation with the French Riviera Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the authorities of the Sophia Antipolis Science Park in the field of high technology and in particular for establishing a Technology Park in Cyprus to host research centres of international repute and esteemed high tech enterprises.

All these initiatives, in combination with the existing research centres, like the Institute of Neurology and Genetics, the Agricultural Research Institute, the research units of the University of Cyprus as well as of other academic institutions of tertiary education, will form the core of the necessary research infrastructure for the promotion of the high technology industry in Cyprus and will support our efforts for transforming Cyprus into a regional research Centre and a bridge between the European Union, the East Mediterranean and the Middle East Region.

Fundamental objective of today's seminar is to have an interactive exchange of information, views and experiences between the participants with regard to the basic aspects and parameters that are essential for the successful creation and operation of a technological park in Cyprus. You will be invited to address various issues that should be considered for the inception and implementation of this project, like:

- What kind of technological park is required in Cyprus?
- What kind of services will be offered?
- What kind of activities will be allowed to enter the park?
- Which authority or body will undertake its establishment and its management?
- Criteria for the selection of the most suitable location for the technological park,
- Who will be the prospective customers of the park, and
- Incentives for the attraction of enterprises to this park.

All these will form the necessary input for the preparation of the terms of reference for the feasibility study, which will be the next phase following this seminar.

In concluding, I would like to wish you all every success in your deliberations and to assure you that I will be waiting with great interest the conclusions of the seminar.