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The Technical Committee
on Cultural Heritage



PRESS RELEASE

Launch of the Interactive Educational Program on shared cultural heritage for Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot youth

Nicosia, 25 October 2024 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage (TCCH) celebrated the launch of an interactive educational web platform, which teaches Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot youth about shared heritage, at the Home for Cooperation on Friday in Nicosia. The platform walks users through visual constructions of some of the island’s oldest historic sites, and includes interactive teaching games about these sites and their heritage. The platform is designed for youth ages 12-15 and is available in Turkish, Greek, and English.

The platform is a project of the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage, with funding from a Cultural Property Implementation Agreement Grant from the United States Department of State, and is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme. The overall Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage (TCCH) is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The event included speeches from the U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus, the Head of Cooperation of the Cyprus Settlement Support of the European Commission, the UNDP Cyprus’s Head of Office, and the TCCH co-chairs. Members of the TCCH, U.S. Embassy, European Commission, UNDP and its Advisory Board, and diplomatic community, as well as Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot teachers and youth, attended the October 25 launch event to experience the interactive platform.

“We know that cultural heritage - embodied in ancient structures, monuments, traditions, artifacts, or languages - teaches us about our past, shows us who we are today, and inspires our future. Through that heritage, we celebrate what connects and unifies Cypriots,” said Julie Davis Fisher, the U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus. “Alongside the European Commission, the Technical Committee, and the UN Development Programme, our Embassy is proud to have supported the creation of this educational platform designed to bring Cyprus’ youth communities closer to the island’s historic sites and its shared cultural heritage.”

Sotos Ktoris, the Greek Cypriot Co-chair of the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage spoke about the work of TCCH:



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“At the TCCH, we believe that cultural heritage is not just about preserving historical monuments. It is about protecting our shared heritage that bind us together, but it is also about acknowledging and respecting the unique characteristics of all communities in Cyprus. Our differences should not be conceived as barriers or walls, but as integral elements that enrich the mosaic of our shared heritage. The project we are introducing today, offers Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot youth the tools to explore the history and significance of key monuments across Cyprus. More than that, it encourages them to recognize that protecting our shared heritage is essential—not just as a link to our past, but as a cornerstone for peace and reconciliation. It enables them to become the advocates of cultural heritage monuments safeguarding them for the generations to come.”

Ali Tuncay, the Turkish Cypriot co-chair of the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage called attention to the importance of educating youth on cultural heritage:

“The Interactive Educational Program on the Shared Heritage in Cyprus, which focuses on raising awareness and respect for the cultural heritage of our island, is of crucial importance for the promotion of mutual understanding and respect between the younger generations of the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots. The island of Cyprus, with its rich history, has a unique cultural heritage that needs to be appreciated and preserved. This interactive educational program would encourage users to explore the island's diverse and rich traditions and historical sites. By highlighting the shared heritage of Cyprus, this program would help build trust while respecting each other's existence and distinct identities. Educational program would also play an important role in preserving the heritage sites of the island of Cyprus for future generations.”

The platform can be accessed and used in classrooms and homes across the island and we invite you to experience it here: iep.cyprusdigitalheritage.com.

For further information and media enquiries please contact UNDP at:

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United Nations Development Programme

UNDP aims to contribute and support the peace-building process in Cyprus and to enhance cooperation between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriot by implementing a range of confidence building measures.



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The Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage

The Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage works in line with the mutually agreed mechanism for the preservation of the island's shared heritage. In 2009, the Advisory Board was set up by a decision of the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage and approved by the two leaders as the consultative body of the Committee. The aim of the Board is to protect, preserve and facilitate the preservation, physical protection and restoration (including research, study and survey) of the immovable cultural heritage of Cyprus. This mechanism allows for the practical aspects of preservation to be considered in a non-political manner so that practical measures can be taken to improve the situation on the ground.

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