

Notes & News

●The new **British High Commissioner** to Cyprus, Lyn Parker, presenting his credentials to President Clerides on 18 September, stressed that Britain remained firmly behind UN efforts to find a just Cyprus settlement and deplored the Turkish Cypriot side's refusal to participate in resumed talks. He also praised the "impressive progress" made by Cyprus towards EU accession.

●The 10th anniversary of the appointment of Cyprus' first **Ombudsman** was marked by an international conference in Nicosia on 13-14 September organized by the office of the Cyprus Ombudswoman, Eliana Nicolaou, and attended by representatives from 15 European countries and the EU. Mrs Nicolaou told the conference that in the decade since the creation of her office, over 10,000 complaints had been submitted and that the number had risen in recent years.

●The Forestry Department confirmed in early September that a herd of red deer roaming the Tylliria mountains will be culled because they pose a threat to the survival of Cyprus' 2,000 **indigenous moufflon** (wild sheep).



• Under threat... The indigenous Cyprus moufflon.

The red deer have multiplied greatly since three were imported from Switzerland in 1982 and released into the wild by mistake. Their voracious eating habits bring them into direct competition with the less assertive moufflon, which had been brought back from the brink of extinction in the 1970s and are now in new danger. Forestry Director Aristos Ioannou said that meat from the slaughtered deer would be sold to the highest bidder.

●The Turkish Government and its "collaborators" in the Turkish-occupied area were strongly condemned on 12 September by Turkish Cypriot trade union leader Onder Konuloglu, who accused the Turkish Cypriot "authorities" of trying to remove him as President of the **Turk-Sen union federation**. Mr Konuloglu cited spurious allegations aimed at harming him and Turk-Sen because he had consistently pointed out the damage being done to Turkish Cypriots by Turkey and its occupation regime.

●The Cyprus envoy to the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe** (OSCE), Andreas Georgiades, told an OSCE meeting in Warsaw on 19 September that "the continuous and systematic plundering of the religious, historical and cultural identity" of Cyprus by the Turkish occupation regime in the north and the "Turkification of the occupied part of the island" constituted "a provocation to the whole international community".

●Archbishop Chrysostomos announced on 19 September that the **Cyprus Church** will

donate a piece of land in Limassol for the building of a Russian Orthodox church for Russian citizens resident in Cyprus. The pledge followed talks in Nicosia between the Archbishop and the Exarch of Moscow and all the Russias, Archbishop Sergios. The following evening the Moiseyev Russian ballet company gave a special charity performance in Larnaca to raise funds for the church.

●Communications and Works Minister Averof Neophytou on 20 September signed a memorandum of understanding with Greek and Bulgarian Ministers covering co-operation in the launching of **TV satellites**, starting with one intended to be operational in time for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Mr Neophytou said that he expected the Vatican to join the venture in the near future.

●Following the success of a trial run in the capital last year, several other big towns joined in observing "**Going to town without a car day**" on 22 September. In Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca and Paphos private cars were banned from central areas for six hours and citizens encouraged to use other means of transport. The brainchild of Communications and Works Minister Averof Neophytou, the special day is intended to raise public awareness of the dangers of rising traffic congestion and exhaust emissions.

●President Clerides on 28 September granted a **presidential pardon** to Omer Tekoglu, the Turkish Cypriot who had been sentenced to a 10-year prison term in March on drugs-related charges. His arrest in December 2000 had provoked the retaliatory abduction by Turkish forces of Panicos Tziakourmas, who had been released in April.

●Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot **youth groups** on 30 September held a "Cyprus Peace Day" festival in the Turkish-occupied village of Pergamos as part of a campaign called "I want to meet a friend" aimed at developing relationships between the two communities in the face of persistent attempts by the Turkish "authorities" to prevent intercommunal contacts.

●Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment Minister Costas Themistocleous on 9 September attended the annual **Donkey Day** organized at Vouni village near Limassol by the Friends of the Cyprus Donkey. Attracting thousands of visitors, the event raised much-needed funds for the work of the Friends on behalf of the island's celebrated beast of burden, including the provision of veterinary services for working donkeys and sanctuaries for unwanted animals. □



• Donkey idyll... Cyprus' well-loved beast of burden.



• New generation... To be counted in the census.

New census on EU guidelines

Cyprus' sixth census since independence in 1960 begins on 2 October, nine years after the last one in 1992, in order to meet a European Union (EU) recommendation that all actual and prospective member states should conduct a census in 2001.

Some 650 census-takers will be involved in the operation, which aims to register the population of the Government-controlled area, including both Cypriots and permanent foreign residents. The work will take until the end of November, with preliminary findings being issued in early December and the final results being published in May 2002.

Harmonized with EU guidelines, the census will involve three questionnaires, one to record numerical data on Cyprus' 290,000 households, another to obtain occupational, educational and other information, and a third to cover institutions such as schools, colleges and hospitals. Collation of the census forms will be assisted by a new optical recognition system accounting for C€450,000 of the estimated total cost of about C€1.4 million.

The 2001 census is the 13th in Cyprus' modern history, the first having been taken in 1881 under British rule, when the population was found to be 186,173. The eighth census at independence in 1960 recorded a population of 573,566, which rose to 631,778 in the ninth conducted in 1973. Following the 1974 Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus, the Government-controlled area was found to have 497,879 people in 1976. The 11th census in 1982 gave a figure of 522,845 and the 12th in 1992 a population of 615,013.

Significant trends include a reversal of the rural/urban percentage split from 64/36 in 1960 to 32/68 in 1992, explained in part by the non-inclusion of the Turkish-occupied area since the 1976 census. The ageing of the population is shown by a rise in those aged over 65 from 6.4 per cent in 1960 to 11 per cent in 1992 and a decrease in the under-14s from 36.3 to 25.4 per cent over the same period. Also interesting is the decline in households with six or more members from 22 per cent in 1960 to 5.9 per cent in 1992, when four-member households were the largest category with 25.5 per cent. □

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