

# ORGANISATION OF RELATIVES OF MISSING CYPRIOTS (UK)

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**IDENTIFICATIONS:** Nicos Vlahou from Ay. Amvrosios, Minas Papavasiliou from Pera Horio, Georgios Christofi from Dimes, Michael Kyprianou from Lemesos, Haralambos Prodromou from Ag. Amvrosios, Sotiris Thalassinou from Ay. Epiktitos. CMP figures now stand at 746 Greek Cypriots identified and 762 still missing and 293 and 199 Turkish Cypriots respectively.



**WELCOMING THE NEW YEAR!** On Sunday, January 14, the traditional cutting of the New Year's cake of our Organization took place in the hall of St. John's Church. During the Divine Liturgy that preceded it, a memorial service was held for those who have been identified and buried and prayers were said for those still missing.

The event was attended by His Excellency the High Commissioner of Cyprus, Mr. Andreas Kakouris, who made a short speech, in the Hall, wishing everyone a Happy New Year and liberation from the evils of partition and continued occupation. He stressed that the High Commission is always ready to support our Organisation and its activities.

Then, the President of our Organization, in his speech, thanked all the attendees and the High Commissioner for honouring the event with his presence. Special thanks also to Fr. Apostolos Trifyllis and all the clergy, the Church Committee for the allocation of space for meetings and other events and the ladies committee for their help.

He mentioned that the number of missing persons in Cyprus during the inter-communal troubles of 1963-64 and the Turkish invasion of 1974 was around two thousand. Today, after 50 and 60 years, the CMP (Committee on Missing Persons) reports show that about half are still missing, 767 Greek Cypriots and 199 Turkish Cypriots. *"The difficulties are very great, but we must continue to work for all our missing because the clarification of each of the missing person's case means great relief for the family that awaits him/her"*.

**OBITUARY:** It is with great sadness that we have learned of the death of our Vice President's wife, and first cousin of the missing hero Tasos Marcou, Lella Markou-Theodorou. She passed away on 10<sup>th</sup> February. She was an active member of our Organisation from its inception. Our sincere condolences to Tony and his family. The funeral took place on 29<sup>th</sup> February. May she rest in peace!

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE, COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS:** A three-member delegation from the Committees of Relatives of Cyprus, Greece and the UK, visited Strasbourg prior to the Committee of Ministers (COM) of Council of Europe discussing the issue of our Missing. The COM monitors the implementation of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) judgements which include those of Cyprus vs Turkey and Varnava and others vs Turkey on the Missing. They spoke with the Secretariat and raised the issue of Turkey's refusal to co-operate and give information as to where mass graves are located. The Secretariat can only listen to both sides and pass on what was written or said to the Ministers for decisions to be made and reports to be issued.

Turkey evidently, claims that it has no records of where the mass graves are located as "it was a very hot summer and they had to bury the bodies quickly"! They also spoke with many Council of Europe country representatives, including the one for the UK. The aim was to make sure that the COM continues to monitor the implementation of the ECHR judgements on the Missing and refuse Turkey's demands to stop it, claiming that it has done all it could do to help with this issue!

We are all very pleased to learn that the COM reached the decision to continue monitoring and will discuss the issue again during their March 2025 meeting.

**DONATIONS:** Mr Y. Kashimeris £200, Mr L. Loizou £150. *Thank you for your kindness and generosity!*