

A BI-COMMUNAL PILOT PROJECT IN CYPRUS FOR RESTORATION OF MONUMENTS UNDER THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL HERITAGE

In April 2008 bi-communal Working Groups and Technical Committees were formed to help prepare the ground for direct talks between the Leaders of the two communities (Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot). One such Committee is the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage.

Two of the first decisions of this Committee were:

- (a) to work towards the formation of a common comprehensive inventory of the immovable cultural heritage of the whole of Cyprus and
- (b) to carry out a pilot project regarding the restoration of Archangelos Church and Arnavut Mosque.

Some of these important monuments are in danger, suffering heavy damages. So the Committee decided to seek funding for a pilot project for restoring one monument in the north and one monument in the south part of the island. A bi-communal group of consultants has been appointed to carry out preliminary survey of both monuments, detect damages and propose immediate measures for preventing probable collapse and organize the procedure for the restoration study and works.

The two monuments chosen are the Church of Archangel Michael at the village Lefkoneko and the Arnavout Mosque at Limassol.

The Church of Archangel Michael dates to the 15th century. Only the wall painting of the Archangel survives on the south wall. The monument was cleaned recently from vegetation and debris, but roots have penetrated the structure causing heavy damages, e.g. cracking of dome, vaults and arches and partial collapse of the south porch roof.



The Arnavout Mosque dates to the 16th century. The Ministry of Interior, through the Limassol District Office, as Custodian of Turkish Cypriot property has partially restored the Arnavout Mosque, works were in progress at the time of inspection.

The pilot project working group has finished a draft documentation of the two monuments, the condition survey, the proposal for immediate measures and the proposal for organizing the restoration study and works. The report for this first phase is expected to be submitted to the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage by the beginning of April 2009.

Michael Pittas
Consulting Structural – Civil Engineer



