

Welcome address
by the Superintendent of Insurance, Mrs. Victoria Natar,
at the networking event organized by
the Insurance Companies Association of Cyprus on February 7, 2019
entitled
“The Insurance Industry in a rapidly changing environment –
A European supervisory perspective.”

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me and for the Insurance Companies Control Service to welcome to Cyprus Mr. Gabriel Bernardino, the Chairman of EIOPA and Mrs. Teresa Cassado, country officer of EIOPA for Cyprus. Mr. Bernardino is the keynote speaker at this very interesting event so kindly organized by the Insurance Companies Association of Cyprus. Many thanks to the Association for their co-operation and especially to its Chairman, Mr. Andreas Stylianou and its General Manager, Mr. Andreas Athanasiades.

As you know, in our capacity as supervisory authority of the insurance sector we represent Cyprus in the Board of Supervisors of EIOPA and we have the honour to work with Mr. Bernardino for many years now. In fact, our co-operation with him dates back to when he was the Chairman of CEIOPS, the predecessor of EIOPA.

All supervisory authorities / members of EIOPA have benefited immensely and are co-operating more closely with each other since EIOPA's establishment back in 2011. EIOPA's role in the harmonization of supervision

and the establishment of common supervisory practices across all EU member states is extremely important. We continue to rely on its valuable support and guidance, especially in areas such as the implementation of the Solvency II Directive, the IDD, the PRIIPs and many other EU Laws and regulations, with a view to achieving a convergent and efficient consumer protection across the European Union. Thanks to my staff's dedication and hard work we have so far been implementing all these new far-reaching reforms smoothly.

As stated in the recent Report of the European Court of Auditors, EIOPA has made an effective contribution to supervision, supervisory convergence and financial stability. Towards this goal EIOPA is using a wide range of interventions like the issue of Guidelines, Recommendations, Opinions and Decisions, which we follow in a timely manner. Furthermore, EIOPA is using tools such as stress tests, performs peer reviews, sets-up and co-ordinates cooperation platforms and mediation panels, organizes seminars, training, etc.

We certainly look forward to EIOPA's continued support and guidance, as all European supervisory authorities continue to face many supervisory challenges especially with market conduct issues and emerging new risks coming from digitalized and technologically innovative insurance companies (Insurtech), which culminate in completely different kinds of business models than the ones we are accustomed to deal with and which create many issues of concern to us in the areas of consumer protection and effective supervision. What are also top in our agenda are the problems all supervisory authorities are currently facing with regard to market conduct supervision and also with

regard to the supervision of cross-border businesses which are areas where EIOPA has a decisively leading role to play. I am sure Mr. Bernardino has a lot to say to us today on all these issues.

Another area where EIOPA is already playing a very important role nowadays is with regard to Brexit. Through the issue of Opinions and Recommendations to insurers and to national supervisory authorities EIOPA is advising on what steps should be taken to avoid interruptions to service provision and to minimize the actual risks resulting from Brexit. As developments regarding Brexit continue to be very complicated and uncertain and the relationships of individual EU member states with the UK on a solo basis are not homogeneous, the only way forward for supervisory convergence in insurance during this difficult period is through EIOPA. In this respect we appreciate immensely EIOPA's efforts in negotiating with the UK authorities on our behalf various MoUs to be concluded between us all on time in order to be applicable on day one in case of a hard Brexit.

Our jurisdiction in Cyprus is very small by European standards and so is the Insurance Companies Control Service in terms of size and resources. However, we are doing our best given the available resources. Far reaching reforms and strengthening of our capacity are needed in order to enable us to play a more decisive role in protecting the interests of insurance policyholders.

Thank you for your attention.