

**Speech of the Mayor of Karavas Nicos Hadjistephanou,
in the opening of the “fervolites” exhibition in Suceava**

Excellencies,

Honorable guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Municipality of Karavas, I would like to thank you for the invitation to organize this exhibition, dedicated to the traditional embroidery of our town “fervolites”. In Cyprus, fervolites has a local character since it was made exclusively in the town of Karavas. Today, fervolites is an element of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Cyprus.

It is well known that this type of embroidery can be found in various European countries and it appears that the name we use in Cyprus “fervolites” originates from the French word “frivolite”. Among the countries, in which we traced this type of embroidery, is Romania. Therefore, we can say that “fervolites” is a common element of the cultural heritage of our countries.

At this point, please allow me to say a few words about my town Karavas:

Karavas lies on the North part of Cyprus, which is under Turkish occupation since 1974. In July 1974, Turkey invaded the island and occupied 37.8% of the total territory of Cyprus. The Turkish troops forced us, the legal residents of the area, out of our homes and properties, together with 200.000 thousand other Cypriots.

Since then, we, the lawful residents of Karavas have been living away from home, scattered around the free parts of the island and in other parts of the world. Illegal settlers were brought by Turkey to usurp our properties. Our churches have been looted; our cultural monuments have been destroyed and every evident of our history has been demolished.

However, we have never lost hope. We have never ceased to exist. We preserve our Municipality, the legal Authority of our town, and we anticipate that we will soon be able to free our country and peacefully return to our motherland, to the place where we belong.

Distinguished Romanian friends,

I would like to thank you once again for the opportunity you give us to organize this exhibition. To demonstrate the embroideries made by the women of our town and to talk about our common cultural heritage, the Cypriot, the Romanian, the French, the European.

I am particularly grateful to Dr. Daniela Popescu who, from the first moment, embraced our desire to sign an official agreement for partnership collaboration between our countries. With her excellent cooperation, this desire is today materialized.

Please allow me to also thank Dr. Antigoni Polyniki, Officer of the UNESCO of Cyprus, for her decisive contribution to all the steps of this process, the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus for their support, as well as all the ladies of the Fervolites Committee of Karavas Municipality, and especially the ladies of this delegation.

Last, but not least, I am thankful to all of you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your presence.