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**Breakdown of social dialogue in the Cyprus Police during the Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the EU**

**2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026**

Dear President Von der Leyen,

Dear President Costa,

Dear Vice-President, Minzatu,

Dear Commissioner Brunner,

On behalf of EuroCOP – the European Confederation of Police, representing police trade unions and professional associations across Europe – we wish to draw your attention to a matter of serious concern regarding the state of social dialogue within the Cyprus Police. EuroCOP are currently represented in Cyprus by our Head of Office/Secretary General, Mr Nigel Dennis, who has engaged with the Cyprus Police Trade Union ISOTHTA amid ongoing and escalating industrial relations tensions with the Chief of Police.

These discussions have confirmed a profound breakdown of social dialogue, characterised by a refusal to engage in meaningful negotiations, the absence of responses to formal correspondence and reported threats directed at union members. Such behaviour is wholly unacceptable and fundamentally incompatible with European norms of industrial relations. This situation is particularly alarming given that Cyprus currently holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

At a time when the Presidency is expected to exemplify the Union's core values, the denial of effective social dialogue within a key public service undermines the credibility of the EU's commitment to social rights and the rule of law. We recall that the right of workers and their

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organisations to negotiate and to engage in collective action is enshrined in Article 28 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Furthermore, the European Pillar of Social Rights, notably Principle 8, commits Member States to the promotion of social dialogue and collective bargaining.

These principles are reinforced by Directive (EU) 2022/2041 on adequate minimum wages, which in Article 4 places a clear obligation on Member States to promote and support collective bargaining in practice. Similar guarantees are reflected in Article 6 of the European Social Charter.

The current situation in Cyprus raises serious questions as to the effective implementation of these commitments. The refusal of the Chief of Police to engage with the recognised police trade union, coupled with the lack of intervention by the Cypriot government, represents a failure of leadership and governance that risks eroding trust within the police service. The gravity of the situation was made evident on 21st January, when Cypriot police officers held a rare public protest outside Parliament. Such demonstrations by police officers are highly unusual in Europe and signal deep institutional distress. A sustained breakdown in relations between police management and staff representatives not only violates social rights but may also have consequences for morale, operational effectiveness, and ultimately public safety.

We also wish to underline a symbolic but important reality: the very police officers who will be responsible for ensuring the safety and security of European leaders, Commissioners, and delegations during meetings linked to the Cypriot Presidency are themselves working under conditions marked by intimidation and the absence of genuine social dialogue. We believe it is important that EU leadership is fully aware of this contradiction. EuroCOP stands firmly in support of the Cyprus Police Trade Union and respectfully calls for urgent steps to encourage the Cypriot authorities to restore meaningful, good-faith social dialogue in line with European standards.



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We will continue to monitor developments closely and to raise this matter at European level in the weeks and months ahead. We would welcome your attention to this issue and any action within your respective mandates that may help ensure respect for fundamental social rights and constructive industrial relations in Cyprus.

We remain at your disposal should you request further background information about this ongoing issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N. Dennis". The "N" is large and stylized, with a small "C" to its left. "Dennis" is written in a smaller, cursive font to the right of the "N".

Nigel Dennis  
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European Confederation of Police

Copy

General Secretary European Trade Union Confederation: Esther Lynch.