



Zero CO2 emissions target for Palace

By Sarah Ktisti and Stefanos Evripidou

CYPRUS' SEAT of government will slash its CO2 emissions to zero within a year, setting an example for others to cut down on pollution belched into the atmosphere, officials said yesterday.

The Presidential Palace, an imposing limestone building in the centre of the capital, is expected to become CO2 free within a year.

The initiative will use concentrated solar energy to power the daily needs of the building and its occupants.

"It will set an example to the rest of Cypriot society for the development of a social and environmental conscience," said Titos Christofides, under-secretary to President Demetris Christofias.

The complex, which still bears a British coat of arms over its entrance, was once the home of the British colonial governor until handed over after Cyprus gained independence in 1960. The present structure replaced a wooden one destroyed in a 1931 insurgency.

"The fact that the Presidential Palace is an older building, the materials used actually help our endeav-

ours," said Loukas Kalisperis, a professor at the Cyprus Institute, a local research organisation.

The Institute hopes to flag the Palace as a model Green Building after installing renewable energy sources which will transform it into a 'zero energy' and 'zero emissions' building.

"The Institute, recognising the urgent need for meas-

ures to improve the environmental design of residential areas in Cyprus, has begun active research in the field of structured built environments," said Institute President Professor Costas Papanicolas.

"The initiative for the 'Green Presidential Palace' assigned to us by the President, honours us and gives us enormous responsibilities.

"The symbolism of the project will have a global impact," he added.

A group of specialists could be seen carrying out a series of thermal and atmospheric pollution measurements yesterday at the Palace to determine the potential of transforming the central administrative building of the

Republic of Cyprus into a model environment-friendly state building.

TESTS

The tests are being carried out by the Cyprus Institute in cooperation with the University of Athens, with the use of a mobile measurement station, equipped with state-of-the-art instruments. Christofides said the initiative was undertaken after a decision by Christofias, in cooperation with the Cyprus Institute.

The exercise aims at sending a clear message to the private and broader public sector to take practical measures to minimise energy loss.

The government message couldn't be more timely following the recent hikes in electricity prices after the Electricity Authority had to dish out €10 million to the EU for exceeding the CO2 emission quota.

Christofides said efforts on the Palace were focusing on solar energy, since no other renewable energy sources were available in the area, adding that, if the system

proves to be cost-effective, then it may be implemented by the end of 2009 or beginning of 2010.

The Palace which is a complex of offices has a residential quarter, although Christofias and his wife do not live there.

Meanwhile, scientists also carried out a series of tests in Eleftheria Square, the heart of the capital, which acts as a bridge between the old town and its newer relatives outside the walls.

With the support of Nicosia Mayor Eleni Mavrou, the Institute has begun measurements on temperature structures in Nicosia.

The study will lead to proposed measures to address and mitigate the negative impact of thermal islets.

The Cyprus Institute is a public research and educational institution with a scientific and technological orientation.

Through its own work and in collaboration with international research centres of excellence, the Institute seeks to examine and provide solutions to problems of immediate interest to the Eastern Mediterranean and of global importance.