**ADDRESS BY THE CHIEF OF POLICE,**

**Mr. ZACHARIAS CHRYSOSTOMOU**

**AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP ON “COMMUNITY POLICING”,**

**Atlantica Miramare Beach Hotel**

**Limassol, 06 October, 2017 at 0900**

Representative of the Limassol Mayor,

Divisional Commander of SBA Police – Episkopi,

President of the IPA-Cyprus,

Dear Delegates-Members of the IPA from Greece, Israel, Italy, Romania and Poland,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very honoured and very pleased to welcome you all, delegates-members of the International Police Association, to Cyprus and the coastal town of Limassol, for the IPA’ s Workshop on “Community Policing”.

I would like to thank you for attending this important event held by the world’s largest organization for police officers. Please allow me to thank our distinguished speakers and experts who, through their expertise and specialization, will maintain the interest of the audience, convey their knowledge, as well as foster a constructive and fruitful dialogue. Congratulations must be also given to the Cyprus Section of the IPA, for the organization of this Workshop that focuses on a highly important subject.

At the initial stages of this brief address, allow me to focus on the IPA’s motto of “Service through Friendship”, that has enabled it to grow to a membership of 450,000 members… in 65 countries and exert its influence worldwide. The fact that the IPA makes no distinction as to rank, sex, race, colour or religion, but hasfriendship as its guiding principle, has greatly contributed to the development of an organization that fulfils a most important role with regards to the establishment and strengthening of friendly links and cooperation among individual police officers and law enforcement agencies worldwide. The numerous activities that the organization undertakes, be they social, cultural or professional, are indeed of great benefit to its members, their families but also to the various police organizations operating around the world. Undoubtedly, the remarkable work accomplished by the organization has positive effects on societies in all countries in which the organization is active.

The founder of the IPA, Arthur Troop was certainly a truly inspired man and a pioneer of his time, to envision and undertake the great, ambitious and noble task of establishing a World Friendship Organisation for police officers in 1950, shortly after the Second World War. It was an era, during which Europe and the whole world struggled to heal wounds and make a new start, based on the ultimate principles of peaceful coexistence and cooperation among people and countries. His basic philosophy that sincere human relations, solidarity, mutual understanding, cooperation and a common confrontation of problems can transcend political, religious and other types of controversy and division, was not only an essential sign of hope for the time, but also for our current period as well.

Today, Europe and the world in general, are once more at a critical point. Socioeconomic problems have intensified, political turmoil has led to large-scale destruction in various parts of the world and specific types of crime have increased, while new ones have emerged. In this context, the demands on law enforcement organizations and the police in particular, have increased greatly. Terrorist attacks throughout the world unfortunately, continue to threaten public safety and security. Police work is thus now more demanding, physically but also mentally with police officers having to confront great challenges and numerous difficulties.

In view of this, we are making concerted efforts so that Cyprus Police becomes a modern, efficient and effective police organization, able to always provide high quality of service to the public, as well as a healthy work environment for its members to execute their duties effectively and efficiently. In order to fulfill our vision, we have been implementing a specific model of policing, one which is based on Community Policing and encompasses a number of policing methods and approaches such as neighbourhood watch, intelligence-led policing, hot spot policing and in part, technology assisted policing or as is commonly referred to “smart policing”.

In implementing the model of Community Policing, we have adopted a people-centered approach, according to which the traditional principle of the ‘police working for the public’ evolves and changes into the Police ‘working together with the public’, with the support of citizens.

Cyprus Police, particularly in recent years, has been making steady progress towards implementing and taking advantage of the above-mentioned methods and approaches to policing. Specifically, it has been acquiring advanced technological equipment and it has strengthened, in terms of personnel numbers, neighbourhood policing-although not to the degree that we would have liked, as we have been restricted by the drastic reduction in police members, resulting from the recent economic crisis and the freeze on recruitments. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that crime mapping is at its final stages. Additionally, Neighbourhood Watch has been extended to new areas: it now operates in 29 municipalities and 244 rural communities and involves the participation of 88000 volunteers, in comparison to only 13,000 participants which was the case three years ago. The drastic increase during this rather short period is largely due to the great importance that we assign to Community Policing and its fundamental principles. Undoubtedly, Cyprus is among the countries with the highest percentages of neighbourhood watchers. We are thus very pleased to report a 30% reduction in serious and minor crime over the recent three years, as well as an improvement in the relations between the police and the public and enhancement of the cooperation between them.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The IPA’s existence and the values and ideals of friendship, mutual respect and peace that are promoted through its activities are indeed very supportive for police officers in the difficult work they are called upon to accomplish. Officers in different settings and circumstances around the world are able to obtain a vigour that enables them to carry out their duties more efficiently and confront modern challenges more effectively. This IPA workshop that is about to begin is indeed an important activity, as it will give participants the opportunity to exchange ideas, discover novel opportunities, reacquaint with colleagues and expand their knowledge.

Before closing my address, I would like to wish our IPA colleagues attending this event, a very pleasant stay on our island, as well as every success with the fulfillment of the aims of this Workshop.

Thank you.