



ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΕΘΝΙΚΗ ΠΑΡΑΟΛΥΜΠΙΑΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ (Κ.Ε.Π.Ε)
CYPRUS NATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE (C.N.P.C)

03 February 2026

To the competent authorities of the European Parliament

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

Subject: Official Condemnation and Request for Institutional Review – Discriminatory Remarks by MEP

The **Cyprus National Paralympic Committee** hereby formally addresses the competent institutional authorities of the European Parliament to **officially condemn** public remarks made by Member of the European Parliament **Mr. Fidias Panayiotou**, which constitute a serious violation of the dignity and rights of persons with intellectual disabilities and stand in direct contradiction to the fundamental values of the European Union.

During a publicly broadcast podcast, Mr. Panayiotou used the term **“peloi” (a very insulting word in Greek - Cypriot Language meaning crazy)** when referring to persons with intellectual disabilities. The use of this term is unequivocally **derogatory, stigmatizing, and offensive**, and cannot be interpreted as a linguistic slip, humour, or momentary lapse of judgment. It represents a form of verbal violence that reinforces discrimination, social exclusion, and ableist stereotypes.

When such language is used by an **elected Member of the European Parliament**, the issue transcends personal opinion and becomes **a matter of institutional responsibility and democratic accountability**. The public discourse of elected representatives must uphold, not undermine, the principles upon which the European Union is founded.

We recall that the European Union is firmly grounded in the values of **human dignity, equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion**, as enshrined in the **Treaty on European Union**, the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**, and the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**, which the EU has ratified and is legally bound to uphold.

In this context, the Cyprus National Paralympic Committee formally requests the **institutional examination of this incident** by the relevant bodies and committees of the European Parliament, including those responsible for ethics, equality, and the conduct of Members. We further request that the public statements of the said MEP be assessed within the established mechanisms of accountability applicable to elected representatives of the Union.



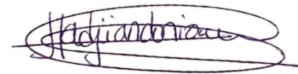
The Cyprus National Paralympic Committee makes it unequivocally clear that an apology, while expected, does not exhaust the gravity of this matter, nor does it negate the need for institutional scrutiny. Respect for persons with disabilities is not optional, symbolic, or conditional. It is a **binding ethical, legal, and political obligation**.

We will continue to stand firmly against all forms of verbal abuse, stigmatization, and discrimination targeting persons with disabilities, and to defend the integrity of the Paralympic Movement at both national and European level.

Best Regards,



Andreas Georgiou
President



Marianna Hadjiandoniou
General Secretary

