

Inter-communal workshops have an interactive management approach. The workshops first define an interactive vision of the future. In a brainstorming session the participants think about the benefits of a common future. This increases the willingness and desire for this goal. Second, obstacles preventing a common future are identified and ranked. Politicians would be wise to heed the results of these workshops, he said.

While the inter-communal talks, led by the UN, bring the leaders of the two communities together for a short while during the negotiation, they do not sustain the contact. After the negotiations are concluded, the leaders move away. Among the highest ranking obstacles identified by the participants of inter-communal workshops led by Yannis Laouris has been communication. **People should have the right to speak to each other any time they wish. Canada and other countries may be able to assist the Cypriots to meet each other on a sustained basis. Personal connections and friendships are much harder to break.**

Technology is an excellent tool in bridging the divide. The Internet is used to exchange and disseminate information about people on both sides engaged in inter-communal meetings. The result of meetings should be also widely publicised.

In conclusion, Yannis Laouris drew attention to the changing nature of governance due to technology and increasingly liberalised economic systems world wide. Civil society can be empowered through the use of technology to make decisions for itself. Governance is no longer the domain of isolated elites.

Cyberspace and Internet provide an efficient, fast, traceable, confidential, organised, time and space independent means of communication. As individuals and organizations throughout the world continue to have conflicts, the Internet can overcome the challenge posed by physical separation, whether due to geographic, political, or other reasons, by effectively moving discourse into cyberspace.

*Technology for Peace*

### **Comment and Discussion**

A point was made that water and technology could be used as both, a unifying and a dividing force. It is impossible to discuss these elements in a vacuum, disassociating them from the legal and the political framework. An opinion was expressed that it is unlikely that water or technology could achieve anything in and of themselves.

Others said that in order to use technology for rapprochement, there has to be a reason to communicate, which currently does not exist.

Still, a plea was made for disseminating the positive stories from the past, when Greek and Turkish Cypriots lived together. The need to show the young people, especially, that there is another story. Civil society in Cyprus requires encouragement and empowerment to be able to continue inter-communal contacts. Until very recently those who wished to reach out to the other side were labelled as traitors.