

**Excellency, Mr Mayor, Permanent Secretary,
Distinguished Guests, Dear Friends,**

We have just witness a special ceremony, that of a Twinning between two BPW Clubs. To conclude the event, we will pay tribute to the organizers by participating in a special candle lighting ceremony.

The Association of Business and Professional Women was founded in the United States of America by Dr Lena Madessin Phillips more than 80 years ago. She conceived of the idea of the Candle Lighting Ceremony to evoke historical memories of the hardship and prejudices that women have overcome and to celebrate the many accomplishments and achievements of women today.

**The candles symbolise the ambitions and endeavours of dedicated women around the world. They stand as a beacon, encouraging us to use our abilities and strengths to attain our goals and objectives;
to advance our education and stimulate our careers,
not to be afraid to involve ourselves in politics or economics,
to take responsibility for our community and to work towards equal opportunities for women in all fields.**

The tallest candle represent the International Federation, who's embracing light reflects on all Business and Professional Women around the world

I call upon Mrs Gabriella Canonica, former First Vice President of BPW International, to light the tallest candle

We ask Mrs Kikoula Kostapa, to light the White candle representing the Cyprus Federation of Business and Professional Women

As the hosts of this evening's ceremony and initiator of the twinning idea, we call upon the President of BPW Nicosia, Mrs Mary Papadopoulou, to light the next candle

Ms Georgia Bross, will light the candle representing BPW Basel

The Blue Candle symbolises a country, in this case, Greece. We are honoured to have with us, the President of BPW Athens Mrs Ioanna Lagoumidou whom we call upon to light the blue candle

The last candle is the Green candle of the Future. It symbolises our hope for a better and brighter future and reaffirms our goals to encourage women to move forward boldly, and with enthusiasm, strive to bring about a just and fair society

We call upon the President of Young BPW Natalie Antoniadou to light this candle

This concludes the candle lighting ceremony. Lets take the opportunity to raise our glasses and drink a toast to the successful and fruitful twinning of Aphrodite with Elvetia