

## **Antonis CONSTANTINOU**

Mr Antonis Constantinou is presently Director of Directorate F in the Directorate General of Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission, responsible for the rural development programmes in 13 member states of the EU (negotiation, approval, financial management, monitoring and evaluation of programmes). He was appointed to this post on 15 July 2005.

He was born in Cyprus in 1947 and before joining the Commission he served for 8 years as the Director and for another 5 years as the Deputy Director of the Cyprus Department of Agriculture an organisation with 400 employees.

Mr Constantinou holds a Diploma in Agriculture and a Doctorate in Agricultural Sciences from Giessen University in Germany, a post-graduate diploma on animal breeding and genetics from Edinburgh University in the UK and a Masters degree in public sector management from the Cyprus International Institute of Management. He speaks fluently Greek, English and German and has an advanced knowledge of French.

Mr Constantinou occupied himself for over 30 years with agricultural and rural development issues and projects, mostly in his home country but also in several other countries where he worked as a consultant for the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in Rome.

In the 80s, Mr Constantinou was actively involved in agricultural research and published a good number of original research papers. He also served for six years as member of the Editorial and Advisory Board of the "Small Ruminant Research Journal", published by Elseviers Science Publishers in Amsterdam.

Since 1992 he has been the leading actor and negotiator of his country on issues related to agriculture. He participated in the WTO negotiations on agriculture starting from the Uruguay Round in the early 1990s and was present at all major events and conferences, including Seattle, Doha and Cancun and all the so-called non-trade concerns conferences.

Between 1998 and 2003 he was leading the accession negotiations of Cyprus with the EU on agriculture. As Director of Agriculture and Chairman of a number of Statutory Boards, he supervised the transposition of the community acquis into national legislation and managed the preparation and implementation of his country's Rural Development Programme co-financed by the EU. After accession he was representing Cyprus in the Special Committee on Agriculture.

He joined the European Commission in July 2005.