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#### Underwater archaeological survey of the shipwreck at Mazotos 06/06/2008

The Department of Antiquities announces the completion of the second underwater survey of the shipwreck at Mazotos, carried out by the Research Unit of Archaeology (Department of History and Archaeology) University of Cyprus, in accordance with an agreement signed between the Research Unit of Archaeology and the Department of Antiquities in October 2007.

The ship was commercial and was sunk at about the mid-fourth century B.C. It lies at a depth of 45m in the area of the village Mazotos, about 2.5km from the shore. The ship was carrying the renowned red wine of Chios, perhaps the most expensive Greek wine of the Classical period, within amphorae, the vessels used exclusively for the sea transport of wine. About 500 amphorae are now visible on the surface but there may be many more buried below the sand. Apart from the Chian amphorae, which form the overwhelming majority, there are also other types from islands of the North Aegean. During the second season of survey which lasted from 20-31 May 2008, the shipwreck was photographed and drawn and a small sample of the various types of amphora was salvaged for the purposes of study and further research. Conservation of the amphorae has already begun in the Larnaca Museum, under the supervision of the conservator of the Cyprus Museum Laboratory Mr Christos Christofides. The marine biodiversity of the area of the shipwreck is also under study by Dr. Stavros Kaniklides, President of the Scientific Committee of the Cyprus Organisation of Underwater Activities.

The above research is of great importance to the nautical and economic history of the Eastern Mediterranean because the shipwreck of Mazotos is one of few finds dating to the Classical period in the Eastern Mediterranean and in addition its state of preservation is excellent. The results of this study will shed light on many problems of nautical and economic history which concern not only the Cypriot but also the international archaeological research, namely the commercial relations between the North Aegean and the south-eastern Mediterranean, the role of Cyprus in the trade routes in the final phases of the Cypriot Kingdoms, the manner in which sea trade was organised, the types and sizes of commercial ships of the period etc.

Another important aspect is that this project is the first marine archaeology research carried out in Cyprus exclusively by Cypriot institutions. The project was directed by Dr. Stella Demesticha, Visiting Lecturer of Underwater Archaeology, Department of History and Archaeology, in co-operation with Prof. Demetris Michaelides, Director of the Research Unit of Archaeology, University of Cyprus. Members of the team were specialists from Greece, members of the Institute of Underwater Research as well as volunteer-divers from Cyprus. In addition, other members of the team were Fotine Vlachaki (Architect), Marcos Garras (physicist), Xanthi Argiri and Niove Karapetsis (marine archaeologists), all from Greece. Most important to the success of the project was the participation of the divers Andreas Troullides, Giorgos Troullides, Christos Patsalides, Costas Andreou, Pantelis Themistokleous, Yiangos Hadjiyiannis, Gregoris Savvides, Antonis Neofytou, Tasos Kyriakides, Michalis Andreou and Polyvios Savva.

The sponsors of the research were the Thetis Foundation and the Cyprus Tourism Organisation. The contribution of Christos Mouskis and the Cyprus Ports Authority was invaluable for the resolution of major practical issues. The equipment/ vessel utilised were loaned, without cost, by the Thetis Foundation and speed-boats were loaned by Yiangos Hadjiyiannis, Grigoris Savvides and Xenophon Kyriakides.