

THE CYPRUS ISSUE: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

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BACKGROUND

Outside powers have determined Cyprus's fate throughout its history. Because of its location, it has attracted the attention of the powerful ancient states that set up civilisations in this region.

The first group of settlers reached the island in the fourth millennium BC. By 1200 BC the Greeks had founded colonies and some 200 years later the Phoenicians followed. Other conquerors included the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Persians and Alexander the Great. In the first century BC, the Romans conquered Cyprus.

When the Roman Empire was divided finally into two parts in 395 AD, Cyprus became part of the Eastern Empire, and so a province of Byzantium. From the seventh century onwards the island was a battleground between Byzantine and Arab forces.

Richard I of England conquered the island during the Third Crusade of 1189-1192, and later sold it to Guy de Lusignan. Guy assumed the title of king in 1196 and his successors ruled as independent sovereigns until the fifteenth century. Good relations were maintained with Venice and Genoa, and both established colonies in the island, which was of great strategic importance for the commercial empires of the two cities. After 1473, the predominant influence of Genoa gave way to that of Venice.

In 1571, the Ottoman Empire conquered Cyprus and the first Ottoman settlers embarked for the island. Therefore, the Turks of Cyprus have inhabited the island for over four hundred years. The Ottomans ruled the island under the "millet system" where all individuals were classified according to religion. The island was under the rule of the Ottomans until 1878.

At the Congress of Berlin in 1878, the British Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, gained for Britain the administration, though not the sovereignty, of Cyprus in return for his part in

settling the 'Eastern Question' after the flare-up of the Russo-Ottoman War in the previous year.¹

During World War I, Cyprus was unilaterally invaded by Great Britain. The Republic of Turkey recognized Britain's annexation of the island in accordance with Article 19 of the Lausanne Peace Treaty. The island was colonized by Great Britain after the 1923 Lausanne Conference and it became a Crown Colony of Great Britain in 1925. Cyprus remained a British colony until 1960.

Between 1923 and 1929, there was intensive migration from the island to Turkey.

Since the late nineteenth century, there had been a movement for union with Greece (enosis), although the island had never been under Greek sovereignty.²

In 1950, Archbishop Makarios, the patriarch and leader of the Greek people, arranged a clandestine plebiscite in favour of union with Greece. The Greek government referred the matter to the United Nations.

Archbishop Makarios founded the underground terrorist organization, EOKA on 1 April 1955, under the Greek Orthodox Church.

In April 1955, the Greek EOKA terrorist campaign started under the leadership of General Georgios Grivas.

From 1950, the Turkish government favoured of the maintenance of the status quo in Cyprus and it supported Great Britain's policy.

Since 1954 the Cyprus issue has become one of the main issues of the Turkish foreign policy. In 1954 the Cyprus problem was brought for the first time before the UN General Assembly by the Greek Government as an international conflict.

In 1958, the Macmillan Plan, named after the then British Prime Minister, was announced. It proposed a partnership between the two communities in the island and between the

governments of the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey. Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots accepted this plan, but the Greek Cypriots declared it unacceptable.

The Turkish and Greek Foreign Ministers, Fatih Rüştü Zorlu and Evangelos Averoff, agreed, with the persuasion of Britain, to meet and discuss the Cyprus problem. Consequently, the governments of Turkey and Greece met at a conference held in February 1959 in Zurich.

It was agreed at the Zurich Conference that an independent Cyprus, with Turkey and Greece's protection, should be created. The Conference produced agreement on a set of principles for the construction of a bi-communal, federal state, save that there was very little physical separation of the two participating communities.

On the same day, Zorlu and Averoff consulted the UK Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, agreeing that certain areas of Cyprus should be retained under UK sovereignty.

Then, on 17 February 1959, the London Conference was started with the presence of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Greece and the UK, and the leaders of the two Cypriot communities.

THE ZURICH AGREEMENTS AND ITS AFTERMATH

The Prime Ministers of Britain, Turkey and Greece signed the Zurich Agreements on 19 February 1959. These agreements included texts for:

- A. The Basic Structure of the Republic of Cyprus
- B. The Treaty of Guarantee concluded among the Republic of Cyprus, Turkey, Greece and the United Kingdom
- C. The Treaty of Alliance concluded among the Republic of Cyprus, Turkey and Greece.

On 16 August 1960, Cyprus became an independent sovereign republic. Archbishop Makarios became the President and Dr Fazıl Küçük from the Turkish Cypriot community became the

Vice-President of the Republic –the Greek Cypriot community having elected the President and the Turkish Cypriot community the Vice-President.

The Greek Cypriots increasingly protested against Turkish Cypriot participation in government, even though the constitution determined this participation. The two sides could not agree on setting up the army or the establishment of separate municipalities. The Turkish Cypriots insisted on the implementation of those constitutional provisions relating to job apportionment according to the ratio of 70:30 (70 per cent for Greek Cypriots and 30 per cent for Turkish Cypriots), and the establishment of separate Greek and Turkish municipalities and town councils.

On November 30, 1963, President Makarios officially proposed amending the Constitution. In the event of Makarios getting the thirteen amendments he sought, the equality of the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities would have been abolished. When Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots rejected these amendments, the Turkish Cypriots were ejected, by force of arms, from all the organs of the state and the bi-communal character of the Republic was destroyed.

On 21 December 1963, the Greek Cypriots launched their plan, called Akritas, aimed at exterminating the Turkish Cypriots from the island and uniting with Greece.

On 25 December 1963, the Turkish jets flew over the island.

The Greek Cypriots use of force caused the division of the island, as the Green Line dividing Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot enclaves in Lefkoşa symbolised. The UN Security Council, with Resolution No. 186, sent peacekeepers, the United Nations Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP), in 1964. Since then the UNFICYP mandate has been extended every six months.

On 13 March 1964, the Turkish Government sent a message to Makarios warning him that if the aggressions against the Turkish Cypriot people did not stop, Turkey would intervene to protect the rights and the security of the Turkish Cypriots.

US President Lyndon Johnson sent a letter to the Turkish Prime Minister, İsmet İnönü, on 6 June 1964, stating that the US would not approve of the use of any military weapon the US provided in any intervention Turkey might make in Cyprus. In other words, Turkey should not unilaterally intervene in Cyprus without prior consultation with the USA. The Johnson letter constituted a turning point in Turkish foreign policy because from then onwards Turkey began to pursue a multilateral foreign policy rather than a pro-Western one.

FROM 1967 TO 1974

On 21 April 1967, a group of colonels seized power in Athens and established a military dictatorship. This dramatic political development greatly complicated the relationship between the Greek and Greek Cypriot governments. Makarios was faced with a Greek government with which he was ideologically out-of-step. He loathed the Junta's authoritarianism and rigid anti-communism.

The military leaders of Greece believed in enosis. However, they became increasingly impatient with Makarios' unyielding attitude. Georgios Grivas was the only person through whom the Greek colonels could exercise any control over Makarios. Thus, they gave him carte blanche to continue his campaign of intimidation and aggression against the Turkish Cypriot enclaves.

By 1967, the forces of Grivas were stronger than ever in Cyprus. Although the 1960 Treaty of Alliance limited the number of Greek troops on the island to 950, as many as 20,000 of them had infiltrated into Cyprus.³ In addition, there was the Greek-officered National Guard, which comprised 10,000 active soldiers and 20,000 reserves. As a step towards achieving enosis, Grivas had done his best to transform the National Guard into a purely Greek force.

During 1967, there was a considerable rise in the number of individual Greek Cypriot villagers' terrorist acts against their Turkish Cypriot neighbours.

Grivas unleashed a well-planned attack upon the Turkish Cypriot quarter of Boğaziçi, as well as upon the neighbouring all-Turkish Cypriot village of Geçitkale. All the Turkish Cypriot positions were overrun. The capture of these two Turkish Cypriot villages had strategic significance, effectively cutting off the Turkish Cypriots in the south of the island from those in the north.

On the morning of 16 November 1967, the Turkish government warned that it would intervene militarily if the shooting continued. At this point, President Johnson once more intervened in the Cyprus conflict. On 22 November, he dispatched Cyrus Vance as his special envoy with instructions to negotiate a settlement. Vance convinced the governments of Greece and Turkey to accept a compromise solution.

As a result of the US intervention, Grivas was dismissed. Greece withdrew its forces from the island. However, the National Guard was not disbanded. Makarios was strengthened by the departure of his chief rival for power, Grivas. But his chances of ever again presiding over a unified, bi-communal government had become much more remote, for the Turkish Cypriots had been forced to form their own separate administration.

Thus, on 28 December 1967, a Provisional Turkish Cypriot Administration (Geçici Kıbrıs Türk Yönetimi) was established. With the formation of the Provisional Turkish Cypriot Administration, the separation between the two communities became complete. Hence, the Turkish armed intervention in 1974 did not cause the division of Cyprus into two ethnically homogeneous, self-governing states, as is commonly believed; Makarios and Grivas achieved it in the 1960s.

THE 1974 PEACE OPERATION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS

On 15 July 1974, the Greek Cypriot National Guard, under the direct control of Greek officers, enacted a coup d'état against Makarios. The principal reason behind this coup was the union of Cyprus with Greece. Nicos Samson was declared the new president of the so-called Republic of Cyprus. Makarios fled to London.

The Turkish armed forces landed in Cyprus on 20 July 1974 to save the lives of the Turkish Cypriots. Turkey's intervention, which the Turkish Cypriots call a 'peace operation', was legal according to Article IV of the Treaty of Guarantee.

The UN Security Council responded by passing a resolution, No. 353, which stated that foreign intervention in Cyprus should cease immediately and that all foreign military personnel should promptly withdraw from the island.

On 30 July 1974, the foreign ministers of the guarantor states issued the Geneva Declaration and agreed upon the reestablishment of constitutional government in Cyprus. Turkey supported the idea of a federation at this conference.

The Greek Cypriot side did not abide by the agreement and continued to attack the Turkish Cypriot people. Thus, the then Premier of Turkey, Bülent Ecevit, launched a second peace operation on Cyprus on 14 August 1974. The aim was to put an end to the Turkish Cypriots' sufferings.

In December 1974, Makarios returned to Cyprus and became the President once again.

On 13 February 1975, the Turkish Cypriot leaders declared the establishment of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus.

As a result of inter-communal talks that held in Vienna in August 1975, it was agreed that the Turkish Cypriots should settle in the northern part of the island and the Greek Cypriots should settle in the south. This is the first time that the island was divided into two distinct ethnic zones – north and south.

On 12 February 1977, the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş, and Makarios signed the High-Level Agreement and agreed upon the establishment of a bi-communal federal republic in Cyprus.

In 1977, Makarios died and in 1978, Spyros Kyprianou became the new President of the Greek Cypriot administration in the south.

In May 1979, Denktaş and Kyprianou signed the second High-Level Agreement ('Ten Point Agreement'). This was the reiteration of the Denktaş-Makarios Agreement of 1977. The parties agreed that territorial and constitutional issues would be taken up in the negotiations, that the island should be freed of all foreign military personnel and that partition or annexation of Cyprus should not be considered at any cost.

Between 1980 and 1983, the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities continued to negotiate. However, talks between Denktaş and Kyprianou failed due to the latter's refusal to accept the Turkish Cypriot side as an equal.

Until 1983, the Cyprus issue was a permanent item on the agenda of the UN but no solution was found.

On 15 November 1983, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was founded and Denktaş became the President of this new state. The TRNC was based on the reestablishment of a federation that would be dependent on the partnership of two equal communities on the island.

On 18 November 1983, the UN Security Council, in Resolution No. 541, declared that the foundation of the TRNC was incompatible with the 1960 Treaties and was, for that reason, not legal.

1992 'SET OF IDEAS'

In June 1992, the UN Secretary-General, Boutros-Boutros Ghali, invited the leaders of the two communities to discuss a 'Set of Ideas' for an overall framework agreement on Cyprus.

This framework agreement was based on the 1977 and the 1979 High-Level Agreements. This agreement recognised that Cyprus was the common home of the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities and that their relationship was not one of majority and minority, but of two politically equal communities in a federal republic of Cyprus. It safeguarded the cultural, religious, political, social and linguistic identity of each community.

The overall framework agreement acknowledged and ensured the political equality of the two communities. The Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities would establish the bi-communal and bi-zonal federation freely. All powers not vested by them in the federal government would rest with the two federated states. The federal republic would be one territory composed of two politically equal federated states. The federal republic would have one sovereignty which was indivisible and which emanated equally from the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. One community could not claim sovereignty over the other community. The federal republic would have one international personality and one citizenship.

The main issues that were discussed in the Ghali Report were the constitutional aspects of the federation; security and guarantee; territorial adjustments and displaced persons.

The Turkish Cypriots had already offered territorial adjustments (Denktaş had accepted a settlement involving 29 per cent or so of the island's territory), troop reductions, compensation for lost property, a range of confidence-building measures and a new bi-zonal, bi-communal political structure with joint institutions. However, the Greek Cypriot side has consistently rejected a settlement on these terms, claiming that every Greek Cypriot had a right of access to the North and to have physically restored to him any property which he owned in the North on 20 July 1974. This would, however, unravel the Exchange of Populations Agreement made between the two peoples in 1975.

The insistence of the Greek Cypriot administration on a return to the North and restitution of property would in effect repopulate the North with Greek Cypriots and could eventually allow them to establish their domination over the whole island. Similarly, the Greek Cypriots' desire for a unitary state or at least a federation with strong central powers raises fears that they could eventually assert control.

Unless international pressure is placed on them, Greek Cypriot leaders will never agree to a solution based on equality and their church will never allow them to agree to a settlement which excludes forever the possibility of turning Cyprus into a Greek island.

PROXIMITY TALKS

In February 1993, the two leaders, Denktaş and Glafcos Clerides, started proximity talks on the implementation of the confidence-building measures. These measures included the opening of Varosha (Maraş) under UN administration as a kind of free trade zone for both sides and the opening of Nicosia International Airport under UN administration. However, these talks failed.

For almost three years, Clerides refused to negotiate with the Turkish Cypriot side claiming that there was no common ground. The UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, invited the two leaders to face-to-face talks. Thereupon, a series of talks were held in Troutbeck, New York, between 9 and 13 July 1997 and then in Glion, Switzerland, between 11 and 16 August 1997. However, the talks ended without substantive progress.

The Turkish Cypriots and Turkey signed an agreement to establish an Association Council on 6 August 1997. The two parties underlined that the negotiation process should be based on the political and sovereign equality of the two sides in Cyprus, and stressed that the Turkish-Greek balance established by the 1960 international treaties should be safeguarded.

The first round of the proximity talks between Denktaş and Clerides was held in New York 3-14 December 1999 under the auspices of Kofi Annan and his Special Advisor for Cyprus, Alvaro de Soto. The aim of the talks was to prepare the ground for comprehensive face-to-face negotiations to reach a lasting solution in the island.

At the talks, the Turkish Cypriot side proposed the formation of a confederation.⁴ Furthermore, the "core issues" –security, distribution of powers, the exchange of property,

territory and the Turkish Cypriot side's issues of equal status, a security guarantee, the lifting of the embargoes and EU membership– were discussed.

The second round of proximity talks was held under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General between 31 January- 10 February 2000 in Geneva. The primary issues for the Turkish Cypriot side were confederation and acknowledgement of sovereignty rights in the TRNC, whereas the Greek Cypriot side's primary issues were territory and drawing up a map. Clerides stated that it was not possible to accept the confederation proposal.

There remained a huge difference between the two sides' will for a solution in Cyprus. One side insisted on two states while the other on two communities.

The third round of proximity talks was held in Geneva between 5 and 12 July 2000 and between 24 July and 4 August 2000. The Turkish Cypriot side put Denktaş's confederation proposal on the negotiating table. At the end of the talks, nothing substantial was achieved.

President Rauf Denktaş announced on 24 November 2000 that the Turkish Cypriot side would not continue the talks unless the parameters of "state-to-state talks" were accepted through the acknowledgement of the TRNC and recognition that the Greek Cypriots were not the government of the Turkish Cypriots or the whole of Cyprus, and that they did not represent the Turkish Cypriots or the whole of the island.

President Denktaş announced that the proximity talks had deviated from their declared objective and continuing the proximity talks without Turkish Cypriot parameters having been accepted was harming Turkish Cypriot interests. He further stated that the Turkish Cypriot party would only sit at the table once the its parameters were accepted. Turkey expressed its full support for the TRNC decision.

The proximity talks, which had started with the UN Secretary-General's 14 November 1999 statement aimed at preparing the ground for meaningful negotiations leading to a comprehensive settlement, came to a halt in November 2000.

FACE-TO-FACE TALKS

President Denktaş invited the Greek Cypriot leader to direct talks with him in Cyprus. He did this informally in September 2001, and confirmed the invitation by letter on 8 November.

On 5 December 2001, the Greek Cypriot leader Clerides, crossed over to the TRNC to attend a dinner hosted by President Denktaş. In reciprocation, Clerides invited Denktaş to his private home in southern Lefkoşa for dinner on 29 December 2001.

Face-to-face talks started on 11 January 2002. The two leaders have met for a series of talks in the presence of the UN Special Envoy in Cyprus, Alvaro de Soto, and they have agreed to meet for a pattern of meetings on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings, these meetings being closed to the press.

It has now become clear that President Denktaş was right to initiate new direct talks outside the old UN process and there is now a much more positive atmosphere. The international community's acceptance of the Greek Cypriot administration as the government of Cyprus, a status to which they have no legal or moral right, has long placed Denktaş in an impossible position.

The Greek Cypriots, using their unjustified governmental status, occupy the Republic of Cyprus chair at all international institutions and they have lobbied hard in the EU, especially in the European Parliament. The Greek Cypriots control all the Republic of Cyprus embassies and they deny the Turkish Cypriots an official voice in the world.

The European institutions and the UN as a whole have listened for nearly forty years to only the Greek Cypriot side of the case, argued by Greece and the Greek Cypriots themselves, and have excluded the Turkish Cypriots from almost all official and social contact. They have accordingly adopted a Cyprus policy that does grave injustice to the Turkish Cypriots and risks a serious confrontation with Turkey.

THE NEW PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Greek Cypriots now appear to be backing away even from the concept of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, which they had accepted in 1977. They are now suggesting a revised

relationship between the two communities within the old 1960 structure, but in view of what has happened since 1960 this is unacceptable to the Turkish Cypriots.⁵

Political equality, bi-zonality and security through the effective guarantee of Turkey are the basic concerns of the Turkish Cypriot side. The Greek Cypriots completely ignore these fundamental concepts. The Turkish Cypriots have no confidence in international guarantees, which failed to protect them when they desperately needed protection, and they know that the safety of their families can only be entrusted to Turkish and Turkish Cypriot soldiers. The system of guarantees established by the 1960 settlement is still in force. The Greek Cypriot attempts to change and render ineffective the existing system of guarantees are both unproductive and provocative.

Today the Turkish Cypriots have entered a new political process in search for a new partnership. This new partnership will be built on a mutual understanding based on the equality of both sides so that both the Turkish Cypriot people and the Greek Cypriot people can live side-by-side, each in its own state in peace and dignity. This settlement must provide security for the two partner peoples to preserve their separate identities and existence. The Turkish Cypriot people regard a secure territorial basis paramount because they have a smaller population and because their past suffering must never be repeated. This is the essential guarantee for the sustainability and viability of a settlement.

The two parties in Cyprus are at a crossroads and are closer than ever to ending a 39-year struggle. Both parties now have to manage the transition from the existing separate political structures, which the Turkish Cypriot people have ordained in the North and the Greek Cypriot people have ordained in the South, into a new partnership in which, for mutual benefit, some of their powers will be expressly transferred to new partnership institutions.

The new 'partnership state' cannot be the continuity or be seen to be merely an extension of either state that currently exists on the island.

The purpose of the Turkish Cypriot side is not, as many Greek Cypriot leaders present, the establishment of two separate sovereign states, but the mere transformation of the two existing polities on the island into co-founder states in favour of a new 'partnership state of Cyprus' to be created by them. The 'partnership state' would reflect and recognise the equal status of its co-founders.

Each partner state would live in freedom with its own people, territory, functioning democratic institutions and jurisdiction under their respective constitutional order. Neither

partner state would represent or speak for the other, nor could either claim jurisdiction or sovereignty over the other.

The settlement would ensure that sovereignty rested with the two partner states and the new structure would have an international personality in the areas of competence the partner states assigned to it. The co-founding states would be competent in all matters except those they explicitly assigned to the new partnership.

The 1960 Treaties of Guarantee and of Alliance should continue to remain in force. The balance the 1960 treaties established between Turkey and Greece concerning Cyprus is crucial and has to be maintained in every respect.

The partner states should respect each other's special relationship with their respective motherlands as well as the balance of interests, rights and responsibilities of Turkey and Greece vis-à-vis the new structure in Cyprus. The partner states should also possess the capacity to enter international agreements in their areas of competence.

Both sides would support the EU membership of the partnership of Cyprus within the terms of a political settlement.

The achievement of a voluntary settlement in Cyprus would deepen Turkish-Greek détente, which started with the unfortunate 1999 earthquakes; strengthen the pivotal role Turkey and Greece could jointly play in the region; assist the Turkish-European convergence process; and foster regional security and stability.⁶

A NEW DIMENSION IN THE CYPRUS ISSUE: THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Greek Cypriot Administration applied to the EU for full membership on 3 July 1990.

The EU Council of Ministers decided to consider this application on 17 September 1990. Turkey's official reaction to this decision was limited. The then president of Turkey, Turgut Özal, did not wish to see Turkey's relations with the EU deteriorate because of the Cyprus issue.

The TRNC objected to the Greek Cypriot administration's application because the government in the South did not represent the Turkish Cypriot community and, hence, was not in a position to make such an application on behalf of the two communities. Furthermore, Article 1 of the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee prohibits Cyprus' participation in whole or in part in any political or economic union with any state whatsoever. Therefore, Cyprus is prohibited from joining the EU by Article 1 of the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee.

On 6 March 1995, the EU Council decided to formulate a general policy framework concerning the development of its relations with Cyprus.

On 21 November 1995, the EU Council and the Greek Cypriot administration signed a Financial and Technical Co-operation Protocol.

In March 1998, the EU opened accession negotiations with the (internationally recognised) government of the 'Republic of Cyprus' –that is, the administration in the south of the island.

At the 1999 EU Helsinki Summit, it was stated that the Greek Cypriots did not have to settle their differences with the Turkish Cypriots as a pre-requisite for full EU membership. The EU's decision made a Cyprus settlement almost impossible. The Greek Cypriots since then have seen EU membership as a means to bring political, economic, and even military pressure to force a settlement on their own terms. So long as the Greek Cypriots think they can keep their 'governmental' status and keep the Turkish Cypriots isolated and under economic pressure, they will not settle.⁷

The EU recognises the Greek Cypriot administration as the government of Cyprus, and refuses to discuss with the Turkish Cypriots their argument that the Greek Cypriots have absolutely no legal or moral right to that status.

The EU simply tells the Turkish Cypriots to join the 'Cyprus government' delegation, knowing that until there is a settlement the Turkish Cypriots can never submit to the authority of a government which they, correctly, regard as illegal, and take part in an accession process that is contrary to the 1960 Cyprus Constitution and Treaty of Guarantee.

The European Court of Justice has, moreover, assisted the Greek Cypriots to damage the Turkish Cypriot economy by a decision preventing the import of fruit and vegetables. This decision was made on a basis that is hard to justify in law.

The Turkish Cypriots would welcome eventual Cyprus EU membership as two states or one, provided that satisfactory terms of accession can be agreed, but they will not join the 'Cyprus' delegation for current EU negotiations because they consider the application to be illegal and do not recognise any 'government of Cyprus'. They also correctly consider that accession terms cannot be concluded until a settlement has first been agreed in Cyprus.

TURKEY'S ROLE IN CYPRUS' ACCESSION TO THE EU

The EU as an institution and EU member states should encourage successful negotiations. The accession of Cyprus to the EU as a divided state would risk a crisis on the island and between Turkey and Greece, and this would damage security in the eastern Mediterranean. This would be a tragedy for Turkey and Greece, threatening the improvement in relations that the two governments have built up in the past 2-3 years. It would also be a particular tragedy for Turkey if the resulting hardening of positions on all sides were to lead to another crisis in relations between Turkey and the EU.

The entry of a divided Cyprus to the EU would provoke a political response from the leadership of northern Cyprus, supported by the Turkish authorities. It would either take the form of the TRNC's closer integration with Turkey or a more determined assertion of independence for this excluded territory, seeking recognition from non-European states. Such moves would threaten wider relations between Turkey and Greece, and between Turkey and the EU; in turn threatening the broader stability of the eastern Mediterranean.

The key issue for the EU is to reach a mutually acceptable settlement that leads to the entry of the whole of Cyprus as a single member state. Yet, most EU governments have so far paid little attention to the Cyprus conflict, leaving mediation to the UN. The EU Commission has been left to conduct accession negotiations without political engagement from most member governments. The EU, under the current Presidency, should now play a much more active role in promoting a settlement.

A solution of the Cyprus problem is inconceivable without the co-operation of Turkey. If Cyprus enters the EU without the problem being solved then, in consequence of a perceived or real threat to security and lives, tourism will drop, the island's economy will dry up and the European dream of peace and prosperity will become an illusion. To achieve accession, Turkey's help is indispensable. Turkey knows that the more likely that strategy, the stronger its position becomes.⁸

Key issues for Turkey include guarantees for the long-term security of the Turkish Cypriot population, and ensuring that the status of the Turkish Cypriot community granted in any settlement is not one of apparent Greek Cypriot domination and Turkish Cypriot subservience.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by quoting the words of HE Mr Rauf R. Denktaş:

“Our vision is a peaceful Cyprus where our two peoples live in harmony and co-operation under a new partnership structure based on the equal status and sovereign equality of the two Partner States.”

“I believe that this face-to-face interaction provides a new and significant opportunity for both parties in reaching a common understanding on how we can move forward.”

“We have a major role to play in reaching a comprehensive settlement and in creating a desired environment of confidence, co-operation and partnership. I believe the time has come for Mr Clerides and myself to move ahead and to take the necessary initiatives so that future generations do not go through the bitter experiences we have endured.”

“Efforts for a viable settlement in Cyprus could yield desired results only in an environment of mutual trust. The way to a Cyprus settlement is through positive relations between the two parties in the Island. Therefore, if we are to initiate a process for settlement with the expectation of a successful outcome, the issue of trust and confidence must also be addressed.”

“The ideas I have put forward constitute a new pattern of relationship. I believe that our objective is to leave to future generations a Cyprus on which the two peoples could live in prosperity, security and co-operate on the basis of equality.”

1 The Eastern Question, as the Great Powers called it, was the nineteenth century concern for the fate of the Ottoman Empire. The Great Powers directly interested in the fate of the Ottoman Empire were Great Britain, France, Russia and Austria. Until 1878, Great Britain had pursued the policy of maintaining the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. However, after the Crimean War of 1853-56, having realised the decline and the weakness of the Ottomans, England changed her traditional Ottoman policy radically, thereafter favouring partition of the Empire. The first step of this new policy was the occupation of Cyprus.

2 Between 1571-1878, the inhabitants of the island were Orthodox Christians. The Orthodox Greek Church had rights and powers over the Greek Cypriot people during Ottoman rule and the Church gradually increased its economic and social power on the island.

3 Pierre Oberling, *The Road to Bellapais*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1982, p.133.

4 On 31 August 1998, President Denktaş declared his confederation proposal for the solution of the Cyprus question. The US regarded this proposal as “considerable” but the Greek Cypriot administration immediately rejected it.

5 Michael Stephen, “Commentary on ‘Reconciliation in Cyprus: The Window of Opportunity,’ by Lord Wallace (January 2002)”, *Mediterranean Programme Report*, p.3.

6 M. Ergün Olgun, ‘Cyprus: Settlement and Membership’, *Europe-Turkey Foundation and Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, Conference-Debate*, 3 June 2002, pp. 3, 14 and 15.

7 The Greek Cypriots enforce a cruel embargo upon Turkish Cypriot trade and communications. This embargo has forced some Turkish Cypriots to emigrate and reinforces distrust and enmity between the two peoples.

8 Nanette Neuwahl, ‘The European Union and Cyprus’, *Perceptions*, September-November 2001, Volume VI, Number 3, p. 89.