



KYPROS (CYPRUS)



TURKEY' S AGGRESSION: INVASION - OCCUPATION - DIVISION

Cyprus remains forcibly divided since 1974, when Turkey invaded and subsequently occupied nearly forty percent of the country's northern sovereign territory. Through its military occupation, Turkey has implemented a geographic separation of the population along ethnic lines, by forcing the Greek Cypriots out of their homes in the occupied areas and moving the Turkish Cypriots into the occupied areas.

The UN General Assembly and Security Council, as well as other international organizations, have adopted a series of resolutions condemning Turkey's aggression against Cyprus.

These resolutions demand the return of the displaced people to their homes in safety and the ascertainment of the fate of all missing persons. In addition, they call for respect for the human rights of all Cypriots and for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus.

Moreover, the European Commission and the European Court of Human Rights have found the government of Turkey culpable for gross and systematic violations of human rights in Cyprus.

The forcible division of Cyprus, the ethnic cleansing and the illegal prohibition of movement across the UN ceasefire line imposed by Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership brought about a sense of "isolation" for Turkish Cypriots, by depriving them of government services and other benefits and opportunities available to all Cypriot citizens regardless of ethnic origin.

The situation was further exacerbated by attempts at secession of the occupied areas from the Republic of Cyprus:

first, in 1975, through the announcement of the so-called “Turkish Federated State of Cyprus” and then, in 1983, through a “Unilateral Declaration of Independence” (“UDI”), which sought to establish the self-styled “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” [“TRNC”].

The international community’s response to this illegal, secessionist move was immediate and categorical condemnation.

The UN Security Council (UNSC 541, 18 November 1983) declared the act “legally invalid” and called for the withdrawal of the “UDI” and for the world community not to recognize the purported “TRNC.” The Council subsequently (UNSC 550, 11 May 1984) condemned all secessionist actions against the Republic of Cyprus and called on all member-states “not to facilitate or in any way assist” the secessionist regime nor recognize any state on the island other than the Republic of Cyprus. This remains the position of the international community.

These secessionist policies created additional problems for Turkish Cypriots.

First, they were forbidden by Turkey and their own leadership to carry official documents of the Republic of Cyprus which they were entitled to as citizens of the Republic, or make use of services and facilities, including the legal ports and airports of entry and exit on the island. Then, they were forced to carry documents issued by the illegal regime which are not recognized by the international community, and which hampered their mobility, restricted their international transactions and created serious legal and other problems for them.

Following the rejection of the deeply flawed “Annan Plan-V,” proposed in 2004 by the UN Secretary General to settle the Cyprus problem, Turkey launched a propaganda campaign under the slogans of “easing”, “lifting” or “ending” the “isolation” of Turkish Cypriots, and bridging the “economic disparity” between the two communities on the island. Regrettably, this has led not only to widespread misinformation regarding the situation in Cyprus, but also to some questionable proposals, ostensibly to improve the economic conditions of Turkish Cypriots. Turkey has even tried to mislead the international community into believing that the Government of Cyprus was, somehow, responsible for the predicament of the Turkish Cypriots.

Turkey has used this approach for two reasons: to divert, in view of its EU aspirations, attention from its ongoing military aggression against Cyprus and to upgrade the illegal regime in the occupied areas of the island.

In essence, Ankara has been seeking to secure for the secessionist regime economic attributes of an independent entity with no formal international recognition. This would allow the illegal regime to exist without any incentive for constructive participation in the peace process for the reunification of the island.

In their efforts to gain international support for their propaganda, Turkish leaders have adopted, as their main argument, the misleading slogan of “ending the economic isolation” of Turkish Cypriots when, in fact, their goal has been all along political.

However, any moves promoting the de facto recognition of the illegal secessionist regime would be in direct violation of international law and UN Security Council resolutions, especially resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984). Such moves would also undermine efforts for the country’s reunification, which is the declared position of the UN, the EU and the international community at large, as well as of the two Cypriot communities themselves.



United Nations

RESOLUTION 541 (1983)

Adopted by the Security Council
on 18 November 1983

The Security Council,

Having heard the statement of the Foreign Minister of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus,
Concerned at the declaration by the Turkish Cypriot authorities issued on 15 November 1983 which purports to create an independent state in northern Cyprus,

Considering that this declaration is incompatible with the 1960 Treaty concerning the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus and the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee,

Considering therefore that the attempt to create a "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", is invalid, and will contribute to a worsening of the situation in Cyprus,

Reaffirming its resolutions 365(1974) and 367(1975),

Aware of the need for a solution of the Cyprus problem, based on the mission of good offices undertaken by the Secretary-General,

Affirming its continuing support for the United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus,

Taking note of the Secretary-General's statement of 17 November 1983,

1. Deplores the declaration of the Turkish Cypriot authorities of the purported secession of part of the Republic of Cyprus;
2. Considers the declaration referred to above as legally invalid and calls for its withdrawal;
3. Calls for the urgent and effective implementation of its resolutions 365(1974) and 367(1975);
4. Requests the Secretary-General to pursue his mission of good offices in order to achieve the earliest possible progress towards a just and lasting settlement in Cyprus;
5. Calls upon the parties to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in his mission of good offices;
6. Calls upon all States to respect the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of the Republic of Cyprus;
7. Calls upon all States not to recognise any Cypriot state other than the Republic of Cyprus;
8. Calls upon all States and the two communities in Cyprus to refrain from any action which might exacerbate the situation;
9. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the Security Council fully informed.

Adopted at the 2500th meeting by 13 votes to 1 against (Pakistan) with 1 abstention (Jordan).



United Nations

RESOLUTION 550 (1984)

Adopted by the Security Council
on 11 May 1984

The Security Council,

Having considered the situation in Cyprus at the request of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus,
Having heard the statement made by the President of the Republic of Cyprus,
Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General (S/16519),
Recalling its resolutions 365(1974), 367(1975), 541(1983) and 544(1983),

Deeply regretting the non-implementation of its resolutions, in particular resolution 541(1983),
Gravely concerned about the further secessionist acts in the occupied part of the Republic of Cyprus which are in violation of resolution 541(1983), namely the purported "exchange of Ambassadors" between Turkey and the legally invalid "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" and the contemplated holding of a "Constitutional referendum" and "elections", as well as by other actions or threats of action aimed at further consolidating the purported independent state and the division of Cyprus,

Deeply concerned about recent threats for settlement of Varosha by people other than its inhabitants,
Reaffirming its continuing support for the United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus,

1. Reaffirms its resolution 541(1983) and calls for its urgent and effective implementation,
2. Condemns all secessionist actions, including the purported exchange of Ambassadors between Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership, declares them illegal and invalid and calls for their immediate withdrawal;
3. Reiterates the call upon all States not to recognise the purported state of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" set up by secessionist acts and calls upon them not to facilitate or in any way assist the aforesaid secessionist entity;
4. Calls upon all States to respect the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, unity and non-alignment of the Republic of Cyprus;
5. Considers attempts to settle any part of Varosha by people other than its inhabitants as inadmissible and calls for the transfer of this area to the administration of the United Nations;
6. Considers any attempts to interfere with the status or the deployment of the United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus as contrary to the resolutions of the United Nations;
7. Requests the Secretary-General to promote the urgent implementation of Security Council resolution 541(1983);
8. Reaffirms its mandate of good offices given to the Secretary General and requests him to undertake new efforts to attain an overall solution to the Cyprus problem in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions for such a settlement laid down in the pertinent United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution 541(1983) and the present resolution;
9. Calls upon all parties to cooperate with the Secretary-General in his mission of good offices;
10. Decides to remain seized of the situation with a view to taking urgent and appropriate measures in the event of non-implementation of its resolution 541(1983) and the present resolution;
11. Requests the Secretary-General to promote the implementation of the resolution and to report thereon to the Security Council as developments require.

Adopted at the 2539th meeting by 13 votes to 1 (Pakistan) with 1 abstention (United States of America).

TURKISH CYPRIOTS: VICTIMS OF TURKEY' S AGGRESSION

The plight of the Turkish Cypriot community is the direct result of Turkey's aggression, which keeps Cyprus, its people, institutions and economy forcibly divided. It is also the result of misguided policies by Turkish Cypriot leaders, who have consistently promoted Turkey's interests at the expense of their own community and of Cyprus as a whole. The so-called "isolation" of Turkish Cypriots is very much a self-inflicted wound. It is certainly not the result of any action taken by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, which has sovereignty over all the territory of the state, including the occupied areas, and which abides by its obligation to defend its sovereign rights and the rule of law.

In response to Turkey's aggression, the Republic of Cyprus introduced a number of necessary defensive measures to safeguard its independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, economy and society.

One of these measures was the declaration of all points of entry and exit (seaports and airports) in the Turkish occupied area of the Republic as illegal. This and other defensive measures became necessary, because the Government of Cyprus was not able to exercise effective control in the areas under Turkish military control.

Under international law, the Republic of Cyprus is the only legal and recognized authority with sole responsibility for air and sea travel, trade, security, safety and similar issues within its sovereign territory. Similarly, under international law, the regime established by Turkey in occupied Cyprus is illegal and, therefore, all its professed institutions, decisions and documents have no political or legal validity in Cyprus or internationally.

As European Courts and the UN Security Council have affirmed, the Turkish Cypriot regime has no legal status in the international community. The European Court of Justice has declared this illegal regime as Turkey's "subordinate local administration" in occupied Cyprus. The so-called "TRNC" has been aptly described as being "in every sense a diplomatic fiction."

The record clearly shows that the military occupation by Turkey has victimized, albeit in different ways, both the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities on the island. Turkey's continuing occupation is directly responsible for whatever sense of "isolation" Turkish Cypriots may have experienced.

For example:

- **Turkey keeps the island divided and its two communities, institutions and economy separated**, thereby preventing normal interaction and transactions by Turkish Cypriots within Cyprus and abroad and depriving them of essential services provided by the Government.
- **Turkey had, until recently, prevented Turkish Cypriots from acquiring passports, identity cards and other official documents**, which all Cypriot citizens were entitled to. These documents could facilitate travel and other essential activities and transactions in Cyprus and overseas. They would also allow Turkish Cypriots to enjoy EU benefits such as study and work, live anywhere within the Union, and have the benefit of diplomatic and consular protection in third countries.
- **Turkey, in violation of the Geneva Convention of 1949, has flooded the occupied areas with more than 160.000 illegal settlers**, thereby creating economic, social, demographic and, ultimately, political problems for the Turkish Cypriots and for Cyprus as a whole. Low-paid settlers from Turkey who currently outnumber Turkish Cypriots by two to one drove Turkish Cypriots out of their own labor market causing much of their economic deprivation.
- **Turkey, in 1983, introduced the Turkish lira in the occupied areas**, a move that brought about high inflation and other serious economic and social problems for the Turkish Cypriots. This and other similar steps, designed to integrate the economy of the occupied areas with that of Turkey, subjected Turkish Cypriots to many of the disadvantages of Turkey's economy.

- **Turkey has maintained control of the economy in the occupied areas** through conditional aid, direct instructions and management which fostered an inefficient and corrupt system, with disastrous results for the Turkish Cypriots.
- **Turkey has, since 1980, been responsible for the rejection by Turkish Cypriot leaders of confidence-building measures**, because, though beneficial, such measures would not promote the international recognition of the illegal regime in occupied Cyprus.
- **Turkey was responsible for the rejection by Turkish Cypriot leaders of substantial assistance from the EU** and for the non-implementation of constructive proposals by the Government of Cyprus to benefit Turkish Cypriots.
- **Turkey created the illegal situation in the northern part of Cyprus that led to decisions by the European Court of Justice** which in turn led to restrictions on exports from the occupied areas. To the detriment of Turkish Cypriots, this illegal situation also prevents the implementation of the EU *acquis communautaire* in occupied Cyprus.
- **Turkey prevents the export of Turkish Cypriot goods and services through the legal seaports and airports** on the island. The Government of Cyprus has even offered special arrangements to Turkish Cypriots for their exports at the Larnaka port, but their leadership and Ankara discourage them from availing themselves of these facilities.

In short, Turkey prevents Turkish Cypriots from realizing their full potential and deprives them of substantial benefits and opportunities they are entitled to as citizens of the Republic of Cyprus and the EU.



Installations of the UN peacekeeping force at the buffer zone along the 1974 UN ceasefire line that extends across Cyprus.

Pfoto: UNFICYP

CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH BY THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT

The Government of Cyprus has always been concerned about the economic situation of Turkish Cypriots. It has demonstrated this concern in practical terms before and after Turkey's invasion of the island and long before the Annan Plan was proposed. The Government has proven its good intentions toward the economic development and welfare of the Turkish Cypriots through the adoption of concrete policy initiatives designed to benefit them directly and in tangible ways.

Clearly, only the genuine reunification of Cyprus which provides for the reintegration of its people and economy can improve the situation of the Turkish Cypriots, allow them to realize their full potential and share fully the benefits of EU membership. The top priority of the Government has been all along to end the division of the country imposed by Turkey.

Even under the prohibitive conditions of military occupation and division, the Government has at all times extended to Turkish Cypriots, where possible, a number of essential services: free supply of electricity, pensions and social security benefits, and a share of the international economic and other assistance secured by the Government of Cyprus. Furthermore, the Government has provided protection for Turkish Cypriot properties in the areas under its control.

Turkey, on the other hand, and the Turkish Cypriot leadership have repeatedly rejected proposals by the Government of Cyprus that would benefit Turkish Cypriots.

For example, the 1998 invitation extended by the president of Cyprus to the Turkish Cypriot community to join the Cyprus delegation in the EU accession negotiations was turned down, and the Turkish Cypriots were deprived of the opportunity to participate in that important historic process.

Instead, in yet another effort to win legitimacy for the secessionist entity, the Turkish leadership demanded separate accession talks between the EU and the illegal regime. As expected, the EU rejected the Turkish demand.

The Government of Cyprus proposed and strongly supported the EU Regulation on Financial Assistance providing 259 million euro to benefit the Turkish Cypriot community. Again, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership jeopardized and for a long time delayed that substantial assistance to Turkish Cypriots.

The Cyprus Government has been better able to provide services to Turkish Cypriots since the partial lifting in 2003 of illegal restrictions, imposed by the Turkish military on the free movement of people across the 1974 UN ceasefire line that extends across the island.

Turkish Cypriots have since been able to work, in increasing numbers, in the Government-controlled areas earning income estimated at more than 800 million dollars so far and to enjoy an expanded range of benefits, including free medical care.

Their economy has also benefited greatly from the millions of crossings by Greek Cypriots and foreign nationals into the occupied areas. Since 2003, more than eleven million people and more than three million vehicles have crossed the ceasefire line. The substantial increase in economic activity and trade across the ceasefire line has helped to double the per capita income of Turkish Cypriots.

These peaceful, incident-free crossings have also destroyed the myth cultivated for years by Turkish propaganda that the two communities are not able to live together.

In order to facilitate increased transactions between the two communities, the Government has proposed further steps such as the opening of additional crossing points along the UN ceasefire line, the clearing of minefields along the buffer zone and the disengagement of military forces from the walled part of the capital city of Nicosia.

While steadfastly promoting a comprehensive settlement, the Government also continues a systematic policy designed to foster trust and reconciliation between the two communities that would ultimately lead to reunification. The Government has already implemented a series of such tangible measures that have yielded visible results.

Policy initiatives by the Government, unilaterally or in cooperation with the EU (such as the EU **Green Line Regulation**), facilitate intra-island trade and export, through the legally operated ports and airports on the island, for agricultural goods produced by the Turkish Cypriot community.

Regrettably, however, and for political reasons, the Turkish Cypriot leadership, always backed by Ankara, refuses to implement many of these measures, thereby depriving Turkish Cypriots of additional significant economic and other benefits.

The Turkish side seems to hold out for the prospect of external “direct trade” through illegally operated ports and airports in occupied Cyprus. Again, this idea, not justified by economic considerations, is nothing but a political ploy to promote the secessionist regime.

In this context, **“direct trade” has become a code term for an effort to legitimize an illegal situation in areas of the sovereign territory of Cyprus** where the EU has suspended the *acquis communautaire*, because those areas are under military occupation by Turkey.

“Direct trade” and “direct flights” through ports and airports operated by the secessionist regime are contrary to the rule of law, in violation of Cyprus’ sovereign rights and counterproductive in the efforts to achieve reunification.

Since 1974, the Government of Cyprus has declared the airports and seaports in occupied Cyprus as illegal points of entry and exit and closed them to navigation. Neither the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) nor any other competent international body recognizes those airports. The ICAO General Assembly and Council have confirmed repeatedly that the Republic of Cyprus has exclusive sovereignty in the areas occupied by Turkey and the airspace over that territory.

REUNIFICATION, RECONCILIATION AND REINTEGRATION

Only through the reunification of Cyprus can the reintegration of Turkish Cypriots into the international community be accomplished legally and comprehensively.

There are legal and effective ways to advance both the economic development of Turkish Cypriots and the reunification of the island for the benefit of all its citizens. A number of proposals to that end are on the table for the Turkish side to consider. These include the opening and joint operation by the two communities of the Port of Famagusta under EU supervision, as proposed by the Government of Cyprus.

The positive approach of the Government of Cyprus toward the Turkish Cypriot community continues in order to strengthen the foundations for reunification and reconciliation.

It is, therefore, imperative that those in the international community who wish to contribute constructively to the economic and political welfare of Turkish Cypriots work closely with the Government of Cyprus for the reunification of the country.

Only the reunification of Cyprus and the reintegration of its economy and institutions can adequately address the political and economic welfare of all citizens.

Encouraging separatist tendencies under the false banner of “ending the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots,” and other politically motivated schemes promoted by Turkey do little to enhance the economic and political welfare of the Turkish Cypriot community or the peace process.

Such ideas divert attention from Turkey’s continuing aggression against Cyprus and from Ankara’s failure to abide by its obligations to the EU, including the opening of its seaports and airports to ships and aircraft carrying the Cyprus flag. They also inhibit the political will of the Turkish side, thereby undermining initiatives to address the core issue at hand, namely, the solution to the division of Cyprus. Furthermore, they help to solidify the illegal situation created by Turkey in the northern part of Cyprus and to perpetuate the victimization of Turkish Cypriots. Finally, they impede the cause of reconciliation and lasting peace on the island and in the region.

Economic or political problems experienced by the Turkish Cypriot community since 1974 are directly attributable to the continuing military aggression by Turkey against the Republic of Cyprus. No propaganda slogan based on the myth of Turkish Cypriot “isolation” or any other such pretext can alter this fundamental historical fact.

The predicament of the Turkish Cypriot community can improve only when Turkey ends its military occupation and forcible division of the island. A unified Cyprus will reintegrate its people, institutions, society and economy and create conditions for peace, security and stability. Turkish Cypriots will then be able to enjoy the entire spectrum of benefits offered by the state of Cyprus and EU membership.

The Government of Cyprus will continue to expand its integrative policy initiatives unilaterally and in cooperation with the European Commission and its EU partners. It will do so while steadfastly pursuing a viable settlement on Cyprus that will reunify the country and its people, reintegrate its economy and satisfy the fundamental concerns of all its citizens.

As Cyprus President Tassos Papadopoulos stated, “What we demand is very reasonable and what we aim for is self-evident: We demand and aim for the reunification of our country and our people in the framework of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation; a state with one economy, a cohesive society and non-fragmented institutions. We demand and aim to safeguard our fundamental rights and basic freedoms. We demand a solution which can be workable and lasting in order to serve the interests and rights of all Cypriots and not of other countries.”



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