

# CYPRUS

still occupied  
still divided  
1974-2017





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## CYPRUS STILL OCCUPIED, STILL DIVIDED

In July 1974, Turkey invaded the Republic of Cyprus in violation of the UN Charter and the fundamental principles of international law. Beyond the immense human suffering and the great material losses, the dire consequences of the invasion and subsequent illegal military occupation by Turkey are still felt today:

- For 43 consecutive years Cyprus and its people remain artificially divided by the use of force.
- Approximately 37% of the sovereign territory of the Republic of Cyprus is still under illegal military occupation by Turkey, with the presence of thousands of heavily armed Turkish troops rendering the occupied area of Cyprus, proportionally, one of the most densely militarised areas in the world.
- 200,000 Greek Cypriots, over a third of the total population, who were forcibly expelled from the occupied northern part of the Republic of Cyprus, where they constituted about 70% of the population, are still deprived of the right to return to their homes and properties.
- Approximately 1,020 persons, civilians and soldiers, are still missing, while the Turkish side refuses to cooperate fully in ascertaining their fate.
- Around 420 Greek Cypriots and Maronites, out of 20,000 at the end of August 1974, remain

enclaved in their villages, which are still occupied, living under conditions of oppression and deprivation.

- The demographic structure and balance of Cyprus has been altered due to the illegal mass transfer of settlers from Turkey to the occupied areas, as well as the emigration of thousands of Turkish Cypriots from the island after the Turkish invasion. As a result, Turkish Cypriots are now vastly outnumbered by troops and settlers from Turkey, thus constituting the minority in the occupied areas.
- The usurpation of Greek Cypriot properties continues through the illegal construction on Greek Cypriot land and the illegal sale of property owned by Greek Cypriots, who were forcibly expelled from their homes after the Turkish invasion.
- Priceless religious and archaeological treasures – part of the world’s cultural heritage – are still in danger, while many churches, monuments, cemeteries and archaeological sites have been destroyed, desecrated or vandalised.

A series of UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, as well as resolutions adopted by numerous other international organizations, reflect the universal condemnation of Turkey’s invasion and all subsequent acts of aggression against Cyprus. The resolutions demand, amongst other, the withdrawal of foreign troops, the return of refugees to their homes in safety and the ascertainment of the fate of

the missing persons. Moreover, they call for the respect of the human rights of all Cypriots as well as for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus. The European Court of Human Rights, in its judgment against Turkey on 12 May 2014, has found the government of Turkey responsible for gross and systematic violations of human rights in Cyprus.

A new round of negotiations, aiming at a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem, was initiated in September 2013, conducted, as all previous ones, under the auspices of the UN Secretary General’s Good Offices Mission. In this framework, on 11 February 2014, the leaders of the two communities adopted a joint declaration which, inter alia, reaffirmed the basis of a settlement, namely a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality, as set out in the relevant Security Council Resolutions and the High Level Agreements. It also reaffirmed that any settlement should ensure the common future of all Cypriots within the EU.

Since May 2015, negotiations proceeded intensively in an overall more positive climate and significant progress has been reached on an important number of issues. Nevertheless, there still remain significant difficulties and divergences. When the process reached a point where it was not yielding results, President Anastasiades submitted a constructive proposal to help taking the process forward and overcome the difficulties.

PHOTO: Katia Christodoulou



“It is of utmost importance to remain committed to the continuation of this dialogue, and work with determination to reunify the island and to serve the true interests of the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots”, President Anastasiades stressed.

President Anastasiades’ proposal was rejected by the Turkish side, but was followed by a meeting of the two leaders with the UN Secretary General in New York in June. The statement issued following the meeting with the Secretary-General stressed in the clearest terms that the chapter on security and guarantees is of vital importance and that progress in this chapter is an essential element in reaching an overall agreement.

To this end, Turkey’s contribution in tangible terms in these negotiations is vital. There is no solution that can be reached without Turkey taking practical and concrete steps towards this direction and, inter alia, revisit its outdated positions on guarantees, the presence of troops and unilateral rights of intervention. Turkey, a country that aspires to accede to the European Union and be a key regional player, is expected to rise to the occasion and contribute constructively to the process, taking into account the benefit of the people of Cyprus, as well as the positive impact a settlement will have to international peace and regional stability and cooperation.



“We aspire to achieve a just, comprehensive and viable settlement, based on international law, the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and the EU’s fundamental values and principles. A settlement that will reunite our country and its people in a modern, functional European state, safeguarding the fundamental freedoms and human rights of all Cypriots, without the presence of foreign troops or rights of guarantees and intervention.

To this end, we are adamant that the best guarantee for reunited Cyprus and all its people is the EU; a solution that is fully in line with EU law, values and principles.

We are of the strong opinion, that reaching a settlement would not only benefit the people of Cyprus, but would also significantly contribute to the peace and stability of the region, with Cyprus becoming a homeland of peaceful co-existence and prosperous collaboration between all of its citizens, to the benefit of the younger generations, as well as a shining example of the ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic cooperation.”



**Nicos Anastasiades**  
President of the Republic of Cyprus

Cover photo: Christos Avraamides



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