

## THE NEED FOR FULL DEMILITARISATION OF CYPRUS

What follows is the latest Communiqué of Forum for Friendship and Co-operation.

### FORUM COMMUNIQUE, 22 September 1998

Once again the clouds of war are looming over the Island of Cyprus. No country in the world, with the exception of Korea has seen its territory amassed with such a deadly array of weaponry. The proposed deployment of the S-300 missiles coupled with the threat of air strikes by Turkey has accentuated tension with possible catastrophic consequences for the inhabitants.

With the above in mind the Forum For Friendship and Co-operation believes that:

i. The Cyprus problem can only be resolved by peaceful means. Any attempt to unite the island by force will either lead to occupation of the whole of the territory of Cyprus or will lead to its permanent partition.

ii. Peace keeping on the island can only be successful if it is accompanied by complete demilitarisation.

iii. This requires the withdrawal of all foreign troops, including the Turkish occupation troops, the dismantling of the British bases as well as the National Guard.

The Forum Further expresses concern at:

i. The promulgation of Nationalist ideology by demagogues on both sides of the Green Line. The Cypriot people have a long proud tradition in ethnic and religious tolerance and this should be built upon rather than destroyed.

ii. The harassment of journalists and peace campaigners who live in the northern part of the Island. Intimidation of those whose views diverge from officially sanctioned policies creates a climate of fear and seriously undermines the right to freedom of expression.

iii. The proposals put forward for a NATO 'no fly zone' over Cyprus. Presented as a peace measure it merely extends the influence of NATO –a militarist organisation embedded in the outdated logic of the cold war years – on the island. It does nothing to further the cause of peace in the region, which can be achieved via demilitarisation of Cyprus.

The Forum once again reiterates its belief in a united, independent, sovereign, federal and demilitarised Cyprus, in which all its citizens can live together in peace and harmony.