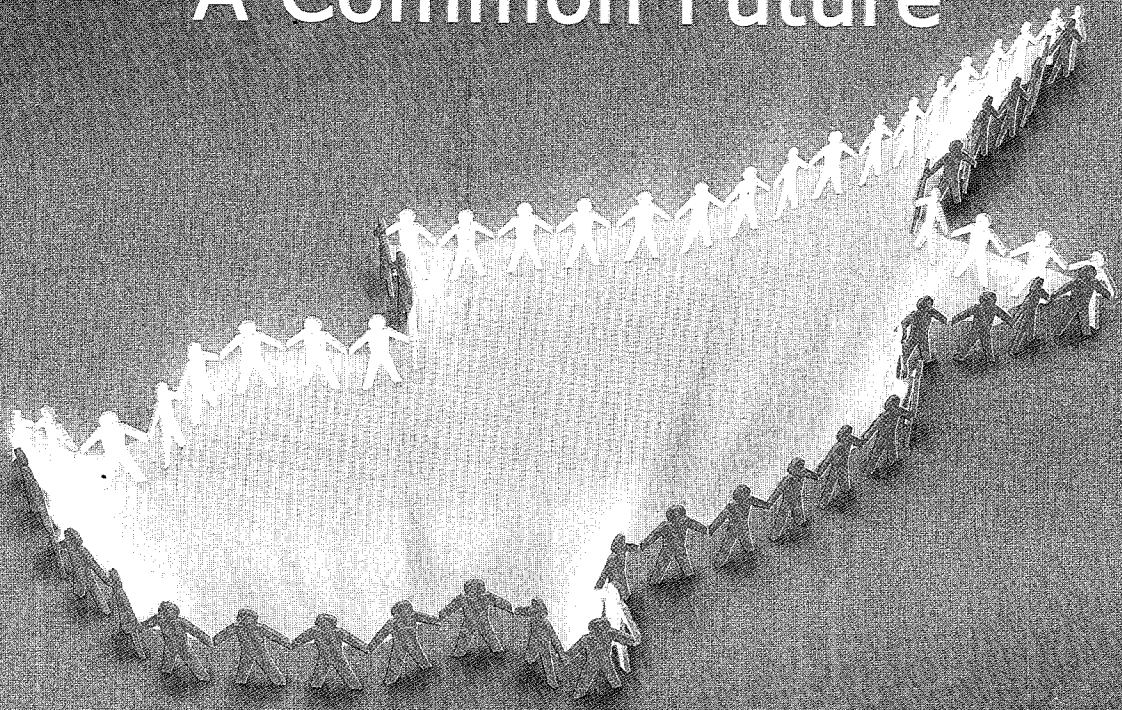




REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

A United Homeland A Common Future



The geostrategic position of Cyprus at the eastern end of the Mediterranean and at the crossroads of three continents has defined its turbulent history. The successive conquerors that attempted to exploit the island's significant position have caused immense tragedies and problems to the people of Cyprus. The wake of the 21st century finds the Cypriots striving to end the partition and bring about the reunification of their homeland. They are struggling to turn Cyprus, from a bleak land of semi-occupation, into a bright land of peace, democracy and prosperity for all its inhabitants; Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Maronites, Armenians and Latins.

The Republic of Cyprus - A great historical conquest

Cyprus was proclaimed an independent, sovereign republic on 16 August 1960. Later it was decided that 1st October would be celebrated as the Independence Day of the Republic of Cyprus.

The people of Cyprus won their independence after hard and long struggles against colonial rule, which had stubbornly denied granting the Cypriots the right of self determination. During the period from 1955 to 1959 the anticolonial struggle took the form of an armed struggle, under the guidance of the EOKA organization (National Organization of Cypriot Fighters).

In order to serve its own strategic interests, Great Britain applied the doctrine of "divide and rule," undermining the relations between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots and instigating the clashes between them. Unfortunately, extremist and nationalist circles in both communities of Cyprus fell into the trap of this divisive policy.

Against the backdrop of the divisive policy of Great Britain but also the impasses created during the anticolonial struggle, a fettered independence with a dysfunctional constitution containing strong divisive elements was imposed on the people of Cyprus.

Despite the weaknesses of the imposed constitution of Zurich and London, the foundation of the Republic of Cyprus constitutes a great historical conquest of the people of Cyprus. Indeed, this could have been used as the starting point for a new

and hopeful course. The nascent Cyprus Republic presented a framework of free governance for the people of Cyprus, within which the two communities could build a common future on the basis of understanding and cooperation.

However, foreign conspiracies and interventions on the one hand, and mistrust between the two communities on the other hand, which was intensified by the problems in the functioning of the state, led to the intercommunal clashes of 1963-64.

After the 1963-64 clashes, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership demanded the withdrawal of the Turkish Cypriot community from the administration of the state and forced a large number of Turkish Cypriots to live in enclaves.

The nightmare of the Turkish invasion and occupation

The treacherous coup against the lawful President of the Republic of Cyprus on 15 July 1974, gave Turkey the long awaited pretext to invade Cyprus in order to implement its partitionist plans.

The invasion of Turkey in Cyprus on 20 July 1974, is undoubtedly the most tragic event in the turbulent history of Cyprus. The blow was heavy and the human pain indescribable; almost 37% of the territory was occupied by the Turkish military forces, while nearly one third of the population were forcibly expelled from their homes and properties in effect becoming refugees in their own country. Thousands were killed, while hundreds of families are still awaiting the ascertainment of the fate of their loved ones who have been missing ever since.

Through the military invasion in 1974 and the continuing occupation, Turkey is implementing its partitionist plans against Cyprus, which it developed during the 1950s when the British factor brought Turkey back into the scene as an interested party in the Cyprus question.

Turkey's expansionist policy is spearheaded by the influx of thousands of Turkish settlers, who are changing the demographic character of the population in Cyprus. Over 160.000 settlers have been moved to the occupied area, currently outnumbering

“The Republic of Cyprus is a joint conquest and it belongs to all the Cypriots. It is high time, learning from the bitter experiences of the past, to join hands and behave as Cypriots and ignore those whose only concern is to urge us to accept a solution which is not in our best interest.

Cyprus is too small to be divided but large enough to embrace all its citizens. A reunified Cyprus can become the home of both the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, a home with respect for the national, cultural, language and religious characteristics of each community.

At the same time it will provide the prerequisites and opportunity for all Cypriots to live there, together in harmony.

The united country can be turned by us the Cypriots into the sweet and caring mother, who will embrace all of its children with the same warmth.”

Demetris Christofias, 1 October 2008
(extract from the speech of the President of the Republic
on the occasion of the Independence Day of Cyprus)



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the Turkish Cypriots by two to one. Their presence in Cyprus causes the reaction of even the Turkish Cypriots themselves, since culturally they are a foreign body to Cyprus.

Turkey has implemented a policy of ethnic cleansing in Cyprus; The 20.000 Greek Cypriots who had remained in the occupied area after the invasion, have gradually been driven out, with less than 500 remaining there today. Indeed, they live in fear and oppression, being denied their fundamental rights for education, economic activity and exercising of their religious duties. All evidence of Hellenic presence in the occupied areas is gradually being erased. Greek place names have been given Turkish substitutes. Churches and places of religious worship have been pillaged and looted. The cultural heritage of Cyprus, a possession of all the people of Cyprus and of all mankind, has been systematically destroyed. The occupied area's economy depends totally on Turkey and the Turkish lira is used as the legal tender. Ankara is deliberately turning the occupied area into a Turkish province.

Turkey's separatist policy culminated with the "unilateral declaration of independence" in the occupied part of Cyprus on 15 November 1983. Through the establishment of the so-called "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" Turkey attempted to dismember and undermine the Republic of Cyprus and create a subordinate entity in order to promote its partitionist policy.

The international community's response to this unilateral act by Turkey was immediate. Through the Security Council Resolutions 541 of 1983 and 550 of 1984, the United Nations strongly condemned the unilateral declaration of an independent state by the Turkish side, declared it legally invalid, and called for its immediate withdrawal. As a result, no country in the world, except Turkey, has recognized the illegal regime.

The difficult path towards reunification

Successive rounds of UN sponsored talks between the two communities had reached a stalemate. The common denominator of all Turkish proposals was the recognition of the so-called realities on the island, with the existence of two separate state entities, which would cooperate within the framework of a loose association. Moreover, Turkish proposals completely ignored the UN Security Council resolutions which

provided for the withdrawal of foreign troops and the settlers, and the respect of the territorial integrity, the sovereignty and the single international personality of the Republic of Cyprus. Moreover, Turkey insists on the continuation of the anachronistic guarantees provided for in the 1960 treaties and on preserving its unilateral right of military intervention in Cyprus.

On the contrary, the proposals of the Greek Cypriot side have always been in accordance with international law and UN resolutions. They aim towards the reunification of Cyprus, within the framework of a genuine bizonal, bicomunal federation which will provide full self-governance to the Turkish Cypriots. At the same time, the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all citizens as well as the viability and functionality of the federal state should also be safeguarded.

During the new phase of the direct talks between the President of the Republic of Cyprus Demetris Christofias and the Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat which began on 3 September 2008, the Greek Cypriot side demonstrates its determination to proceed to a functional and viable compromise which will meet the just concerns of all the citizens of the island. The framework of this compromise is a bizonal, bicomunal federation with political equality, as described in the relevant UN resolutions, with a single sovereignty and a single international personality. The solution must be based on the UN resolutions on Cyprus and the basic principles of international and European law.

For this compromise to be viable it should put an end to the occupation of Cyprus, terminate the colonization, reunify the state, the people, the institutions and the economy and safeguard the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Cypriots.

The Greek Cypriot community has always extended a hand of reconciliation and cooperation towards the Turkish Cypriot community, in order to build a peaceful and happy future based on the principles of mutual understanding, consensus and respect of democracy and human rights; the principles upon which the European Union is based. Taught by the island's history and leaving the mistakes and the traumatic experiences of the past behind, the Greek Cypriot community is ready to walk along the path of reunification, peace and prosperity together with the Turkish Cypriots, the Armenians, the Latins and the Maronites.