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CONTENTS

PREFACE ................................................................................................................. 4

DO GREEK CYPRIOTS AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS HAVE A COMMON PERSPECTIVE REGARDING THE HISTORY OF CYPRUS? ................................................................. 5

IS THE SEPARATION OF TURKISH- AND GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITIES THE RESULT OF TURKISH INTERVENTION IN 1974? ................................................................. 8

HOW DID THE EUROPEAN UNION REACT WHEN CYPRUS WAS DIVIDED ALONG ETHNIC LINES IN 1964 DUE TO EOKA TERROR CAMPAIGN? ........................................ 11

ARE TURKISH SETTLERS IN THE TRNC AFTER 1974 A FOREIGN ELEMENT IN CYPRUS, AS CLAIMED BY GREEK CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES? ............................................ 13

HAVE THE GREEK CYPRIOTS ALWAYS CONSTITUTED A MAJORITY IN CYPRUS? ___ 16

TURKISH- AND GREEK CYPRIOT ATTITUDES PRIOR TO THE REFERENDUM ON THE ANNAN PLAN (OR: WAS THE EU JUSTIFIED IN ADMITTING THE GREEK CYPRIOT ADMINISTRATION AS THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF ENTIRE CYPRUS?) ......................................................................................................................... 20

DID THE EUROPEAN UNION PLAY A ROLE IN IMPROVING TURKISH-EU RELATIONS AND THE SITUATION OF TURKISH CYPRIOTS AFTER THE GREEK CYPRIOT ACCESSION? ........................................................................................................ 23

HAS GREEK CYPRIOT MEMBERSHIP IN THE EU SO FAR CONTRIBUTED TO THE SOLUTION OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM? ................................................................. 26

CAN THE RECENT RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOLUTION OF CYPRUS PROBLEM? ................................................ 31

DOES THE EUROPEAN UNION HAVE A CYPRUS POLICY OF ITS OWN? ............... 33
PREFACE

Cyprus, the third largest island of the Mediterranean, is also a paradise on earth in view of its natural beauty, climate and people. Yet the history of the island has witnessed some tragedies, ethnic strife and political stalemate. The United Nations has been involved in the Cyprus question since the 1950s aiming to create a unified federal state among the two major communities. A United Nations peacekeeping force is situated on the island since 1964 and is still serving on the territory of a country that has acceded to the European Union in 2004. The political situation on the island has not been resolved yet. The Annan plan aiming to reunify the island has been rejected by the Greek Cypriots in a referendum in 2004. Thus a very important opportunity for the island to accede to the European Union as a unified political unit had been lost. The negotiations between the two sides are still continuing with no apparent prospects for a comprehensive resolution in the near future. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus established in 1983 continues to exist as a separate state in the North of the island. All in all, the Cyprus issue is a quite complex question that is intricately related to questions of international law, justice, and dispute settlement.

The booklet you are about to read aims to shed light on some little-known facts about the Cyprus question. It is a valuable source that you may resort to from time to time in search of answers about important questions regarding the issue.

Prof. Dr. Haluk Kabaalioğlu
Chairman
Do Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have a common perspective regarding the history of Cyprus?

View of Girne (Kyrenia) Harbor in 1928
It is generally accepted that ethnic communities which constitute a nation share, in addition to a set of common values, a common notion of history. While the history of Cyprus dates back almost four thousand years as a center of human civilization, most Cypriots of today adhere to different versions of history depending on their ethnic background. The failure of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to reach a consensus regarding the history of their island is arguably the biggest component of what is commonly known as ‘the Cyprus Problem’. Although the Ottoman era (1571-1878), as well as the British rule between 1878 and 1960 are also heavily disputed, the most controversial topic between Greek- and Turkish Cypriots is the historical chapter between 1963 and 1974. The British newspaper Guardian went even as far as stating that ‘the Cyprus Problem was that no Turkish Cypriot could ever forget the period 1963-1974, and no Greek Cypriot could remember it.’\(^1\) This finding is, however, incompatible with the Greek-Cypriot claim that Turkish- and Greek Cypriots form the Cypriot nation, simply because a ‘nation’ is generally described as ‘the awareness on the part of a particular community of having a separate identity on the basis of common history, race, language, religion, culture and territory’\(^2\). Given that Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots do not even generally agree on certain events which took place less than 50 years ago, it goes without saying that they do not fulfill the basic requirement for being part of the same nation.

Moreover, while it is true that the notions of forgetting and remembering are individual psychological actions, the collective engagement of entire communities in such individual acts strongly suggest that certain traumatic events had shaped the collective consciousness of Greek Cypriots and that of Turkish Cypriots in quite different fashions. It is therefore essential to focus on the period of 1963-1974 in order to evaluate the events which led to the Turkish intervention and de-facto partition of Cyprus into Greek and Turkish sections. It is during this eleven year period that numerous Turkish Cypriots were victims of Greek Cypriot EOKA terrorist organization, the ultimate goal of which was Enosis, i.e. the unification of Cyprus with

\(^1\) The Telegraph ‘Rauf Denktash’ 15 January 2012
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/politics-obituaries/9016548/Rauf-Denktash.html

Greece. While it is true that several prominent leftist Greek Cypriots who favored Cyprus’ independence were also assassinated by the EOKA, the overwhelming majority of EOKA’s victims were Turkish Cypriots.

Although the ‘Republic of Cyprus’ which was founded in 1960 was based on proportional representation and equality between Turkish- and Greek-Cypriots, most historians concur that the newly founded independent state was a failed Western attempt to bring Turkish and Greek ethnic groups together. As many Turkish- and Greek Cypriots expected, this idealistic attempt was not viable, “primarily because Greek Cypriot leaders, thinking wrongly that their community was an absolute majority on the island, were not prepared to recognize political equality of their Turkish Cypriot partners.”

According to Andrew Mango, a prominent scholar of Ottoman and Turkish history, the tragedy of Turkish Cypriots began on Christmas Eve of 1963, when Greek Cypriot militia attacked Turkish Cypriot villages throughout all Cyprus, and forced Turkish Cypriots to retreat into small enclaves. Although Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü appealed to Britain to intervene as a guarantor state, the British government opted to refer the matter to the United Nations (UN) and call in the UN peacekeeping forces, the intervention of which temporarily stopped the attack against Turkish Cypriot civilians.

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Is the separation of Turkish- and Greek Cypriot communities the result of Turkish Intervention in 1974?

Council of Europe Map indicating Turkish Cypriot enclaves in the period between 1964 and 1974
While Turkish Cypriots’ retreat into enclaves meant temporary protection from EOKA’s violence, it also meant total isolation from their regular daily lives and prevention from participating in their economic activities. By the end of 1963, Nicosia, the capital of the Republic of Cyprus, was already divided into Turkish and Greek sections, separated by the Green Line. By the end of 1964, most Turkish Cypriots who had lived outside the capital were forced into small enclaves, protected by small garrisons of United Nations Peacekeeping Forces, and isolated from their daily lives. In 1967, following the second terror campaign of EOKA against Turkish Cypriots, it was estimated that three-quarters of the island’s Turkish community were living in enclaves, which constituted only three percent of the island’s territory.  

As Turkey became more determined to protect the Turkish Community in Cyprus, however, forced President Makarios to shift from military to political and economic methods of struggle for enosis. Having realised that their struggle for enosis would take longer than they originally expected, the Greek Cypriot community supported Makarios’s new policy of isolating Turkish Cypriots economically and geographically. The economic sanctions on Turkish Cypriots, imposed by the ‘Republic of Cyprus’, created two separate economies, deepening the already present split between the two communities. During the period between 1968 and 1974 the Turkish Cypriot economy was spared from an even more severe depression thanks to Red Crescent relief shipments and financial assistance from Turkey (8 million Cyprus pounds annually). 

The de-facto ethnic separation of Turkish- and Greek Cypriots in 1964, which continues until today has arguably its roots in most Greek Cypriots’ refusal to treat Turkish Cypriots as equal citizens. Even expert scholars on Cyprus with an admitted pro-Greek bias acknowledge that a sizeable portion of Greek Cypriots do not consider Turkish Cypriots as their equals and compatriots. James Pettifer, who is among prominent scholars regarding Turkish-Greek relations and otherwise an adamant supporter of predominantly Greek causes, admits that the majority of Greek Cypriot people as well as politicians do not prefer to coexist with Turkish Cypriots in the form of a
federation or confederation. According to Pettifer, most Greek Cypriots political leaders do not want to share the recently accumulated wealth with Turkish Cypriots, and tacitly support the status quo. Although the recent economic crisis in the Euro-zone greatly affected the Greek Cypriot Administration, forcing the GASC government to apply to EU bail-out mechanism, the per capita income of Greek Cypriots remains higher than that of Turkish Cypriots.

![UN BUFFER ZONE DRIVE THROUGH OF MILITARY VEHICLES OR PERSONNEL PROHIBITED](image)

Entrance to the Dhekelia British Sovereign Base which borders both on TRNC and GASC
http://euobserver.com/843/116681

Given this innate notions of moral, economic and demographic superiority, it can safely be argued that most Greek Cypriots have never been willing to grant Turkish Cypriots political, as well as cultural equality. Since it has become impossible, at least in military terms, to impose restricted minority rights on Turkish Cypriots since 1974, the tacit support for the status quo among certain Greek Cypriots becomes more understandable. It goes also without saying that the ethnic separation of Turkish- and Greek Cypriot communities began at least a decade before the intervention of Turkey in 1974. In the light of these historical facts, it can safely be argued that the Greek Cypriot official argument regarding the peaceful coexistence and harmonious cohabitation of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots before the Turkish intervention in 1974 does not reflect the truth.

How did the European Union react when Cyprus was divided along ethnic lines in 1964 due to EOKA terror campaign?

Greek Cypriot Demonstrators with ‘Zito Enosis / Long Live Enosis’ banners outside the British High Commission Office in Nicosia, 1958
Although the Republic of Cyprus, founded in 1960, *de facto* ended by 1963, when the Greek Cypriot organs of government, administration and legislation proceeded to disregard the Turkish Cypriot participatory rights as guaranteed by the Constitution of 1960, the European Union continued to regard the Greek Cypriot authorities as the legitimate government of whole Cyprus. With the explicit support of the EU member states, (Resolution 186 of 1964), UN Security Council, in its Resolution 186, referred to the Government of Cyprus in a way which implied that the government manned only now by the Greek Cypriots, was the legitimate Government of Cyprus. Having interpreted this UN Resolution as the unconditional support of the international community, the Greek Cypriot authorities continued to usurp the titles of the bi-communal state until present.⁸

In 1967, when the Colonels’ Junta seized power in Greece, the situation of the Turkish Cypriots further deteriorated. In the same year, Greek Cypriot House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution, declaring that their struggle in Cyprus will continue until the union of Cyprus with Greece is achieved and they continued their attacks against Turkish Cypriots to force them to accept ENOSIS. Again, this illegal action of the Greek Cypriot was not criticized nor condemned by the European Union. All these events forced the Turkish Cypriots to organize their own national administration and this resulted in establishing the provisional Turkish Cypriot Administration, on 28 December 1967.

⁸ Dokuz Eylû University Official Webpage  
http://web.due.edu.tr/kbri/history/8474.html
Are Turkish settlers in the TRNC after 1974 a foreign element in Cyprus, as claimed by Greek Cypriot authorities?

Baroness Meral Hussein-Ece, an English Liberal Democrat member of the House of Lords. She is the first woman of Turkish Cypriot origin to be a member of either house of Parliament
Another strongly disputed issue which is related to the dubious Greek Cypriot claim about Greek- and Turkish Cypriot peaceful cohabitation prior to 1974 is the settlement of mainland Turks in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and Turkey’s alleged attempts to change the ethnic composition of Cyprus. According to the claims of Greek Cypriot Administration, Turkey aims at changing the demographic character and to distort the population balance between Turks and Greeks in Cyprus, in order to justify the claims of the Turkish side regarding the territorial and constitutional aspects of the Cyprus Problem. The Greek Cypriot officials insist that Turkish Cypriots never constituted more than 18 percent of Cyprus’ total population, and Turkish Cypriot entitlement to political and economic rights should not exceed this particular ratio in future negotiations.\(^9\)

In several official publications, the Greek Cypriot authorities went as far as claiming that Turkish Cypriots constitute only 11 percent of the island’s population.

A significant part of the Turkish Cypriot population, who had escaped EOKA violence in Cyprus and immigrated to Turkey, United Kingdom, and Australia, returned to the TRNC after the Turkish intervention in 1974. Since the majority of these Turkish Cypriots had already obtained Turkish or British, or Australian citizenship by the time of their return, it became difficult to determine the exact number of Turkish Cypriots among other nationalities. The problem of determining whether a returning Turkish Cypriot is rather ‘Cypriot’, ‘British’, or ‘Turkish’ becomes apparent especially in the case of the United Kingdom, which has been the primary destination of Turkish Cypriot immigrants. According to a study conducted by the British Government in 2009, there are 130,000 Turkish Cypriots in the United Kingdom, 18,000 of which were Cyprus-born. The study further states that there are several thousand Turkish Cypriots who arrived in the UK with a Turkish passport, and thus classified as a Turkish, rather than Turkish Cypriot.\(^{10}\)

As it is the case with Turkish Cypriots in the UK, it is also impossible to determine the exact number of Turkish Cypriots with Turkish citizenship who returned to the TRNC after the Turkish intervention in 1974. Nevertheless,

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\(^{10}\) [Official Website of the UK Department for Communities and Local Government, The Turkish and Turkish Cypriot Muslim Community in England](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1203710.pdf)
academic studies demonstrate that Turkish Cypriots made up a significant portion of about 100,000 Turkish nationals who settled in TRCN since 1974. Given that Greek Cypriot authorities destroyed birth records of several thousands of Turkish Cypriots in the period between 1963 and 1974, many returning Turkish nationals permanently lost their opportunity to prove their Turkish Cypriot ancestry.\footnote{Bertrand, G., ‘Cypriots in Britain: Diaspora(s) committed to peace?’, \textit{Turkish Studies},5:2, 92-110} Ironically, these Turkish Cypriots with solely Turkish citizenship, who were deprived of their birth records by Greek Cypriot authorities, are currently classified by the same authorities as ‘mainland Turkish settlers’ and ‘Turkish colonizers’. It can therefore be safely asserted that a very significant portion of the immigrants who settled in TRNC after 1974 have full or partial Turkish-Cypriot ancestry.
Have the Greek Cypriots always constituted a majority in Cyprus?

While it is still disputed among historians and academics whether Turkish Cypriots constituted a majority during any historical period in Cyprus, most scholars concur that the percentage of Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus was between 35 and 40 percent until early 20th century. Another undisputed fact is that the percentage of Turkish Cypriots in the total Cypriot population had been in steady decline since 1878, when Britain occupied the Ottoman-administered Cyprus. In the eighteenth century, the British consul in Syria, Simon De Vezin, believed that the Turkish population on the island outnumbered the Greek population by a ratio of two to one. According to De Vezin’s estimates, the Greek Cypriots numbered between 20,000 to 30,000 and the Turkish population around 60,000. By the time of the first British census of the island in 1881, Greek Cypriots numbered 140,000 and Turkish Cypriots 42,638. British authorities suggested for the small number of Turkish Cypriots was that many of them sold their property and migrated to mainland Turkey when the island was placed under British administration according to the Cyprus Convention of 1878.\(^\text{12}\)

In 1960, when the Republic of Cyprus was established, the Turkish Cypriot population were living in 114 mixed towns and villages and 117 wholly Turkish villages. These numbers signified a drastic decrease in the number of mixed villages in Cyprus, as their numbers had declined from 346 in

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1891 to 252 in 1931 to 114 in 1960. While a certain number of villages experienced the effects of urbanization and migration abroad, other villages became homogenized because of intercommunal tensions, in some cases caused by growing ethno-nationalist divisions and in others by local disputes. As a result, Turkish Cypriot population in a village moved to what they perceived as safer areas with larger Turkish concentrations. This phenomenon was almost entirely limited to Turkish Cypriots, mainly because minority Greek populations in ethnically mixed villages were less common. With the beginning of the EOKA (Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston) armed struggle against British colonial rule in 1955, tensions reached the villages, as EOKA’s local organization and activities were observed by Turkish Cypriots, who did not participate in the struggle. According to Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) “Turkish Cypriots who lived through this period invariably describe it as the moment when intercommunal relations deteriorated, often resulting in severed communication, as well as the loss of friendships and business relations. Turkish Cypriots report that at the local level, EOKA members often pressured Greek Cypriots to buy only from other Greek Cypriots, and to hire Greek Cypriots rather than Turkish Cypriots.”

Map 1: Distribution of Turkish Cypriots. Areas denoted with darker shades of red indicate heavier concentration of Turkish Cypriots. Areas denoted with yellow and orange indicate mixed Turkish- and Greek Cypriot settlements while white areas indicate areas solely inhabited by Greek Cypriots.}

While it is true that the mass immigration of mainland Turks to the TRNC raise certain concerns about personal safety and erosion of Turkish Cypriot culture, Turkish Cypriots generally welcome well-mannered and educated mainland Turks who did not oppose integrating into Turkish Cypriot society. Most Turkish Cypriots also point out that they oppose only those mainland Turks who come to TRNC with purpose of involving in illegal activities. In contrast to the related Greek Cypriot claims that TRNC does not possess sovereign rights, Turkish Cypriot authorities deport a significant number of Turkish nationals who break the laws of TRNC. Moreover, TRNC citizenship is, in most cases, granted only to those Turkish nationals who had been living in TRNC for more than 5 years with a proven record of legal and gainful economic activity. Although there have been numerous cases where TRNC citizenship was granted to legally undeserving Turkish nationals in exchange for political or economic favors, this wrongful practice is proven to be an exception rather than the rule.

Regarding the Greek Cypriot claims about Turkish distortion of ethnic composition and Turkish Cypriot/Greek Cypriot rate of Cyprus, on the other hand, numerous academic studies prove that Turkish Cypriots have generally been constituting much more than only 18 percent of the island’s population. While it is still disputable whether Turkish Cypriots have ever constituted a majority in Cyprus since the Ottoman conquest in 1571, it is an undisputed fact that Turkish Cypriots’ population ratio fluctuated between 30 and 40 percent during the British rule in Cyprus (1878-1960). The upsurge of Greek Cypriot nationalism in early 1950s and its violent campaign for Enosis (Union with Greece) was not directed only against the British rule, but also against Turkish Cypriots who were accused of being British collaborators. The EOKA-B propaganda and deteriorating economic conditions forced about 30 thousand Turkish Cypriots to emigrate between 1955 and 1974.

15 Albaba, Arzu. ‘KKTC’de Yakıncılara Sırrı Değ Edilmemeli’ İstanbul Üniversitesi Milletlerarası Hukuk Bülteni. Sayı 27
16 Arbel, Benjamin. Cyprus, the Franks and Venice in the 13th-16th Centuries. New York: Ashgate, p.213
Turkish- and Greek Cypriot Attitudes Prior to the Referendum on the Annan Plan (Or: Was the EU justified in admitting the Greek Cypriot Administration as the legitimate government of entire Cyprus?)

TRNC President Mehmet Ali Talat’s election campaign office bearing his posters which read, in Turkish, “Yesterday or the World”, and call for the approval of the Annan Plan: http://www.spiegel.de/fotostrecke/photo-gallery-northern-cyprus-prepares-to-vote-fotostrecke-53766.html
As it became increasingly evident that the Greek Cypriot Administration would be unilaterally admitted to the European Union, the United Nations, under the leadership of Secretary General Kofi Annan, intensified their efforts to reunify the island and to secure the EU membership of Turkish Cypriots as well. Negotiations regarding the initiative of Kofi Annan started on 10 March 2010, with the participation of Rauf Denktas, the President of TRNC, and the Greek Cypriot President Tassos Papadopoulos. Following a one year debate regarding the wording and the details of the reunification plan, both Turkish- and Greek Cypriots agreed on 31 March 2004 that the Annan Plan was ready to be put to referenda on 24 April 2004. While Turkey officially declared its strong support for the approval of the Annan Plan, the Greek Government limited itself to the vague statement that the Plan’s positive elements outweighed difficulties.18

Shortly before the referendum on the Annan Plan on 24 April 2004, the GASC President Tassos Papadopoulos, as well as the majority of Greek Cypriot political leaders, was strongly opposed to the Annan plan, and simultaneously (and paradoxically) adamant in their opinion that Turkey was entirely responsible for Cyprus’ failure to reunify. With the tacit support of GASC authorities, those Greek Cypriots who supported the Annan plan were intimidated despite heavy protests from United Nations and the European Union. While GASC President Tassos Papadopoulos publicly condemned the plan, the Bishop of Nicosia threatened Greek Cypriots who supported the Annan plan with eternal damnation.19 Mainly due to the state-backed negative propaganda and intimidation campaigns, all major political parties in the GASC, with the exception Giafagos Clerides’ Democratic Coalition Party (DISI), publicly declared their opposition the Annan Plan.

When an overwhelming majority of Greek Cypriots rejected the Annan Plan on 24 April 2004, the initial reaction of the European Union was disappointment and anger at Greek Cypriot Administrations’ attitude. Günter Verheugen, the Enlargement Commissioner who had helped Cyprus into the EU, declared that he felt disappointed and cheated by the Greek-Cypriot government. Chris Patten, European Commission’s External Affairs Commissioner, accused the Greek Cypriots of betrayal and stated that the

Greek Cypriots were not going to be a popular addition to the EU family.\textsuperscript{20} To the chagrin of Turkey and TRNC, however, European Union’s sympathy towards Turkish Cypriots, which found their expression in the statements of Chris Patten and Günter Verheugen, vanished within few months following the Greek Cypriot accession to the EU on 1 May 2004.

Did the European Union play a role in improving Turkish-EU relations and the situation of Turkish Cypriots after the Greek Cypriot accession?
At the Brussels Summit on 16-17 December 2004, the European Union set 3 October 2005 as the starting date of Turkey’s accession negotiations, but officially linked eventual Turkish membership to the Union’s ‘absorption capacity’, a concept which could neither be measured nor evaluated. On 29 July 2005, Turkey and the EU signed the Additional Protocol which extended the Ankara Agreement to new member states that acceded to the EU in 2004. While signing the Additional Protocol, Turkey also annexed an official declaration which explicitly stated that Turkey, by signing the Additional Protocol, did not recognize the “Republic of Cyprus” by any means.\(^{21}\) The European Council, in response to the Turkey’s refusal to recognize ‘the Republic of Cyprus’, blocked eight negotiation chapters with Turkey in 2006. According to the decision of the European Council, “negotiations will not be opened on eight chapters relevant to Turkey’s restrictions regarding the Republic of Cyprus and no chapter will be provisionally closed until the Commission confirms that Turkey has fully implemented the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement.”\(^{22}\)

Despite the EU’s failure, or unwillingness, to keep its promises to Turkey, as well as its initial criticism of the GASC for refusing the Annan Plan, the overall blame for Turkey-GASC conflict was shifted to Turkey. According to the Greek Foreign Ministry, Turkey’s refusal to establish diplomatic relations with ‘the Republic of Cyprus’, (the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Treaty, EU Declaration of 21 September 2005), is paradoxical given that Turkey wishes to join an organization one member of which it does not recognize.\(^{23}\)

In other words, Greek diplomats point out that Turkey accepted the start of EU negotiations on 3 October 2005, more than one year after the EU had admitted GASC as a full member despite heavy Turkish opposition. According to the reasoning of Greek Foreign Ministry, Turkey should have refused starting accession negotiations with the EU, especially if it felt so wronged about the accession of GASC into the EU.

Regarding the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, the EU clearly demonstrated its unwillingness to assist the TRNC by blocking eight negotiation chapters

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with Turkey. Given that Turkey refused to open its ports to Greek Cypriot vessels simply because the EU does not allow any vessels from TRNC into its own territory, the Union’s choice to ‘retaliate to Turkey’s retaliation’ further exacerbated the situation of Turkish Cypriots. During the eight years which followed the Greek Cypriot accession in 2004, the EU categorically failed to implement any plan or proposals which were objected by the Greek Cypriot Administration. As a result of this official complacency, the Greek Cypriot leadership never found itself in a position to reform or amend its usurping policies. According to the BBC, ‘the EU agreed in 2004 to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community, and to encourage its economic development. Soon afterwards, the European Commission put forward draft regulations on opening Turkish Cypriot ports and airports to direct trade, and providing 250m euros (£168m) of aid. But the Cypriot government has so far blocked the regulation on direct trade, arguing that this would be tantamount to recognising the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.’

While addressing the GASC Parliament on 28 May 2012, President of the EU Council Herman van Rompuy stated that “overcoming the situation was difficult in 1974, it was difficult in 2000…, but if nothing changes it will still be difficult in 2025… Nobody should be a prisoner of the past. [Cypriots] can choose a different future.” President van Rompuy also added that ‘Cyprus can count on [his own] support and on that of the European Union in the efforts to reach a settlement.’ While van Rompuy’s declaration of support regarding Cyprus issue and his optimism about the future is noteworthy, it is also necessary to remind him that no Turkish Cypriots representatives have been allowed in the alleged ‘Parliament of Cyprus’ since 1963, eleven years before the Turkish intervention. For the last 49 years, all EU statesmen, including Herman van Rompuy, have been addressing an assembly which calls itself ‘the Parliament of Cyprus’, despite being composed of solely Greek Cypriot deputies. The President of the EU Council should therefore consider the inconsistency of his opinion with regard to his own participation in Turkish Cypriots’ isolation by addressing the Parliament of GASC and disregarding the Parliament of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus during his visit to the divided island.

24 BBC http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2839603.stm
Has Greek Cypriot Membership in the EU so far contributed to the solution of the Cyprus problem?

TRNC President Mehmet Ali Talat and GASC President Demetris Christofias enjoying coffee prior to intercommunal talks in UN-controlled part of Nicosia
http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jan/24/cyprus-reunification-talks
Although Turkish Cypriots were justifiably convinced that the Greek Cypriots no longer have any incentive to reach a solution regarding the unification of Cyprus after GASC’s EU membership, they were willing to continue intercommunal talks with their Greek Cypriot counterparts. Despite the prevailing Turkish Cypriot pessimism due to the Greek Cypriot rejection of the Annan Plan and eventual EU Membership, the Prime Minister of TRNC, Mehmet Ali Talat, who was elected to the TRNC Presidency on 17 May 2005, brought new impetus and enthusiasm to intercommunal talks. While Talat’s first three years coincided with the GASC Presidency of Tassos Papadopoulos, the mastermind who orchestrated the Greek Cypriot rejection of the Annan Plan, Cyprus’ future seemed more optimistic when Demetris Christofias, leader of the communist AKEL party, became the GASC President on 28 February 2008. Since Demetris Christofias declaredly belonged to a political and ideological movement that prioritized rapprochement and cooperation between Greek- and Turkish Cypriots, expectations regarding a permanent solution rose on both parts of Cyprus.

Few months after the inauguration of the new GASC President, on 1 July 2008, Talat and Christofias ‘agreed to reach a solution that would be bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality, as defined in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, for a state with a single sovereignty, a single citizenship, and a single international personality.’\(^{26}\) On the base of the initial agreement between Mehmet Ali Talat and Demetris Christofias, Turkish- and Greek-Cypriot leaders met 141 times under the auspices of United Nations Good Offices Mission in Cyprus. The last 70 of these 141 meetings took place between Demetris Christofias and Derviş Eroğlu, who was elected to the TRNC Presidency on 23 April 2010. As agreed by the Turkish- and Greek Cypriot sides, as well as by the United Nations, the meetings and negotiations were being conducted under the overriding principle of the “integrated whole approach” which means that “nothing is agreed unless everything is agreed.”\(^{27}\) The ambitious nature of this ‘integrated whole approach’ however, rather played into the hands of the Greek Cypriot negotiators who focused on minor disagreements despite Turkish Cypriot concessions on major issues.

\(^{26}\) Interview with Demetris Christofias, Turkish Policy Quarterly, 01/2012 http://www.turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/2012-1-DemetrisChristofiasInterview.pdf

\(^{27}\) Official Website of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Cyprus http://www.uncypriotalks.org/ncontent.cfm?a_id=2921
As GASC President Christofias also admitted, the new TRNC President Derviş Eroğlu committed himself to continue negotiations from the point Christofias left off with the previous TRNC President Talat, but refused to adhere to the convergences in case Greek Cypriot reversal on previously agreed issues. Given that Derviş Eroğlu, belonging to the political movement of Rauf Denktas, the founder and first president of the TRNC, had a tougher stance on sovereignty issue, the Greek Cypriot leadership could effectively blame Eroğlu with intransigence. The Greek Cypriot decision to start exploratory oil and natural gas drilling without consulting Turkish Cypriot authorities on 18 September 2012 further deteriorated the prospects of bi-communal talks. The negative outlook regarding the Cyprus question became also evident in the latest ‘Assessment report of the Secretary-General on the status of the negotiations in Cyprus’, dated 12 March 2012, in which Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, stated that .... “the political environment in which the negotiations are currently taking place has become increasingly difficult.”

It goes without saying, then, that the veracity of Greek Cypriot claim that the failure to reunite Cyprus until this day has been solely due to the intransigence of Turkey and Turkish Cypriot leadership, is highly questionable. Especially since accession of GASC to the EU, Greek Cypriot leaders have been involving the Union in the bi-communal talks whenever they need to refrain from rejecting a Turkish Cypriot compromise. By doing so, Greek Cypriot negotiators often avoid being seen as the intransigent side, and point a finger at Turkish Cypriot leaders whenever they reject a Greek Cypriot proposal. Moreover, due to the fact that Turkish Cypriots are not allowed to be represented in EU institutions, they are also deprived of the chance to challenge and disprove the veracity of Greek Cypriot claims. By turning a deaf ear to Turkish Cypriot arguments, however, the EU sentences itself to the narrowest and totally misleading version of the Cyprus conflict, which is namely the official doctrine of the Greek Cypriot Administration.

It can therefore be stated that the Greek Administration of Southern Cyprus, has so far proved to be overenthusiastic to abuse its EU membership in its relations with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The fact that the

28 Official Page of United Nations Good Offices Mission in Cyprus. ‘Assessment report of the Secretary-General on the status of the negotiations in Cyprus’
European Union allowed the GASC to become a member of the Union despite having rejected the Annan Plan provides Greek Cypriot leaders with unprecedented and unconditional EU support when dealing with their Turkish Cypriot counterparts. Since the Greek Cypriot accession to the European Union in 2004 is unmistakably a bigger EU concession as compared to the assumption of European Council Presidency in 2012, the Greek Cypriot leadership has a well-deserved right to assume that it has been given a carte blanche when dealing with its Turkish Cypriot counterparts. Turkey, however, so far refused, or failed, to give up its expectation that the European Union would intervene on Turkish Cypriots’ behalf, if only in cases of extreme and undisputed Greek Cypriot intransigence. Mainly due to this unrealistic expectation, however, Turkey is destined to be continuously disappointed in its relations with the Union, simply because the EU does not consider it worth to amend its past mistakes regarding Cyprus.

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon with TRNC President Derviş Eroğlu and GASC President Demetris Christofias in UN Headquarters in New York.
http://turkey.setimes.com/tr/articles/ses/articles/features/departments/world/2012/03/27/feature-01
Upon its unilateral assumption of the EU Presidency on 1 July 2012, GASC President Demetris Christofias stated that his government will not use the EU Presidency to pursue its national agenda. President Christofias further stated that they would support Turkey’s EU bid as long as Turkey cooperates with the European Union with the aim of bridging the differences between Turkey and member states. Christofias also aimed to assure Turkey that they “will implement the decisions of the EU in relation to the candidate countries, including Turkey, with objectivity and neutrality”. The GASC President concluded by remarking that Turkish Cypriots, as well as Turkey would benefit from the fruits of discovery and exploitation of hydrocarbons which are currently conducted unilaterally by the Greek Cypriot Administration on behalf of entire Cyprus. Nevertheless, President Christofias warned that the Cyprus problem must first be solved so that Turkey and for Turkish Cypriots could benefit from these hydrocarbon discoveries.29

Because of EU’s failure to kept its promise regarding the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot people in 2004 and the prevention of Turkish Cypriots from forming closer social, cultural relationship with the EU at sports and commerce, the negotiation process would have continued on a healthier ground. As TRNC Prime Minister İrfan Küçük duly observed, unfulfilled promises of the EU spoilt the Greek Cypriots in the EU and provided the Greek Cypriot Administration that could not even solve its internal problem the opportunity to assume the EU Presidency.30

Can the recent rapprochement between Turkey and Greece contribute to the solution of Cyprus problem?

Despite the prevailing attitude of self righteousness, it can be argued that certain segments of Greek Cypriot society recently started to make goodwill gestures towards the Turkish Cypriots, which were quite unimaginable prior to the Greek Cypriot EU membership in 2004. Although Greek Cypriot Administration’s international campaign against TRNC’s recognition continues relentlessly, several Greek Cypriot statesmen and opinion leaders admit past errors, and express their condemnation of EOKA-B’s terroristic activities. Demetris Christofias, President of GASC and leader of the Greek Cypriot Communist Party (AKEL), apologized for the actions of EOKA-B against Turkish Cypriots, and for Cypriot state’s failure to protect the Turkish Cypriot community. Glafcos Clerides, a prominent Greek Cypriot statesman and former President of GASC, sincerely admitted in 2006 that Enosis would remain as an ideal, however an unrealistic one, and that no Greek Cypriot would dare to publicly oppose Enosis.\(^{31}\) While the emotional attachment of Greek Cypriots to the Enosis idea has been the biggest stumbling block in front of Turkish- and Greek Cypriot dialog, the recent increase in Greek Cypriot willingness to admit past mistakes may be interpreted as a modest hope for optimism.

As early as in 1993, British historian James Pettifer had predicted that all conflicts between Turkey and Greece, as well as those between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, could be solved once Greek leaders would abandon their claims of moral superiority over Turkey simply because Greece shares the same religion with civilized Europe. In his authoritative book about Greece, Pettifer predicted that Greece ‘may make possible better relations with Turkey, in that for so long this dispute has been symbolized at a certain level of the Greek political mentality as a contest between the civilized Christian West, represented by Greece, and the authoritarian, anti-democratic Turkish East with its Moslem religion and unhealthy political traditions…”

Arguably, the rapprochement between Turkey and Greece was partly owed to the fact that Greece gave up its claim of historical moral superiority over Turkey which had gained widespread acceptance throughout Europe. In other words, Greek statesmen showed political maturity and goodwill by not resorting to Europe’s historical prejudices about Turkey as much as they had done prior to 1999. By refraining from requesting EU’s assistance and intervention on Greek behalf, Greece managed to tackle its problems with Turkey bilaterally, and thus convinced their Turkish counterparts that Turkey does not have to deal with prejudiced third parties, i.e. the European Union, which has been adamantly indoctrinated with pro-Greek opinion since Greece’s EU accession in 1981. Despite having managed to turn its own arguments into EU arguments following its EU membership, Greece, in most instances, did not encourage the EU to intervene in Turkish-Greek disputes on Greece’s behalf. Greek refusal to involve the European Union in Turkish-Greek disputes, in turn, strengthened the dialog and empathy between Greece and Turkey, which resulted in significant improvements in Greek-Turkish relationship between 1999 until present.

Does the European Union have a Cyprus policy of its own?

According to the European Commission, “the whole of the island is part of the EU. However, in the northern part of the island, in the areas in which the Government of Cyprus does not exercise effective control, EU legislation is suspended in line with Protocol 10 of the Accession Treaty 2003…. Yet, the suspension does not affect the personal rights of Turkish Cypriots as EU citizens.”

The European Council, in its official statement, is also very supportive of the Turkish Cypriot Community, ostensibly due to the Turkish Cypriot approval of the Annan Plan. According to its own official website, “The Council is determined to put an end to the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community and to facilitate the reunification of Cyprus by encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community. The Council invited the Commission to bring forward comprehensive proposals to this end with particular emphasis on the economic integration of the island and on improving contact between the two communities and with the EU.”

TRNC President Derviş Eroğlu receiving EU Commissioner Stefan Füle during his visit to TRNC in 2012
http://www.kktcb.org/content05.aspx?id=3&sayfa=22

The contradictory and inaccurate nature of the European Union’s claims regarding the protection of the personal rights of Turkish Cypriots as EU citizens are most evident in the fact that not a single Turkish Cypriot is allowed into the European Parliament which allocated six seats to the representatives from the ‘Republic of Cyprus’. During the eight years which have passed following the Greek Cypriot Administration’s EU membership, the European Union did not make any proposal or demand regarding the assignment of seats to Turkish Cypriot representatives. Moreover, the GASC authorities categorically rejected demands from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to hand two seats in the next European Parliament to Turkish Cypriot representatives.35 A further proposal by several MEPs to acknowledge Turkish as an official EU language following the Turkish Cypriot approval of the Annan Plan, was also rejected at the European Parliament.36

The indecisiveness and hesitation of the European Union to become part of the debate regarding the right of Turkish Cypriots to participate in the European Parliament elections clearly demonstrated the EU’s lack of its own Cyprus policy. While the European Union confirmed that those Turkish Cypriots with ‘Republic of Cyprus’ citizenship were eligible to vote and get elected, the EU refrained from interfering on behalf of Turkish Cypriots petitioners. The European Union further exacerbated its own position by failing to convince Greek Cypriot Administration to properly inform those Turkish Cypriots who were eligible to participate in the elections. In 2007, a small number MEPs belonging to the Socialist Group criticized the lack of action and of initiatives regarding the issue of Turkish Cypriot MEPs, and proposed a draft amendment to allow Turkish Cypriot participation in the European Parliaments as full members, or observers. Nevertheless, this proposal was rejected mainly due to the opposition of European Peoples Party (EPP), which is mainly composed of Christian Democrats.37

The EU seems to be driven more by Greek pressure and reactions to events than by a well-defined Cyprus policy of its own. It has thus raised Greek and Greek Cypriot expectations that they will succeed in their plans for the

36 http://www.todayzaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=delay&link=103051
37 MEPs consider Turkish Cypriot observers in EU parliament' EuObserver
 http://euobserver.com/8432/3696
political future of the island, with EU membership “appearing for them to be a clever way to implement the basic freedoms of the acquis communautaire, with the consequence of an effective Greek Cypriot domination on the whole of the island”.\(^{38}\) The EU is thus faced with the dilemma of having to communicate with the Greek Cypriot Administration which claims to represent the whole island, and ignoring completely Turkish Cypriots whose contribution is invaluable in case the EU decides to form its own Cyprus policy.

\(^{38}\) Sonyel, Salahi. “The European Unions Mediterranean Policy and the Cyprus imbroglio” Center For Strategic Research