

**Forum:** General Assembly 4

**Issue:** Towards a United Cyprus

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## Introduction

Since its declaration as a British Empire protectorate prior to WW1, the Cypriot island has been home to intermittent periods of instability, conflict, and chaos. As part of a secret agreement made between the UK and the Ottoman Empire at the Cyprus Convention in 1878, the UK was granted administrative over the island in hopes of protecting it from an increasing Russian threat against the waning Islamic power. Nevertheless, following the onset of the First World War which pitted the two countries against one another, the UK nullified the accords made in the convention. The newly formed Republic of Turkey recognized British sovereignty over the island in 1923. The Cypriot island nation was formally declared a colony of the Crown in 1925.

British occupation, however, came with fallbacks of its own. The Cypriot population is primarily comprised of individuals of Greek or Turkish descent. Under British rule, Greek Cypriots fervently demanded union of the island with Greece (a union referred to as *enosis*), as many of the Aegean and Ionian islands had done following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. British opposition to these demands led to an unprecedented upsurge of domestic violence and hostility in what is known as the Cyprus Revolt of 1931. The UK's response was equally unforgiving, dispatching a considerable amount of Military reinforcements to the island and disbanding Cypriot media agencies and civil institutions in hopes of regaining control of the riotous colony. Discussions on enosis cooled with the onset of the Second World War.

In 1946, the British government announced plans to invite Greek Cypriots to form a Consultative Assembly to discuss a new constitution. The offer was declined as there was no mention of enosis (union with Greece). In 1950 the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, the central political voice for Greek Cypriots, held a referendum which found that roughly 97% of the Greek Cypriot population wanted the union. This prompted international recognition of potential union of the British colony with the Greek state from a number of supranational organizations, including the United Nations. Nevertheless, the British government remained adamant on their stance for the issue, dismissing it altogether. However, when international pressure did not suffice to make Britain respond, violence escalated among a number of anti-colonial independence opposition groups, primarily the guerilla militant group *Ethniki Organosis Kyprion*

*Agoniston* (EOKA), which coordinated a number of terrorist attacks on police stations and other public venues.

All this time, amidst talks of enosis and violence among the Greek Cypriot population, the minority Turkish Cypriot populous also sought to advance their own interests during such troubling times. In 1957, militant Turkish Cypriots responded to enosis demands with *taksim*, a call for a partition within the island of which the northern half would be occupied by the Turkish state itself. This event provides the basis for the Cyprus dispute we see still today. British disregard for Turkish Cypriot desires spawned increasing hostility on their side as well. Turkish Cypriot riots and demonstrations flooded the streets, with the Turkish government producing a hostile response as well.

Violence among and even between these communities was ultimately answered with the Zurich-London Agreement of 1959, which established a presidential unitary representative democratic regime requiring a Greek Cypriot President and a Turkish Cypriot Vice President for the newly independent Cypriot state. In 1961, the Republic of Cyprus became the 99<sup>th</sup> member of the UN. Nevertheless, The Zurich agreement did not succeed, however, in establishing cooperation between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot populations. The accords did not address enosis or *taksim* demands. Greek Cypriots saw Turkish protections and ethnically specific institutions as impediments to the functionality of government. In November 1963, President Makarios, the first president of the newly independent state and a Greek Cypriot, implemented a number of constitutional amendments designed to eliminate Turkish Cypriots role in the government. Such action was met with threats from the Turkish state. Widespread intercommunal fighting ensued and in December 1963, the Akritas Plan was put into motion which definitively eliminated Turkish Cypriot participation in the central government, removing officials from office including Vice President Dr Fazıl Küçük.

Violence, once again, riddled Cypriot society. The power-sharing government collapsed. Peace talks facilitated by the UN on constitutional amendments, separatist states, and devolved legislative powers failed miserably. Separateness would have denied the Makarios government formation of a unitary, if bi-communal, state. The UN, which recognized the Greek government as the legitimate state of Cyprus, ultimately sent in a peacekeeping force, the UNFICYP, in hopes of stabilizing the region. However, things just got worse.

Serious rifts began to arise within the Greek Cypriot government between Makarios and pro-enosis national forces. Makarios had not placed enough importance on the island's union with the Greek state, prompting such divisions. Assassination attempts were made on the president and the former EOKA returned to Cyprus now, not with Turkish Cypriots in sight but Makarios himself. In July of 1974, a military coup under the leadership of Nikos Sampson, a firm supporter of enosis and a 'hammer of the Turks', usurped power from the Makarios administration. Turkey called on the Greek government to dismiss Sampson and ensure the integrity of the Cypriot island, but Greece refused. Failing to spur action from the international community, Turkey decided to act unilaterally in solving the conflict, conducting a military invasion of the island just days after Sampson had come into power, occupying the northern quarter of the country.

Peace talks were then held in Geneva between Greece, Turkey, and Britain, which called for a ceasefire between Greek and Turkish forces. A partition was marked by a United Nations Buffer Zone, or "green line", running east to west across the island that separated Turkish and Greek Cypriot populations. Turkey, however, refused to remove its military presence from the island until an agreement was made granting Turkish Cypriots autonomy from the Greek Cypriot government. Humanitarian crises that came with such interventions concerned many within the United Nations Good Offices. Discussion would go on for years attempting to reach an agreement on the issue. In May 1983, the UN passed a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all occupation forces from Cyprus. Turkish Cypriots, however, responded by declaring independence for the Northern Turkish state, pushing back compromise discussions on the formation of a federal state with Greek and Turkish constituents. By this time, only Turkey recognized the northern state as its own sovereign nation against UN mandate. Leaders of the two communities could not see eye to eye. Gridlock and legal battles characterized the next 20 years.

The UN's next and last significant attempt at reaching a settlement came in the form of the Annan Plan in the 2000s, proposed by then UN secretary general Kofi Annan. The Republic of Cyprus would become the United Cyprus Republic with two component states: a northern Turkish Cypriot constituent and a southern Greek constituent. Each part would have had its own national assemblies as well as send members to a bicameral legislature on the federal level. In April of 2004, referendums were then held within the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities to garner the opinion of the populous on the plan. Referendums in favor of the plans were required for its implementation. Turkish Cypriots voted in favor but the Greeks voted a resounding nay, yet another failed attempt at resolving the Cyprus dispute.

Cyprus joined the EU in May of that same year. Some 6 years later, new leadership within the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities spawned discussion on the crisis. On 31 January 2010, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon arrived in Cyprus to accelerate talks aimed at reuniting the country. These talks, however, achieved little to no progress towards solving the issue. In February 2014, renewed negotiations to settle the Cyprus dispute began once again after several years of warm relations between the north and the south. Nicos Anastasiades and Derviş Eroğlu, leaders of Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, released a joint declaration calling for renewed peace talks in hopes of reuniting Cyprus into a singular sovereign state.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Demonstrators

A demonstrator can be defined as a participant in a public protest or march. Violence against demonstrators has been one of the main sources of Human rights violations in Burundi.

### Opposition Groups

Often referred to as rebels or youth militia groups, opposition forces signify any and all peoples who dissent with their state's governments. These individuals can either illustrate their dissent through violent or nonviolent protests.

## **Civil War**

Civil war is defined as a conflict amongst individuals of the same country or state. The Civil War in Burundi was a war amongst two cultural groups, two groups which both reside as citizens of the Burundian State.

## **Coup**

A coup, or coup d'etat, is a sudden and sometimes violent, illegal seizure of governmental power. Coups often occur in response to feelings of oppression or feelings of greed. Coups are founded on ideologies that oppose that of the established government.

## **Referendum**

A referendum is a vote by all enrolled electors on a question of public policy. It is said to be the most direct form of democracy, allowing the people themselves to shape and influence policy and decision making processes within a state.

## **Enosis**

Enosis refers to the unionist philosophy of Greek citizens in foreign nations, namely Cyprus, looking to incorporate their region into the Greek state.

## **Taksim**

Taksim, literally translated as "division" or "partition" in Turkish and Arabic, is a separatist philosophy adopted by Turkish Cypriots in hopes of establishing an independent Turkish state from the Cypriot island. This was made in response to Greek enosisism.

# **Background Information**

## **Greek and Turkish Cypriots**

Cyprus was initially inhabited by Mycenaean Greeks in 1100 BCE. The Greek Cypriot population retained a considerable amount of freedom from expansive regimes through the years, including Egypt and Persia. Nevertheless, the island nation was ultimately conquered by Alexander the Great then passed onto a number of other historical superpowers, such as the Roman Empire. Ultimately, in August of 1571, the Cypriot island was conquered by the Ottoman Empire and remained under Islamic rule for three centuries. It was during this time period that a minority Turkish population was first introduced to

the island nation. Ethnic alliances serve as a central cleavage within Cypriot society. Greek and Turkish Cypriots have always held contradictory political ideologies, cultures, and alliances, which has led to the dispute we discuss to this day.

### **Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA)**

The EOKA was created in the mid to late 1950s with a singular focus to liberate Cyprus from oppressive British colonial rule. The group was formed as a Greek nationalist organization seeking to create an independent Greek Cypriot state that could eventually unionize with Greece (enosis). The military campaign officially began on April 1, 1955, when EOKA conducted an attack on the British controlled Cyprus Broadcasting Station in Nicosia. The organization's efforts, however, were largely limited to sabotaging military installations, convoys, and patrols as well as assassinating high ranking British officials and informants. The military leader of the EOKA was Georgios Grivas, a veteran of the Greek army, while the political arm of the organization was headed by Makarios, first president of the Republic of Cyprus.

### **Zurich Agreement**

The London and Zurich Agreement was held on February 19, 1959 in Lancaster House in London. In attendance were representatives from Turkey, Greece, the United Kingdom and Cypriot community leaders (Makarios for the Greek Cypriots and Dr Fazıl Küçük for the Turkish Cypriots). The fundamental purpose of the agreement was to settle ongoing hostilities between Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities against one another and British colonial rule. The accords provided a basis to the form of government, a constitution in essence, that was to be implemented after it was declared a sovereign state following the removal of British administration of the territory. One provision given by the agreement was the Treaty of Guarantee which promised that Cyprus and the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Greece would disallow the promotion of "either the union of the Republic of Cyprus with any other State, or the partition of the Island". This treaty was, of course, disregarded in the years that followed. Following the Turkish military invasion in 1974, only the Greek Cypriot state recognized the legitimacy of the provisions made within the constitution granted to them in these agreements.

### **The Akritas Plan**

The Akritas plan was drafted in the early 1960s by then Cypriot minister of interior Polycarpus Georghadjis. Its fundamental purpose was to persuade the international community that the provisions made in the London and Zurich agreements provided protections of the Turkish Cypriot minority that deeply hindered the government's ability to function effectively. The plan actively sought to nullify the Treaty of Guarantee outlined in the Zurich agreements as well, so that, ideally, the Greek dominant Cypriot state could fulfill its ultimate desire of enosis, union with Greece. In November 1963, Greek Cypriot President Makarios made a 13 point proposal to amend the Cypriot constitution, which were wholly rejected by the Turkish Cypriot Leadership on 16 December 1963. This was followed by what became known as Bloody Christmas, during which some 150 Turkish Cypriots died and 10s of thousands fled their homes. Turkish Cypriot leadership within the government was forcibly removed.

## Joint Agreement

The Joint agreement was an accord made between Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders Nicos Anastasiades and Derviş Eroğlu in February 2014. The agreement's provisions include the necessity of re-engaging in discussion on a settlement to reunify the Cypriot nation under a Federal constitution with two constituent states of equal status in hopes of "respecting democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as each other's distinct identity and integrity and ensuring their common future in a united Cyprus within the European Union."

## Effects on Society

Violence during the Cypriot dispute has shaken the social foundations on the island nation. Instabilities and terrorist attacks spawned by militant maneuvers by EOKA and the Turkish State have resulted in a significant number of fatalities. The Turkish invasion in 1974, itself, accounted for the mobilization of a combined 100,000+ Greek Cypriot and Turkish troops. Belligerent encounters between opposition forces resulted in more than 8,000 civilian and military casualties with countless more citizens missing or severely injured. Nine UN peacekeeping force personnel were also killed, while 65 were left wounded. Ongoing disputes among Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities have only offered further impediments to the development of the country. Public and private educational and financial institutions have struggled to provide their services to citizens as a result of increased political and social volatility. UN special political missions struggle to remain in contact with sub-regional organizations in hopes of transporting resources and personnel to provide field-based social assistance to Cypriot citizens. Hostilities have lessened over time, but continue nonetheless.

## Major Countries and Organizations Involved

### United Kingdom (UK)

The United Kingdom has been a consistent player within Cyprus' political sphere. The UK, of course, held administrative control of the island nation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It's rule during that time, however, did little to advance the quality of life for Cypriot citizens, which then led to uprising from both the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. The UK was central in forming the nation's first constitution and system of government. In modern times, the UK acts as an arbiter in discussions between Greek, Turkish, and Cypriot representatives in reaching a settlement to resolve land claims and governmental control disputes. The UK was a firm advocate for peacekeeping intervention into the country by the United Nations following the Turkish military invasion. Clearly, the UK is looking towards accelerating discussion on the Cypriot dispute in hopes of stabilizing the region and ensuring its posterity for years to come.

### Turkey

Turkey has played an active role in Cypriot dispute even before its onset. It was the Ottoman Empire that ruled over the island for centuries prior to the First World War. Turkey played a minor role in the early developments of Cypriot dispute under British colonial rule as it recovered from the destruction and instability brought to it by the World Wars. Turkish Cypriot promotion of taksim in 1957, however, brought the Middle Eastern powerhouse back into the discussion. The country's been an active supporter of the minority Turkish Cypriot population in hopes of ensuring their influence is not undermined within Cypriot politics and society. The Turkish state has been quite reactionary and assertive in its dealings with the Cypriot crisis, considering any encroachment on Turkish Cypriot rights to sovereignty and participation in the Cypriot political process as threats against their own. Turkish involvement, of course, ultimately culminated with its military invasion of the island in 1974 and subsequent occupation of the north most 28% of the nation.

## Greece

Greece has continually stood as an avid supporter of the Greek Cypriot cause in the Cyprus dispute, promoting enosis and opposing any calls from the Turkish state or any international body to remove the Greek presence within the Cypriot government. Greece was central in establishing Cyprus as its own sovereign nation. Greece, too, faced a significant shift in its own government to a military power following a coup on April 21 1967. The instability that followed kept the Greek state out of the Cypriot discussion for quite some time, but the country soon rejoined the conversation after less than a decade. It's firmest declaration being an assertive declination of Turkish calls to remove Sampson from power following the Cyprus coup and the Akritas plan.

## European Union (EU)

The European Union has served as a catalyst for settlement talks in Cyprus. In 1997, the European Union opened up accession negotiations with the Republic of Cyprus, which prompted a unified desire to resolve the Greek-Turkish dispute in hopes of ensuring an easy transfer into the union. The EU discouraged Turkish involvement in the dispute and that both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities take on moderate stance in hopes of reaching an agreement. Opposition groups argued, though, that the decision would remove the incentive of the Greek Cypriots to reach a settlement. The EU decided then that a settlement would be better imposed onto the nation if the nation was already a member, thus the accession of Cyprus into the EU was set for May 2004. The EU tended to favor the Greek Cypriot side in the discussion, however. July 5 1994, the European Court of Justice limited importation of goods from Northern Cyprus into the European Union.

## Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
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February 19, 1959	London and Zurich Agreement
November – December 1963	Constitutional Amendments and Akritas plan, removing Turkish Cypriots from office
July 15, 1974	Coup d'état by the Cypriot National Guard and the Greek military, led by Nikos Sampson
July 20, 1974	Turkish military invasion of Cyprus, occupy northern territory
August 9, 1974	Turkey calls for devolved powers to Turkish Cypriot territory, Federal constitution
May 1983	UN resolution calling removal of foreign troops from Cyprus
November 15, 1983	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus declares independence
April 2004	Failed Referendum on Annan Plan for settlement
May 1 2004	Cyprus joins the EU
February 2014	Joint Agreement, reopening of settlement talks

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- The First UN Security Council Resolution on the Turkish Invasion, 20 July 1974 (S/RES/353)
- Cyprus, 15 August 1974, (S/RES/359)
- Question of Cyprus, 1 November 1974 (A/RES/3212/29)
- Cyprus, 13 June 1980, (S/RES/482)
- Question of Cyprus, 16 May 1983, A/RES/37/253

## Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Previous attempts to solve the Cyprus dispute have been unavailing to say the least. Action taken by supranational organizations such as the UN and the EU has done little to nothing to advance discussions towards a settlement on the issue. These organizations do their best to encourage Greek



and Turkish Cypriot community leaders to engage in dialogue but don't have the prerogative to impose any action onto the nations themselves. Such was apparent in the Annan plan, where a clear, coherent, and sound plan to create a unified federal state with two state components laid out by the secretary-general was wholly denied by the Greek Cypriot population which had no interest in devolving powers to Turkish minorities. UN peacekeeping forces, however, have done well to lessen human rights atrocities and ongoing violence within Cyprus' ethnically divided society. Foreign state intervention, too, has only made matters worse. Extreme action taken by Turkey and Greece in ousting rulers and invading the island has only polarized the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities even more. Compromise has become less and less likely the more such sovereign nations are involved in Cypriot politics. Clearly, more needs to be done in hopes of settling this age long dispute.

## Possible Solutions

### Dialogue

Citing the recent joint agreement from Greek and Turkish Cypriot community leaders, engaging in discussion would be the most immediate course of action at this time. Engaging in discourse on the needs and desires of each Cypriot community, much like at the London and Zurich agreement, may significantly advance the negotiation process in forming solutions to territorial and governmental disputes.

### Sanctions

The instance in which a passive approach does not work, an imposition of sanctions by the UN or other supranational organizations, targeted attacks on state own enterprises and assets, limitations on importation of Cypriot goods much like the proclamation made by the EU high court of justice against the northern Turkish region, may provide the necessary impetus to Cyprus to reach an agreement in ensuring the socio-economic prosperity of their nation. Sanctions, too, could be imposed on Greece and Turkey if they are to intervene on the settlement process for this dispute. The nullification of the Treaty of Guaratnee from the London and Zurich accords by the Greek Cypriot government through constitutional amendments had no consequences for the Cypriot state. Turkish invasion of the Cypriot island was met with considerable dissent from the international community but the response wasn't enough to ensure Turkey does not encroach on and worsen the situation in Cyprus. Sanctions may do just that.

### Education

Given its current fiscal status, there is a severe lack of educational opportunities within Cyprus. Only an estimated 6.4% of the Cypriot GDP is invested in the country's educational system. 32.8% of the Cypriot adolescent population is currently unemployed. It's this unskilled, disgruntled population that founds the hostilities Cyprus faces even today. Awareness can be brought to these people by providing

funds directly towards the building of schools or sending volunteers to teach rural and even urban citizens about the country's current situation. Providing citizens with access to education and professional skill development will allow them to integrate back into Cypriot society and thus discourage the continuance of violent demonstrations between Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities.

### Volunteer aid

Volunteer work, perhaps even through the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) program, will provide some form of aid to those affected by the ongoing violence brought by the Cypriot dispute. Volunteers may provide to Cypriot citizens educational and professional skills detailed earlier, as well as develop disenfranchised, hostile communities through provisions of basic resources. In tandem with field-based special political missions, volunteer programs may help reunify and develop a deeply divided and volatile Cypriot society.

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