

13 East 40th Street  
New York, NY 10016-0718



Tel: (212) 481-6023  
Fax: (212) 685-7316  
e-mail: pmccyprus.un@verizon.net

**THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Statement by  
H.E. Mr. Demetris Christofias  
President  
of the Republic of Cyprus**

**at the 65<sup>th</sup> Session  
of the United Nations General Assembly**

**New York, 24 September 2010**



Mr. President,

I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and wish you every success in the fulfillment of your duties. I also wish to congratulate your predecessor H.E. Mr. Abdussalam Treki for his work. I would also like to thank the UN Secretary-General for his Report on the work of the Organization.

Mr. President,

It is commonly acknowledged that the international community faces challenges that are multiplying in scope and magnitude. This raises the question whether our ability to respond to these challenges grows in tandem. We have recently witnessed climatic and natural disasters of a scale, never experienced in recent history, such as, the floods in Pakistan, the fires in Russia, the earthquake in Haiti and the landslides in China.

Environmental degradation and climate change; rising poverty, food insecurity and the lack of basic health care to so many of our fellow human beings in a world with deep social disparities; terrorism; the visible threat of nuclear proliferation, especially in the region of Middle East; the continuing economic crisis of the last few years that has primarily affected millions of working people and the poor, require effective regional and global action through the United Nations and other multilateral organizations.

Bringing our attention to our neighborhood, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, I would like to welcome the re-launching of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and to express the hope for a successful outcome. We all know that it is a difficult task but there is no alternative to dialogue. We express the hope that no unilateral measures will be taken which will bring about more obstacles in the negotiations for reaching an agreement. The solution should lead to the creation of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state which will co-exist side by side to the state of Israel.

Cyprus, together with Greece, has proposed the creation of a humanitarian sea corridor to the people of Gaza utilizing our proximity to the area and our good relations with all sides.

Mr. President,

This year, Cyprus celebrates 50 years of the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus and 50 years of participation as a full member of the United Nations Organization. The Republic of Cyprus became a member of the Organization as soon as it gained its independence with the hope and aspiration to contribute to the work of the organization, and to play a constructive role in international affairs through the promotion of the implementation of the principles of the UN Charter. With its unique geographical position at the crossroads of three continents, Cyprus maintained the noble goal of serving as a bridge of peace and cooperation in its neighborhood and beyond.

Gaining its independence at a difficult period in world politics, Cyprus took a clear and conscious decision to join the Non-Aligned Movement. As a founding member of the Movement, Cyprus played an active role in the work of the United Nations and in resolving international problems. We have always held the position that problems cannot be resolved through military confrontation but must be solved through dialogue, diplomacy and respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of all countries and peoples, whether great or small, rich or poor.

In 2004, the Republic of Cyprus joined the European Union as a full member. Proud of its traditions, Cyprus preserves its neutrality and seeks to play an active and constructive role as an EU Member-State.

After the 1960 Independence, the road for the Cypriots was not, unfortunately, without problems. Despite the many difficulties and misfortunes, we managed to achieve economic growth and a satisfactory standard of living for our people. But in the political field, the first years of independence were marked by difficulties and lack of the necessary political cooperation between the two communities of the island, which were called to govern the country together under the Constitution. Those early differences and difficulties were exacerbated by foreign interference. The culmination of these interventions was the military coup of the junta which was at the time ruling Greece, and the illegal Turkish invasion of July-August 1974. The military occupation by the Turkish Army of 37 per cent of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus continues until today, as does the violation of the human rights of all Cypriot citizens, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

The people of Cyprus have suffered enough. It is time to overcome the problems, to achieve reconciliation between the two communities and to reunite our country and our people for the sake of peace and of the future generations.

Since the 1960s, the UN General Assembly and the Security Council have dealt with the Cyprus problem. A number of Resolutions have been adopted both by the Security Council and the General Assembly aiming at safeguarding the independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity of the Republic of Cyprus.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the appreciation of the people of Cyprus to the UN Secretary-General, the Security Council and the UN Organization as a whole for their continued and unwavering interest in Cyprus.

Mr. President,

In 1977, Archbishop Makarios, the President of Cyprus at the time, accepted the evolution of the unitary state into a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation. That historic compromise constitutes a brave concession by the Greek Cypriot community towards their Turkish Cypriot compatriots. It aims at bringing an end to the foreign occupation and restoring the unity of the Republic of Cyprus. The composition of the population and the human geography of Cyprus were such that conditions for a federation did not exist. The two communities lived intermingled all over the island. It is for that reason that the acceptance of the bi-zonal, bi-communal federation by the Greek Cypriots constitutes a historic compromise and a concession towards our Turkish Cypriot compatriots.

After 1977, the Security Council through its Resolutions endorsed the evolution of the Republic of Cyprus into a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality, defined not as numerical equality but as effective participation of both communities in all organs of government; the united federal state would be one, with one single sovereignty, a single citizenship and a single international personality. The federal state would respect fundamental human rights and basic freedoms in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions. The principles and values of the European Union would also be observed.

Since my election in 2008 I have been actively engaged with the leadership of the Turkish Cypriot community in a Cypriot-owned process within the framework of the Good Offices Mission of the Secretary-General, in order to reach a mutually

acceptable, agreed solution on the constitutional and other internal aspects of the problem.

Two years into the process, and despite the difficulties, some progress, although not such as anticipated, has been achieved on certain issues. At the outset of this process, we agreed with the Secretary General that there would not be any artificial deadlines or outside interventions in the form of arbitration or submission of ready-made solutions.

We have worked through the summer and we have, in the last few weeks, further intensified our meetings. In order to achieve results soon, I have submitted a package consisting of three proposals. First, I have suggested linking the negotiation of the chapters of property, territorial adjustments and settlers, in order to give impetus to the process. I have also proposed that when we are close to reaching an agreement on the internal aspects of the problem, we could hold an international conference under the auspices of the Secretary-General and with the participation of the Permanent Members of the Security Council, the Guarantor Powers, the European Union, the Republic of Cyprus and the two communities to discuss the international aspects of the problem. The third element of my proposal concerns Famagusta.

The set of my proposals will benefit all sides and can create the necessary political climate that will push forward the entire process.

Unfortunately the new Turkish Cypriot leader and the Turkish leadership have rejected these proposals.

I would like to make a special reference to our proposal on Famagusta.

In 1974, Famagusta was a city with a population of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots. As the Turkish army advanced towards the city, the Greek Cypriot population was forced to flee. The town of Varosha has been a ghost-town ever since. The Security Council considers the Government of Turkey responsible for the area and in 1984, in Resolution 550, demanded the return of the town to the United Nations in order to be inhabited by its legal inhabitants. Even before Resolution 550, in 1979, the leaders of the two communities agreed to settle the issue of Famagusta as a matter of priority, notwithstanding any political negotiations on other issues.

My proposal, if accepted, would have benefits for all sides. In addition to the return of the fenced city to its rightful inhabitants under UN control, my proposal includes the restoration of the medieval part of the city where our Turkish Cypriot compatriots live,

as well as the opening of the port of Famagusta to external trade under EU supervision - a measure directly aimed at benefiting the Turkish Cypriots. Such a development would also benefit Turkey's accession negotiations with the EU and would provide an excellent example of harmonious co-existence and cooperation between the two communities.

From this podium, I would also like to propose that the National Guard and the Turkish Army cancel again this autumn their annual military exercises.

Turkey's leadership has been assuring the international community that it wants a solution of the problem by the end of 2010. We are still waiting for their words to be transformed into action. The same expectation was repeatedly voiced by the European Council as well as in a recent resolution of the European Parliament. The European Union calls upon Turkey to work on the basis of UN Resolutions and to meet its obligations towards the European Union and the Republic of Cyprus, which Turkey still fails to recognize.

Turkey must respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus and must contribute to the achievement of an agreement which will reunite Cyprus and its people.

Our vision is a reunited Cyprus, common homeland of Greek and Turkish Cypriots, without any foreign troops or settlers and with the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its people, Greek or Turkish Cypriots, Maronites, Armenians or Latins, fully respected. I would like to reiterate my commitment to do my utmost in this direction.

From this podium, I repeat my call to the Turkish leadership to meet me, parallel to the negotiating process, so that I can share with them my vision for a solution of the Cyprus problem, which would serve the interests of the Cypriots, of Turkey, of Greece as well as of peace and security in the region.

Mr. President,

The challenges faced by the international community, are increasing. Climate change, poverty, malnutrition and lack of access to basic health care, terrorism, wars, the threat of further nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism, the economic crisis and political instability in many regions of the world require that we undertake a renewed and more effective effort to protect humanity's achievements.

The future is in our hands. We will only succeed if we achieve a more just distribution and better re-distribution of the world's natural resources and wealth.

Thank you Mr. President.