

Committee: United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Issue: Drafting a blueprint for the withdrawal of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in accordance with Cypriot-Turkish peace talks

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Position: President

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Welcome, delegates!

My name is Derin Kalkan and I will be serving as the President Chair of the Security Council. I'm from Istanbul, Turkey. This will be my ninth time chairing and probably one of the very last conferences I will be taking part in before leaving for university.

The nature of the Security Council and our very interesting and rather complex agenda requires you to be active during the committee sessions. My aim as the President will be to provide a warm and fruitful environment for every single one of you to learn, voice your opinion, and have fun. Please keep in mind that this Study Guide is only meant to assist you throughout your research and form the basis of your argument. I expect every single one of you to do additional research on the policy of the country you are representing and come up with original ideas.

I am looking forward to meeting you all. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will be more than happy to help!

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TOPIC INTRODUCTION

From the influence of the historical British colonial rule to the current feud between Greece and Turkey, the build-up of violence and tension has never seemed to decrease in Cyprus. Enormous political pressures in the Greek capital of Athens and the Turkish capital of Ankara leave both countries compelled to support their fellow ethnic group in Cyprus. Established in 1964 with the initial purpose of preventing further fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) now serves as an actor of monumental importance in the Eastern Mediterranean. UNFICYP's presence has helped bring stability to the region by promoting peace and prosperity. Nevertheless, it has caused Member States to face diplomatic, social, and financial obstacles, too. With the Force's withdrawal now being a topic of discussion, the need to come to consensus on the Cypriot dispute is more critical and urgent than ever.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Coup d'Etat

A coup d'état is a sudden seizure of governmental power through illegal exercises. They are often carried out by the military or a group of people opposing the established government.

Enosis

Enosis is the political incorporation of Cyprus into Greece.

Taksim

Having the meaning of "division" or "partition" in Turkish and Arabic, Taksim is a separatist concept adopted by the Turkish Cypriot community with the aim of forming an independent Turkish state in Cyprus.

Referendum

Referred to as the most direct form of democracy, a referendum is "a general vote by the electorate on a single political question"¹.

Autonomy

Having the right of self-government.

¹ <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/referendum>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The History of Cyprus

Following the Battle of Lepanto and the annexation of Cyprus by the Ottoman Empire in 1571 because of the island's geopolitical position, Nicosia's political and demographic structures were tremendously transformed. However, the Russian-Turkish War (1877-1878) had an even greater impact on the fate of Cyprus since Great

Britain was given the right to temporarily occupy and administer the island, forcing both the Turkish and Greek communities to adapt to the newly established society.



Figure 1: The Turkish Resistance Organisation (TMT) Turkish Cypriot militia members during the Intercommunal Conflict, 1964

The British viewed the population of Cyprus as a “civilized society” and believed the island could function autonomously. However, the communal diversity and social cleavage because of linguistic, religious, and social elements was very evident. The Muslim Turkish fraction was not content with the British rule but acknowledged the government's status. Great Britain's political strategy led to a heavy migration and a decrease in the number of

Turkish Cypriots, changing the population ratio of Greeks to Turks. The Turkish Community believed they were not being appropriate, and continued to complain about the British Administration's enosis plan and soon started protesting the colony regime. The Turkish Cypriots saw themselves as “heirs to the conqueror Ottoman ancestors” and the Muslim community advocated they were the legitimate rulers of the island because of the number of people who had “sacrificed themselves and spilled their bloods” during their conquest.

Enosis and Taksim

When Turkey joined the First World War (1914-1919) alongside Germany, Great Britain directly annexed Cyprus. When the island became a British Crown Colony in 1925, the Greek Cypriot population's desire to unite with Greece increased, resulting in a major riot in 1931. The Turkish Cypriot expressed their disapproval of

the enosis movement. Although the situation was suppressed by Britain, the anti-colonial movement, which gained popularity after the Second World War (1939-1945), pushed the Greek Cypriot to take action regarding their demand. In 1955, the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA) was established with the aim of ending the British rule in Cyprus and completing their unification plan.

In February 1956, Turkey started defending Taksim (partition), a policy which emphasized the importance of self-determination and supported the idea of partition within the island. Their strategy meant the island would be split in two and the Turkish state would occupy the northern part of it. In the wake of Greek armed movement, Turkish Resistance Organization (TMT) was formed for the purpose of self-defense. In 1957, TMT served as a strong military advocate for the Taksim policy. Seeing the rather aggressive strategies of both communities, the British government proposed to give Cyprus a new constitution involving self-administration without removing the island's title as a British colony amongst the international community. It was rejected by both the Turkish and Greek. However, after the long anti-British campaign by EOKA, Cyprus gained independence in 1960.

Archbishop Makarios III of Greek Orthodox Cypriots was elected as the president and the Turkish and Greek communities reached an agreement on a constitution under the Treaty of Guarantee. Treaty of Guarantee involved the idea of giving Britain, Greece, and Turkey the right to intervene to maintain status quo and the British having control over two military bases within the Cypriot territory. In 1963, President Makarios proposed constitutional changes which ultimately left the Turkish side in distress regarding the power-sharing compromises. This marked the increase of deep ethnic polarization between Turkish and Greek communities and an immense political turmoil.

Involvement of the United Nations

On 15 February 1964, the British applied to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in order to discuss the situation in Cyprus. On March 4, Resolution 186 was passed by the Security Council. It addressed the sovereignty and integrity of the Cyprus state, and recognized Makarios' Administration as "Government of Cyprus". The Turkish community argued that the resolution neglected the violation of the constitution by the Greek Cypriots and the persecution of the Turkish population living on the island.

Formation of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)

Resolution 186 involved the deployment of UNFICYP in Cyprus in order to stabilize the region. On 27 March 1964, with the authorization of the

Government of Cyprus, the UNFICYP was announced to be operational under Indian General Prem Singh Gyani. It had the aim of preventing the continuous fighting, monitoring the ceasefire, restoring order, and maintaining law. UNFICYP faced various challenges because of the irregularity of fighting in Cyprus.

“UNFICYP was powerless to intervene during a number of clashes in the first months of the crisis. Furthermore, the Force had no power to arrest or disarm Cypriots except on the Force's premises”.² UNFICYP served solely as an observation force during clashes. The Turkish Cypriot were disappointed with the inactiveness of the Force. Greek Cypriot was expecting the peacekeeping force to disarm the Turkish rebels, whereas Turkish Cypriot saw the Force as a chance to protect themselves from the illicit exercises of the Greek. As time passed, the balance of power grew in favor of Greek Cypriot as they continued their armed activities and increased in strength. According to UN Mediator Gazo Plaza: “The most conspicuous fact of life in Cyprus was that large numbers of armed men, in and out of uniform and apparently under widely varying degrees of control, were facing one another from fortified positions in many parts of the island. Their numbers had been greatly increased and their armament greatly enlarged, especially on the Greek-Cypriot side, and with assistance from Greece in particular, by the end of the period”.³

Many Turkish Cypriots seemed to think Gyani's alleged inclination toward the Greek community was related to India's known opposition to the Taksim policy of the Turks. Therefore, the Turkish side's opinion that the UNFICYP lacked the power to protect the Turkish community and were inadequate in bringing stability and justice to the island was known throughout the international community.

Amongst the currently active thirteen worldwide UN peacekeeping missions, the UNFICYP serves as the longest running peacekeeping mission with nearly 1100 personnel. Although the number and size of other UN missions are considerably higher, UNFICYP is considered as one of the most fragile and important to operate. The mission's structure is centered around four essential parties: the military, UN Police (UNPOL), the Civil Affairs Branch and Administration. It is currently led by Elizabeth Spehar of Canada, who is dual-defined as both the Special Representative of Secretary General (SRSBG) and Head of Mission (HoM).

² Ehrlich, 1966: 1050

³ Report of the United Nations Mediator on Cyprus to the Secretary-General, 1965, S/6253: 19

What makes UNFICYP rather unique is the size of the operation's military formation. The military component of the mission has the aim of preventing the recurrence of fighting, ensure stability, and de-escalate any tension and monitor the neutral zone in order to assist the process of finding a common, peaceful ground. The UN Military Force is separated into three sectors. These sectors are led by Argentina, UK, and Slovakia. The distribution of roles and nationalities have been arranged by taking cultural similarities and regional-historical relations into consideration to achieve maximum efficiency. Integration, coordination, and cooperation are essential in the mission being successful. Military personnel are only armed in times of crisis or for the purpose of self-defense. Due to the lack of human resources, the military does not have personnel at every observation position along the Green Line and instead regulates patrol on routes or executes flight operations over the zone to document cases of violations.



Figure 2: UNFICYP Forces⁴

When making a decision regarding the withdrawal of UNFICYP from the area, an assessment about the fruitfulness of the Mission has to be made. In this case, it is important to focus on the mandate of the Force stated by Resolution 186: to prevent a recurrence of fighting, contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order, and contribute to a return to normal conditions.

UNFICYP could have recognized EOKA and prevented them from targeting the civilian population. Further clashes between both communities resulted in severe atrocities, massacres, and violence. However, after 1974, UNFICYP was able to increase in capability and reach success of some sort. It has been a major supporter of bi-communal activities in pursuit of

⁴ <https://unficy.unmissions.org/about>

normalization and organized gatherings for people to meet and interact with each other.

Currently, 1/3 of UNFICYP's budget is financed by the Government of Cyprus, while the government of Greece is responsible for the \$6.5 million of it every year. The rest is financed from contributions assessed on the entire membership of the UN. UNFICYP's financial reliance on the Government of Cyprus and Greece present the possibility of parties being influenced or their neutrality being hindered.

Operation Aphrodite

Considered to be fruitless, violence continued to take place within the Cypriot society. Pro-ensis national forces believed Makarios had failed to address the question of the island's union with Greece. Therefore, on 15 July 1974, the National Guards under the leadership of Nikos Sampson, a member of EOKA and a strong supporter of enosis, carried out a military coup and managed to take control of the island. Sampson was appointed as President of Cyprus by the Greek military leaders of the coup d'état. Although Turkey asked Greece to dismiss Sampson in order to establish the integrity of Cyprus, the Greek government refused. Failing to receive assistance from other countries, senior Turkish politicians arrived at the conclusion that a military intervention was necessary and vital.

Operation Atilla

On 20 July 1974, Operation Atilla was launched by Turkey and seized 1/3 of the island's territory. Considering themselves as under the threat of annihilation, the Turkish launched a second operation under the name Atilla II. 200.000 Greek Cypriots were forced to leave their homes, and Turkish Cypriot community villages were invaded by EOKA-B as an answer to the invasion. Established in 1971 by General Georgios Grivas, EOKA-B was a paramilitary organisation in support of a right-wing nationalistic ideology and the idea of uniting Greece with Cyprus. It was declared as a terrorist organisation by the Republic of Cyprus because of their hostile behavior toward the civilian population and disbanded on 11 February 1978.

In a very short amount of time, 38% of Cyprus came under Turkish control. In 1975, Vice President Denktas declared the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TFSC), after 99,4% of the Turkish Cypriots voted in favour of it.



Figure 3: Map of Cyprus, 2021

The Green Line

Following the 1974 Greek Cypriot coup d'état and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the UNSC authorized the extension and expansion of the peacekeeping mission to prevent the inter-communal conflict from turning into a war between the two North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries, Greece and Turkey.

Pursuant to UNSC Resolution 353 of 1974, the foreign ministers of Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom convened in Geneva on 25 July 1974. However, the Turkish military refused to withdraw from the island until an agreement guaranteeing Turkish Cypriots autonomy from the Greek Cypriot government was made. On 15 November 1983, the Turkish Cypriots unilaterally declared independence and re-named the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TFSC) as Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). UNSC immediately denounced it as “invalid” and “incompatible with the 1960 Treaty” that established Cyprus’ independence from Britain. Today, the only state which recognizes TRNC is the Turkish government.

Cyprus was then partitioned by a UN demilitarized zone known as the Green Line. The Green Line is currently being supervised by the UNFICYP. The Force is responsible for preparing a draft report twice a year for it to be examined by the UN. At the final stage, the report is issued to the UNSC for further discussion and guidance. Since it started to operate, the mission has been extended thirteen times on three-month basis and ninety-eight times on semi-annual basis. The report prepared both evaluates the mission from various perspectives and creates the UNSC’s agenda for the formation of a new resolution.

Failure to negotiate

After the failure of the Annan plan proposed by the then Secretary-General Kofi Annan, dialogue between the Greek and Turkish have routinely taken place but failed to reach an agreement. Cyprus joined the European Union (EU) in 2004. Many hoped the accession of southern Cyprus would lead to the unification of the island. However, while the Turkish side supported the idea of reunification since they would become a part of the EU, the Greek side voted against, resulting in the Republic of Cyprus to become the sole representative of the territory.

UNFICYP's presence, which has been extended until 31 July 2021, carries major importance toward the path of peace. UNFICYP's removal or reduction was hinted by Ban Ki-moon, the former Secretary General of the UN. Nevertheless, whether the Force should be withdrawn or not relies both on a diplomatic solution being found, and the escalation of the tension in the area.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Greece

Greece has been a strong promoter of enosis and has condemned the exercises of the Turkish Cypriot community. It has served as a vital actor in establishing the sovereignty of the Government of Cyprus and is an important financial resource for UNFICYP.

Turkey

Turkey's role in the Cypriot dispute began when the Ottoman Empire conquered the island. After recovering from the financial, political and economic destruction the First and the Second World War brought, Turkey became an active supporter of Taksim in hopes of protecting the rights of the Turkish Cypriot community. Their invasion of the northern part of Cyprus ultimately culminated in their involvement.

United Kingdom (U.K.)

Administering the island in the late 19th to early 20th centuries, UK's influence on the state's political, social, and economic structure is very evident. Although it failed to address the necessities of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, the UK was successful in forming the nation's first constitution and governmental system. Today, it serves as a mediator between the involved parties and a firm endorser of the establishment of a peacekeeping force in Cyprus.

European Union (EU)

The EU disapproved of the Turkish involvement in the conflict and launched numerous talks aiming at a comprehensive settlement. After the failure of the Annan Plan and peace dialogues, the EU had no choice but to recognize the Government of Cyprus as the sole representative of the territory, stating “as long as there is no solution, the application of the *acquis* in the occupied areas is suspended.”. The accession of Cyprus to the EU caused the Turkish side to take a more hostile stance toward European countries.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
19 February 1959	London and Zürich Agreements
15 July 1974	Coup d'état by the Cypriot National Guard and the Greek military
20 July 20 1974	Operation Atilla, Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus
15 November 1983	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus declares independence
April 2004	The Annan Plan is rejected according to the after the referendum held
1 May 2004	Cyprus becomes a part of the EU
11 February 2014 - October 2014	A Joint Agreement is announced with the purpose of negotiation, but is stalled in October
12 May 2015 - 7 July 2017	Peace talks begin on 12 May 2015 but fail to reach a conclusion on 7 July 2017
27 - 29 April 2021	Both sides come together once again in hopes of finding a solution, but fail

RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

The Cyprus Question, S/RES/186, 4 March 1964

Adopted during the Cyprus crisis of 1963-64, this resolution established the UNFICYP with the aim of ending the turmoil between the communities.

S/RES/353, 20 July 1974

As the first UNSC Resolution on the Turkish invasion, this resolution demanded the withdrawal of foreign military personnel from the island and encouraged Greece, UK, and Turkey to negotiate.

S/RES/649, 12 March 1990

This is the first resolution to provide a detailed framework for the negotiations and discuss the material named “The Situation in Cyprus: Report of the Secretary-General on his Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus (S/21183).

S/RES/831, 27 May 1993

This resolution changed the method of financing for UNFICYP, and the structure of the Force.

The Annan Plan, 31 March 2004

Known as the Cyprus reunification plan, the Annan Plan was the UN’s proposal of forming a federation of two states under the name “United Republic of Cyprus”.

S/RES/1568, 22 August 2004

After the rejection of the Annan Plan, this resolution altered the concept and force level of UNFICYP.

S/RES/2561, 29 January 2021

This resolution extended the presence of UNFICYP until 31 July 2021.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

London and Zürich Agreements

Starting with an agreement on 19 February 1959 between Greece, Turkey, the United Kingdom and leaders of the Cypriot community, the London and Zürich Agreements had the fundamental purpose of bringing stability to the region by addressing the inter-communal dispute. A constitution was drafted and agreed upon, proclaiming Cyprus an independent state and removing Britain from the territory. Along with the London and Zürich Agreements, the Treaty of Guarantee was signed, too. The Treaty of Guarantee involved the idea of giving Britain, Greece, and Turkey

the right to intervene to maintain status quo and the British having control over two military bases within the Cypriot territory.

The Annan Plan

Considered to be the most successful attempt at solving the Cypriot conflict, the Annan Plan was proposed by then Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2004. It was the UN’s proposal of forming a federation of two states under the name “United Republic of Cyprus”. This new country was to be a federation of two constituent states, the Greek Cypriot State and the Turkish Cypriot State, joined together by a federal government apparatus. In April 2004, a referendum was held in order to gather the opinion of both communities on the plan.

Choice	Greek Cypriots		Turkish Cypriots		Total voters	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
For	99,976	24.17	77,646	64.91	177,622	33.30
Against	313,704	75.83	41,973	35.09	355,677	66.70
Invalid/blank votes	14,907	3.48	5,344	4.28	20,251	3.66
Total	428,587	100	124,963	100	553,550	100
Registered voters/turnout	480,564	89.18	143,636	87.00	624,200	88.68

Figure 4: Results of the Referendum⁵

It was confirmed that the plan would not be implemented by the results of the referendum. Member States were deeply disappointed and expressed their regret.

Peace Talks

On 11 February 2014, Nicos Anastasiades, President of Cyprus, and Derviş Eroğlu, then President of Northern Cyprus announced the start of renewed peace talks to restore peace and integrity within the island. However, the negotiations were stalled in October 2014. Hopes for a solution were once again raised with the election of Mustafa Akıncı. A peace dialogue commenced on 12 May 2015 but was brought to a halt yet again on 7 July 2017 since both sides failed to reach a joint conclusion. An identical scenario between the Anastasiades and Tatar Administration recurred in 2021.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Cypriot_Annan_Plan_referendums

Because of the unpredictable military strategies of both sides, it is unlikely for the UN to authorize the withdrawal of UNFICYP until a peaceful consensus on the problem is made.

Continuing the Peace Talks

Encouraging the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities to engage in debates regarding the political, economic, and social structure of Cyprus may assist the process of finding a solution.

Turkey's Withdrawal from the Island

Demanding that Turkey withdraw from Northern Cyprus is another option but is unlikely to be taken seriously by the Turkish Government as they already haven't complied with the older UNSC resolutions. In order to be effective, the resolution would have to include incentives.

Third-party Mediator

An organization such as NATO could act as a mediator and promote peace in Cyprus. However, the possibility of this action causing further complications should be kept in mind due to tension between some NATO countries and Russia's approach toward the organization's expansion.

Sanctions

If both sides remain incapable of bringing prosperity to the region, the UN could impose embargoes, tariffs or freeze assets in order to force the communities to reach a common consensus. Sanctions could be imposed on both Greece and Turkey as well if they intend to complicate the peacemaking process.

Reconstruction of the UNFICYP

Similar to the strategy mentioned in S/RES/831, the Force's financial, military, and humanitarian structure could be redesigned and developed in order to successfully address the current situation in Cyprus.

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