



The Hague International Model United Nations

Forum: Special Political and Decolonization Committee (GA4)

Issue: The situation in Cyprus

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Introduction

Cyprus is the third largest island located in the Mediterranean sea, east of Greece and south of Turkey. The island gained independence from its colonial power Britain in 1960 and then Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom became the Guarantee powers of Cyprus and created and established a constitution, based on the London and Zurich Agreements for the newly independent island, which fulfilled the interests of both the Greek and Turkish communities of Cyprus and balanced the relations between them.

Nevertheless, the next few years political tensions started to rise among the Greek and Turkish members of the government due to fundamental amendments that were made on the constitution, which resulted in severe violence and civilian casualties, in December 1963. In response to this situation the Security Council, on March 4, 1964 adopted a resolution that demanded the immediate establishment of a peacekeeping force in order to prevent further fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities on the island and bring about a return to normal conditions¹. Afterwards, in July of 1974, things took an astonishing turn for Cyprus and its populations. On

¹ United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. "About." *UNFICYP*, 7 May 2014, unficyp.unmissions.org/about.

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July 15th the "junta" which was governing Greece at that time staged a coup d'état in order to overthrow the President of Cyprus and unite the island with the Greek mainland. However this action resulted in significant consequences, such as the Intervention of Turkey in Cyprus. Turkey on July 20th, abused as an excuse its position as a guarantor country, and intervened on the island. Some of the actions that this intervention included are the bombing of large cypriot cities, the displacement of countless civilians, the establishment of various Turkish troops, and once again numerous civilian casualties.

Since then Cyprus is divided into two pieces: The Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which is only recognized by Turkey. The two regions are separated by the buffer zone extended across the island called "Green Line" which is monitored by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP),

Definition of Key Terms

Buffer Zone²

"A neutral zone or area between two potentially hostile nations, designed to prevent any overt acts of aggression."

Junta³

"A government, especially a military one, that has taken power in a country by force and not by election." **Coup d'état⁴**

"Sudden defeat of a government through illegal force by a small group, often a military one"

De facto⁵

“Existing in fact, although perhaps not intended, legal, or accepted”

Ceasefire⁶

“A ceasefire is an arrangement in which countries or groups of people that are fighting each other agree to stop fighting.”

Peacekeeping⁷

“The activity of preventing war and violence, especially using armed forces not involved in a disagreement to prevent fighting”

²“Dictionary.com | Meanings & Definitions of English Words.” *Dictionary.com*, 2023, www.dictionary.com/browse/buffer-zone

³“Junta.” @CambridgeWords, 25 May 2022, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/junta.

⁴ Cambridge Dictionary. “Coup D’état.” @CambridgeWords, 8 May 2024, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/coup-d-etat#google_vignette.

⁵“DE FACTO | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/de-facto.

⁶“Ceasefire Definition and Meaning | Collins English Dictionary.” *Www.collinsdictionary.com*, www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/ceasefire.

⁷“Peacekeeping.” *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/peacekeeping.

Background Information

Historical Background

Cyprus has a longstanding history and because of its geographic location has been conquered by major powers of the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, Greek characteristics have prevailed in the region since the 12th century BC with the first colonization by the Greeks. The last colonial power to occupy the island was the British in 1878, which succeeded the Ottoman Empire that occupied it in 1571.

Under Ottoman leadership, the Cypriot Greeks and Cypriot Turks lived in harmony despite their discrepancies in regard to ethnicity, religion, language, culture and communal traditions. The Turks gave the Cypriots the chance to grow and flourish in contrast to the Venetians, the previous rulers of the region. In 1878, the British took provisional administrative control of the island and in 1914, when the Turks formally entered the First World War (WWI) (1914-1918) along with the Central Powers, the German Empire, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria, Cyprus was unilaterally annexed by Great Britain. Turkey formally recognized this annexation with the signing of the Peace Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.⁸

The shift of control on the island signified the change in peaceful relations between the Turks and the Greeks of Cyprus. Under British control, the Greek Orthodox Church advocated for Cyprus's annexation by Greece (Enosis). Greece began supporting this initiative in the middle of the 1950s. To

achieve this, EOKA was founded as an underground terrorist group. Therefore, the Enosis movement turned violent, supposedly against the British but really with the intention of bringing the island together with Greece. Turkish Cypriots and British citizens were killed in the EOKA violence. Turkish Cypriots were forced out of mixed settlements between 1955 and 1958, and their homes were set on fire. However, the goals of Greek and Greek Cypriot pressure, murder, and intimidation were not met. Enosis faced fierce opposition from Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots.

The 1974 Crisis and Division

After the independence and the political conflicts that took place in December 1963, tensions started to rise as the years passed. In 1967, after the rise of the junta in Greece the political movement of “Enosis” started to expand, which supported the unification of Cyprus with the mainland of Greece. Nevertheless, the Turkish community of Cyprus was accepting this and therefore it resisted. The situation started to worsen even more when the President of Cyprus at the time, Makarios III, tried to minimize the influence of the Greek military, an action which did not satisfy the Greek community of Cyprus.

This attempt by Makarios III resulted in a coup d'état by the Greek junta, which aimed at deposing him and unifying Cyprus with Greece. However this caused even more ethnic tensions between the two communities and violence, since Turkey responded to this coup with an invasion of the

⁸“From Rep. Of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, www.mfa.gov.tr/cyprus-in-the-period-1571---1959.en.mfa.

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island, which it tried to excuse by saying that it had the right to do so under the Treaty of Guarantee, which stated that it could intervene if the Turkish community was in danger. At the end of the 20th of July Turkish forces landed and captured 3% of the island⁹ before the Security Council had a chance to declare a ceasefire.



Almost a month later Turkey initiated a second phase of its invasion with the goal to expand its territorial control, which Turkey succeeded by the end of its invasion since it expanded its territory in the island to 36%¹⁰. Since then the “Green Line” divides the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) into two different regions, one of them being internationally recognized while the other only recognized only by Turkey.

Figure 1: The Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974¹¹

Humanitarian Impacts

After the crisis in 1974 approximately 150,000 Greek Cypriots and around 60,000 Turkish

Cypriots got displaced¹². The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was called to provide humanitarian assistance on the island, which included essential needs such as medical care, shelter and food. The international community responded to this crisis by contributing to this humanitarian assistance. As the time passed the UNHCR started focusing more on providing aid that would last for a longer period of time, for example they rebuilt fundamental infrastructures and attempted to promote dialogue between the two communities of Cyprus.

Nevertheless, Cyprus continues to face some humanitarian challenges. For instance, in 1968, boats filled with refugees began arriving in the island in need of asylum and protection. Therefore the UNHCR attempts to ameliorate the situation by refining Cyprus asylum and improving laws and procedures for refugees. Furthermore there have been various campaigns that aim at educating the Cypriot population regarding this situation.

⁹“Cyprus Marks 50 Years since the Turkish Invasion.” *Euronews*, Euronews.com, 17 July 2024, www.euronews.com/2024/07/17/cyprus-marks-50-years-since-the-turkish-invasion-of-1974-leading-to-partition.

¹⁰“Cyprus Marks 50 Years since the Turkish Invasion.” *Euronews*, Euronews.com, 17 July 2024, www.euronews.com/2024/07/17/cyprus-marks-50-years-since-the-turkish-invasion-of-1974-leading-to-partition.

¹¹ *Greekreporter.com*, 2024, greekreporter.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/invasion-of-cyprus-1974-credit-facebook-nakvat-hatikva-hakimov-1392x928.jpg.webp.

¹²“UNHCR in Cyprus - UNHCR Cyprus.” *UNHCR Cyprus*, 2024, www.unhcr.org/cy/unhcr-in-cyprus.

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Current Situation

Currently Cyprus is facing a significant migration crisis which the government and the local authorities are trying to address by taking measures such as strengthening marine laws. Some of the migrants that are in the need of asylum were reported living in the UN-controlled buffer zone between the Turkish-occupied north and the Republic of Cyprus, something that has concerned the local authorities which are worried about the treatment that they get.



Figure 2 : A sign marking the boundary of the UN buffer zone stands in the village of Pyla¹³

In addition, after the unification negotiations at Crans-Montana collapsed in 2017, the political

scene is still tense. With talks centered on resuming negotiations for a political settlement based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation, the UN Security Council is nevertheless keeping an eye on the situation. However, attempts at reconciliation are hampered by Turkey's backing for a two-state solution and its refusal to remove its soldiers from northern Cyprus.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

UN and International involvement

- Resolution on establishment of the UN Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus, 4 March 1964 (**S/RES/186**)- The Security Council adopted this resolution as a response to the political tensions between the Turkish and Greek governments, which caused countless civilian casualties and established the UNFICYP in the island
- Resolution on secessionist actions in Cyprus, 11 May 1984 (**S/RES/550**)- This resolution was adopted which called for non-recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which still remain unrecognisable to every nation except Turkey
- Resolution on extending the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) January 30 2023 (**S/RES/2674**)-Adopted by the UNSC with the purpose of extending the UNFICYP and

¹³“Lost in Time - the Cyprus Buffer Zone.” *Reuters*, [widerimage.reuters.com/story/lost-in-time-the-cyprus-buffer-zone](https://www.widerimage.reuters.com/story/lost-in-time-the-cyprus-buffer-zone).

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in order to address the ongoing tension between the two communities

- Treaty of Guarantee, 16 August 1960- Signed by the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey which balanced relations between the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus and served the interests of both communities.

Cyprus

The past decades Cyprus has suffered from numerous ethnic tensions. Since July 1974 has been divided into two parts, the Republic of Cyprus, which consists of the Greek-Cypriot community and is internationally recognized and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which consists of the Turkish-Cypriot community is only recognized by Turkey. The Republic of Cyprus seeks reunification of the two separated regions and the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, since this division is severely impacting the everyday life of the civilian population and of the island in general, since it influences socioeconomic development and the political scene. Even though various previous attempts have been made in the past by the international community and the United Nations, there hasn't been recorded any significant change towards the road to unification and the situation in Cyprus remains very tense.

Egypt

Egypt and Cyprus have exceptional diplomatic relations and cooperate closely together due to common economic benefits. For example the two nations have excellent collaboration when it comes to gas exploration in the eastern Mediterranean, which can be proved through agreements that have been signed in the past, such as a cooperation agreement signed in October 2012. Generally even though Egypt has not made any major attempt in order to contribute in the unification of Cyprus, however they still support the interests of the Republic of Cyprus and aim at keeping their foreign affairs as they are.

Greece

Greece has been playing a significant role in the situation in Cyprus since 1960, when it became one of the Guarantor powers of the island. After the numerous political tensions among the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot populations and especially after the Turkish invasion in 1974, any diplomatic relations between Cyprus-Greece and Turkey got negatively impacted to a great extent. Since then Greece has been continuously advocating for the unification of Cyprus, the withdrawal of the Turkish troops through diplomatic efforts. Additionally Greece and Cyprus, as neighboring countries in the Mediterranean sea, maintain excellent foreign affairs and are always looking out for the benefit of the Republic of Cyprus and its Greek-Cypriot community.

United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)

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The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)¹⁴ was initially established by the Security Council (SC) in 1964 with the aim of avoiding further disputes between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. After further disputes in 1974, the SC mandated the Force to perform more functions, such as maintaining a buffer zone, facilitating humanitarian assistance, and engaging in bicomunal activities to promote peace and cooperation between the communities as well as supporting the good offices mission of the Secretary General. UNFICYP also aids in the safe return of refugees and the protection of civilians as part of maintaining law in the region. As of August 2024, the deployed number of personnel is 1,091 people, including 154 civilians, 66 members of the police, 57 staff offices and 814 troops.¹⁵

United Kingdom (UK)

The United Kingdom was the colonial power of Cyprus until the island's independence in 1960. After this event the UK became one of the three Guarantor powers. Additionally it has established a military presence in two regions of the island, Akrotiri and Dheekelia, which serve as protection of sovereign interests and also as a support mechanism to regional stability. Despite the fact that the United Kingdom does not recognize the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, it still

maintains strong diplomatic ties with both Turkey and Cyprus-Greece.

Turkey

Turkey has been playing a significant role, alongside Greece, in the situation in Cyprus since 1960, when it became one of the Guarantor powers of the island. Turkey’s invasion in 1974 stigmatised the continuity of the geopolitical situation in Cyprus, since it was the reason for the island’s division into two different parts. Since the invasion Turkey has maintained troops located in the island, in order to prevent the dominance of the Greek-Cypriot community and has also negatively influenced the foreign affairs between itself and Greece-Cyprus. Last but not least Turkey has been the only country in the world to recognize the TRNC¹⁶.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1960	Cyprus became independent from Britain, its colonial power and Greece, Turkey and Britain signed the Treaty of Guarantee
December 1963	Tensions between the two governments began to rise, which resulted in

¹⁴ Nations, United. “UNFICYP, CYPRUS.” *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/cco/unficy-cyprus.¹⁵---

“UNFICYP.” *United Nations Peacekeeping*, 2023, peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/unficy.

¹⁶“Cyprus - Countries - Office of the Historian.” *History.state.gov*, history.state.gov/countries/cyprus.

	numerous civilian casualties
March 4th 1964	The Security Council adopted the resolution S/RES/186, which called for the establishment of UNFICYP as a response to the tensions among the Turkish and Greek communities
July 15th 1974	The greek “junta” staged a Coup d’état in Cyprus with goal to unite the island with the Greek mainland
July 20th 1974	Turkey invaded Cyprus, as a response to the greek Coup d’état, and caused severe loan-lasting tensions between Greece, Cyprus and Turkey
May 11th 1984	The Security Council adopted the resolution S/RES/550 which called for non-recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)

January 30th 2023 The Security Council adopted the resolution S/RES/2674 in order to extend the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) for one more year

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

2017 Crans-Montana Talks

From June 30 to July 7 2017 “The Crans-Montana talks” took place in Crans-Montana, Switzerland between the governments of Cyprus and Turkey and the UN Secretary general, who was present but did not participate. The talks were mostly addressing the long term issues of division in Cyprus and governance rights,

The two governments tried to agree on a mutual policy and proposed ideas such as a rotating presidency and mechanisms for equal political representation that could result in the reunification of Cyprus. Unfortunately though the talks were not considered efficient since the two parties failed to agree upon a mutual point.

Annan Plan

The UN Secretary General Kofi Annan created the Annan Plan that called for the creation of a United Cyprus Republic with Greek and Turkish Cypriot governments and was put to a vote in 2004. The plan was rejected as it needed united support, even though only 24% of Greek Cypriots agreed with it, compared to 65% of Turkish Cypriots.¹⁷

The Annan Plan was initiated in 1999 and sought to settle the Cyprus dispute and ease Turkey's

¹⁷“The Annan Plan.” *American Hellenic Council of California*, americanhellenic.org/the-annan-plan/.

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path to EU membership. Proximity negotiations between Kofi Annan and US President Bill Clinton were among the initial initiatives. Drafts of the plan by 2002 tied Cyprus's EU membership to unification, and if the plan didn't work, Northern Cyprus would be left out. Rauf Denktaş, the leader of Turkish Cypriots, rejected a third version that was written by UN ambassador Alvaro de Soto.

2014 Joint Declaration

The Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders signed the Joint Declaration on February 11, 2014. The leaders of both groups agreed that the current state of affairs in Cyprus was intolerable and would have detrimental effects on both populations. A framework for negotiations, including talks on several facets of the Cyprus issue, was laid forth in the Joint Declaration.

By avoiding public accusations and blame, the leaders of Greek and Turkish Cyprus pledged to

foster a constructive environment for negotiations. Since this declaration set the stage for future talks between the two communities, it might be seen as effective up to a point.

Possible Solutions

Dialogues between the two communities

Taking as an example the talks in Crans Montana we could reschedule some diplomatic dialogues between the leader of the Greek-Cypriot community and the leader of the Turkish-Cypriot community. Through these dialogues the share of wants could be achieved and that could result in a compromise among them and a new agreement that will include laws by both parties or even the unification of the island. Moreover, the mediator would be an impartial party that would be responsible for supervising, proposing measures that should be taken based on the demands of its community in order to de-escalate the current situation and aiding at keeping the talk diplomatic throughout its whole duration.

Establishment of a Bi-communal, Bi-zonal federation

With the establishment of a Bi-communal, Bi-zonal Federation each community would govern its own region independently while simultaneously sharing certain responsibilities through a central federal government. Each community would have its own right to self determination and sovereignty and would be able to have its own beliefs and political scene apart from the other community. Through this federation we could possibly de-escalate political tensions, since each region would follow its own law and no misunderstandings and conflicts would happen due to each communities interests.

Neutral Mediation Federation

The neutral mediation federation proposes an innovative political system, where the governments

of the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities are being overseen by an impartial international committee which would be there in order to prevent any de-escalation to happen between the two communities. Moreover, it would have any direct say on the decisions of each local government but it would be responsible for assuring that both communities are satisfied and that there are non tensions between them. Lastly, this solution could contribute in stabilizing a bit the diplomatic ties between the countries and remote easiest cooperation.

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