III. The Situation in Cyprus

Introduction

The eastern Mediterranean Sea is the site of a key maritime dispute between littoral Member States the Hellenic Republic (Greece) and the Republic of Turkey (Turkey).[1] The Republic of Cyprus (Cyprus) has been in the middle of these disputes since its independence in 1960.[2] Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean, located south of Turkey and west of Syria and Lebanon.[3] The island of Cyprus is ethnically divided between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, each holding political power over their own region of the island.[4] While the island contains both the Greek-majority Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish-majority Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, a consensus of the international community recognizes the island as one state under the Republic of Cyprus.[5] As of 2021, Turkey is the only UN Member State to declare formal recognition of Turkish Cyprus.[6] Each party controls its own autonomous region, dividing the island in half from western city Kokkina to the south of eastern city Famagusta.[7]

Cyprus Conflict and the 1974 Coup d'état

Since gaining independence from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) in 1960, the island of Cyprus has experienced severe inter-ethnic conflicts and violence.[8] The constitution of Cyprus was drafted specifically to allow for equitable power-sharing between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.[9] The constitution mandated the President be Greek and the Vice-President be Turkish, each having the ability to exercise veto power.[10] The UK, Turkey, and Greece also entered into *The Treaty of Guarantee*, which established the rules and responsibilities of each respective Member State to the newly formed Republic of Cyprus.[11] The treaty states that Cyprus cannot "participate, in whole or in part, in any political or economic union with any State whatsoever," and in the event of a violation of the articles of the treaty "each of the three guaranteeing powers reserves the right to take action with the sole aim of re-establishing the state of affairs created by the present Treaty."[12]

Following the independence of Cyprus, the historical conflicts between the Greeks and Turks in Cyprus created a hostile environment for both ethnic groups.[13] Despite the agreements in the constitution, Greek Cypriots strongly promoted and advocated for "enosis" – the unification of Cyprus with Greece.[14] A counter-movement by the Turkish Cypriots, called for "Taksim" – a partition of Cyprus between the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots into two

[1] Dalay, Galip, "Turkey, Europe, and the Eastern Mediterranean: Charting a Way out of the Current Deadlock," *Brookings*, January 28, 2021. https://www.brookings.edu/research/turkey-europe-and-the-eastern-mediterranean-charting-a-way-out-of-the-current-deadlock/. (Accessed August 22, 2021.)

[2] Dalay, Galip, "Turkey, Europe, and the Eastern Mediterranean: Charting a Way out of the Current Deadlock."

[3] "Country Profile - Cyprus." *Nations Online Project,* 2021. https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/cyprus.htm. (Accessed August 22, 2021.)

[4] "Country Profile - Cyprus." *Nations Online Project*.

[5] Fasanotti, Federica Saini, "Cyprus: Simmering Tensions over a Divided Island," *Geopolitical Intelligence Services*, April 23, 2021. https://www.gisreportsonline.com/cyprus-simmering-tensions-over-a-divided-island,politics,3494.html. (Accessed August 22, 2021.)

[6] Fasanotti, Federica Saini, "Cyprus: Simmering Tensions over a Divided Island."

[7] Ritsen, Yarno, "Cyprus: an island divided," *Al Jazeera*, February 20, 2017, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/2/20/cyprus-an-island-divided. (Accessed August 22, 2021.)

[8] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space," *Macalester International*: Vol. 15, Article 11 (2005), https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/macintl/vol15/iss1/11. (Accessed August 22, 2021).

[9] Pollis, Adamantia. "Intergroup Conflict and British Colonial Policy: The Case of Cyprus," *Comparative Politics* 5, no. 4 (1973): 575-99. http://fbemoodle.emu.edu.tr/pluginfile.php/47355/mod_resource/content/1/Adamantia%20Pollis,%20Intergroup%20Conflict%20and%20British%20Colonial%20Policy%20The%20Case%20of%20Cyprus.pdf. (Accessed August 22, 2021).

[10] Pollis, Adamantia. "Intergroup Conflict and British Colonial Policy: The Case of Cyprus,"

[11] "Treaty of Guarantee," August 16, 1960, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/CY%20GR%20TR_600816_Treaty%20of%20Guarantee.pdf. (Accessed August 22, 2021).

[12] "Treaty of Guarantee," August 16, 1960.

[13] Kaloudis, George, "Cyprus: The Enduring Conflict." *International Journal on World Peace* 16, no. 1 (1999): 3-18.

[14] Papadakis, Yiannis (2005) "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space."

states.[15] The first president of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, was a strong supporter of "enosis" and attempted to amend the constitution to allow for Greek unification.[16] However, these proposals led to severe conflicts within Cyprus and the establishment of a United Nations (UN) presence on the island.[17] Following the UN intervention, the Cypriot government became increasingly dysfunctional, and the two ethnic groups became geographically and culturally segregated.[18] During this time Cyprus also experienced an economic boom, but the Greek Cypriots were the greatest beneficiaries of the new economic opportunities.[19] In 1974, an extremist group by the name of EOKA B launched a coup d'état attempting to unite Cyprus with Greece.[20] As a result of the coup, Turkey intervened militarily in Cyprus, dividing the country into two distinct halves.[21] Turkish Cypriots controlled the northern half of the island, establishing the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.[22]

In March 2004, UN, European Union (EU), and Cypriot officials released the final draft of *The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem*, also known as the Annan Plan.[23] The Annan Plan describes the reunification of Greek and Turkish Cyprus under one government as one Member State in the UN and EU.[24] Reunification efforts must go through a vote by both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.[25] The referendum was held in April 2004 to determine whether Cyprus should be reunited under the Annan Plan prior to Cyprus's admission to the EU.[26] The referendum failed to pass under overwhelming Greek Cypriot opposition.[27] Seventy-six percent of Geek Cypriots voted in opposition to the referendum, whereas 65 percent of Turkish Cypriot voted in favor.[28]

The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)

In response to the initial post-independence violence on the island, the United Nations Security Council (SC) passed S/RES/186 (1964), creating the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).[29] UNFICYP is the third-longest active UN peacekeeping mission.[30] The mission was mandated to prevent recurrences of fighting, help with the restoration and maintenance of law and order, and aid a "return to normal conditions."[31] UNFICYP's mandate has changed numerous times during its 57-year lifespan.[32] Following the 1974 coup d'état, the UN increased its presence on the island, creating Protected Areas and ceasefire lines.[33]

UNFICYP's mandate changed again in response to Turkish non-compliance with S/RES/550 (1984) that escalated tensions around Varosha settlement.[34] Varosha was an abandoned tourist quarter located in Famagusta, the dividing

---

[15] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space," *Macalester International*: Vol. 15, Article 11 (2005), https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/macintl/vol15/iss1/11. (Accessed August 22, 2021).

[16] Kaloudis, George, "Cyprus: The Enduring Conflict." *International Journal on World Peace* 16, no. 1 (1999): 3-18.

[17] Kaloudis, George. "Cyprus: The Enduring Conflict."

[18] Kaloudis, George. "Cyprus: The Enduring Conflict."

[19] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space."

[20] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space."

[21] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space."

[22] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space."

[23] *The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem*, March 31, 2004, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/Annan_Plan_MARCH_30_2004.pdf.

[24] "Main Articles." in *The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem*.

[25] "Article 13," in *The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem*.

[26] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space."

[27] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space."

[28] Papadakis, Yiannis, "Locating the Cyprus Problem: Ethnic Conflict and the Politics of Space."

[29] "UNFICYP Mandate." *United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus*, UN Missions, December 17, 2015, https://unficyp.unmissions.org/unficyp-mandate. (Accessed August 18, 2021.)

[30] United Nations Peacekeeping, "Where we operate," UN Peacekeeping, 2021, https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/where-we-operate. (Accessed August 22, 2021.)

[31] "UNFICYP Mandate." United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus.

[32] "UNFICYP Mandate." United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus.

[33] "Timeline." *United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus*. UN Missions. Accessed August 19, 2021. https://unficyp.unmissions.org/timeline. (Accessed August 18, 2021.)

[34] United Nations Security Council, Resolution 550, *The Situation in Cyprus*, S/RES/550, May 11, 1984, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/550.

city between Greek Cyprus and Turkish Cyprus on the eastern coast of Cyprus.[35] During the 1974 coup, Turkish military forces stormed the quarter, forcing the Greek Cypriot inhabitants to flee.[36] S/RES/550 (1984) gave control of the city of Varosha to the UN amid skirmishes over the city's settlement.[37] In 1992, UNFICYP was authorized to include Varosha in its area of control, discouraging both Greece and Turkey from becoming involved in fighting within Cyprus.[38]

UNFICYP remains in Cyprus to support reunification efforts but has seen little progress.[39] Confidence-building measures of the 21st century between both sides have repeatedly stalled, causing UNFICYP-monitored peace talks to be canceled several times.[40] The SC renewed UNFICYP's mandate in July 2021, extending the mission until January 2022.[41] The resolution S/RES/2587 (2021) expressed concern over rising tensions along the ceasefire line and called upon involved parties to respect the military authority of the mission within the buffer zone.[42] Under the current 2021 mandate, UNFICYP has 1,012 personnel deployed on the island, tasked with supervising the ceasefire, maintaining the buffer zones, and aiding in humanitarian activities.[43]

Conclusion and Recent Developments

Following another breakdown of peace negotiations in 2017, Turkish Cyprus planned its presidential election in 2020.[44] Prior to the election, now-former president of Turkish Cyprus Mustafa Akinci warned that if reunification did not happen soon, the island could be permanently separated.[45]Akinci and his reelection team stated they feared if unification did not occur, Turkish Cyprus may become economically dependent on Turkey to the point of becoming a de facto province of the Member State.[46] Prime Minister Ersin Tatar won the presidential run-off election in October 2020 by a narrow 52 percent.[47] Tatar ran on a platform of the two-state solution for Cyprus and strengthening relations with Turkey, as Tatar has a strong relationship with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Turkish government.[48]

European diplomats and journalists have expressed concern over Turkish involvement in the Turkish Cyprus election, as Turkey expands its influence into the Eastern Mediterranean through its connection with Turkish

[35] Hooper, Richard and Vibeke Venema, "Varosha: The abandoned tourist resort," *BBC News*, BCC, January 14, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-25496729. (Accessed September 18, 2021.)

[36] Hooper, Richard and Vibeke Venema, "Varosha: The abandoned tourist resort," *BBC News*, BCC, January 14, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-25496729. (Accessed September 18, 2021.)

[37] United Nations Security Council, Resolution 550, *The Situation in Cyprus*, S/RES/550, May 11, 1984, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/550.

[38] United Nations Security Council, Resolution 789, *Resolution 789 (1992) / adopted by the Security Council at its 3140th meeting, on 25 November 1992*, November 25, 1992, http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/789.

[39] Charalambous, Annie, "UNFICYP Mandate Renewal Resolution Circulates as Official Security Council Document," In-Cyprus.com, August 5, 2021, https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/unficyp-mandate-renewal-resolution-circulates-as-official-security-council-document/. (Accessed August 18, 2021.)

[40] "Cyprus Profile - Timeline," *BBC News*, BBC, February 7, 2018, updated 2020, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17219505. (Accessed August 19, 2021.)

[41] "Security Council Extends Mandate of Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus until 31 January, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2587 (2021)," *United Nations Meeting Coverage and Press Releases*. United Nations, July 29, 2021. https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sc14589.doc.htm. (Accessed August 19, 2021.)

[42] "Security Council Extends Mandate of Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus until 31 January, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2587 (2021)," *United Nations Meeting Coverage and Press Releases*.

[43] "UNFICYP Fact Sheet," *United Nations Peacekeeping*, United Nations, July 2021, https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/unficyp. (Accessed August 20, 2021.)

[44] Kucukgocmen, Ali, "PM Tatar Wins North Cyprus Presidential Vote, Says People Want Own State," Reuters, October 18, 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cyprus-north-election-result/pm-tatar-wins-north-cyprus-presidential-vote-says-people-want-own-state-idUSKBN2730PP. (Accessed August 19, 2021.)

[45] Harding, Luke, "Turkish Cypriot Leader WARNS Cyprus Is Facing Permanent Partition," *The Guardian*, February 6, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/06/turkish-cypriot-leader-warns-cyprus-facing-permanent-partition-mustafa-akinci. (Accessed August 20, 2021.)

[46] Harding, Luke, "Turkish Cypriot Leader WARNS Cyprus Is Facing Permanent Partition."

[47] Kucukgocmen, Ali, "PM Tatar Wins North Cyprus Presidential Vote, Says People Want Own State."

[48] Kucukgocmen, Ali, "PM Tatar Wins North Cyprus Presidential Vote, Says People Want Own State."

Cyprus.[49] Since Tatar's election, Turkish Cyprus has rolled out various pro-Turkey legislations, most notably in regards to Varosha.[50] Turkey announced plans to open the abandoned Varosha for public visitors, with Turkish Cyprus soon after announcing plans to convert sections of Varosha from military to civilian control against S/RES/550 (1984).[51] The SC has condemned Varosha decision, calling upon Turkey and Turkish Cyprus to reverse course and respect long-standing resolutions on the settlement.[52] In July 2021, President Erdogan declared the Turkish government will continue efforts to gain international recognition for Turkish Cyprus as its own independent state.[53]

The situation in Cyprus is both long-standing and volatile, as debates over ethnic control of the Member State continue through the two domestic political processes. Delegates should consider how domestic tensions between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cyprus progress or hinder reunification efforts. Delegates should consider how the SC and UNFICYP have played a role in Cyprus and what the UN could further do to come to a solution in Cyprus. Delegates should ask: What are the possible solutions to the situation in Cyprus? What are the concerns of Greece and Turkey when considers a solution in Cyprus? What are the outcomes for Cypriots, the Mediterranean, and the UN if a solution is not reached?

[49] Psaropoulos, John, "What Does Ersin Tatar's WIN Mean for Northern Cyprus?" *Al Jazeera*, November 17, 2020, https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/11/13/what-does-ersin-tatars-win-mean-for-northern-cyprus. (Accessed August 20, 2021.)

[50] Lucente, Adam, "Explainer: The Conflict between Turkey and Cyprus over the Varosha Ghost Town," *Al-Monitor*, July 21, 2021, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/07/explainer-conflict-between-turkey-and-cyprus-over-varosha-ghost-town. (Accessed August 20, 2021.)

[51] Lucente, Adam, "Explainer: The Conflict between Turkey and Cyprus over the Varosha Ghost Town."

[52] "Security Council calls for 'immediate reversal' of Turkish and Turkish Cypriot decision on Varosha," *UN News*, United Nations, July 23, 2021, https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/07/1096352. (Accessed September 18, 2021.)

[53] Kazanci, Handan, "'Turkey Will Continue Efforts for International Recognition of Turkish Cyprus'," *Anadolu Agency*, July 21, 2021, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-will-continue-efforts-for-international-recognition-of-turkish-cyprus/2310730. (Accessed August 20, 2021.)