

July XX, 2009

Dear President Obama:

We share your concerns regarding the nearly 35 year ongoing division of the Republic of Cyprus . We welcome and appreciate your recent statement before the Turkish Parliament calling for a just and lasting settlement that reunifies Cyprus into a bizonal and bicommunal federation.

The Republic of Cyprus has proven itself to be a reliable partner of the United States and shares the values, principles and ideals on which this country is founded. The United States ' support of the efforts of the international community to achieve a Cyprus solution remains of paramount importance. Ending the island's tragic division will pave the way to prosperity and peace throughout the entire region. The absence of a solution to the Cyprus problem continues to be a source of destabilization in the eastern Mediterranean, does not serve U.S. interests and also hampers Turkey 's European Union aspirations. No EU country could be expected to agree to Turkey 's membership while its territory is being occupied by Turkish troops.

As you know, since 1974, numerous resolutions adopted by the U.N. Security Council and the U.N. General Assembly, call for an end to the tragic division of Cyprus and for the return of the refugees to their homes and properties.

We welcome the commitment demonstrated by the President of the Republic of Cyprus Demetris Christofias and the leader of the Turkish Cypriot community Mehmet Ali Talat who have been engaged in direct negotiations since September 2008 with the aim of reunifying the island. Only a well-prepared and mutually agreed settlement based on the universal principles of international law and human rights, the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, and the principles on which the European Union is founded would guarantee a just, viable and lasting solution.

We would like to reiterate our support for the reunification of the island and its people in a bicommunal and bizonal federation with a single sovereignty, single international personality and single citizenship, with its independence and territorial integrity safeguarded, and comprising two politically equal communities as described in the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions. Such a solution for Cyprus would respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Cypriots.

The occupied area of Cyprus is considered to be one of the most militarized areas in the world with the presence of more than 43,000 Turkish troops. There is one Turkish soldier for every two Turkish Cypriots. Yet, since the partial lifting of the restrictions along the cease-fire line by the Turkish occupation forces in April 2003, there have been more than 15 million incident-free crossings by Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

Finally, a solution to the Cyprus problem must come from the Cypriots themselves and serve first and foremost their interests. This can be achieved if the Cypriots retain ownership of the process which should not be subjected to strict timeframes or arbitration. Ultimately however, the key to a successful outcome of the negotiating process and reunification of the island remains with Ankara . Turkey must give the leader of the Turkish Cypriot community the necessary freedom to negotiate a solution within the established framework and facilitate that solution with the removal of its troops from Cyprus .

We urge you to impress upon Turkey that a solution to the Cyprus problem cannot be reached without its full and constructive cooperation, both in the process and in the outcome of the negotiations for a bizonal, bicomunal federation, and without the withdrawal of its military forces from Cyprus .

Sincerely,