

January 23, 2004

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Visit by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Dear Mr. President,

I write regarding your forthcoming meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan on January 28, 2004. In view of this meeting we take the opportunity to address certain issues that are important for U.S. interests in the Southeastern Mediterranean.

Cyprus

Mr. President, with regard to Cyprus, it is in the best interests of the U.S. to:

- 1) Openly support a Cyprus solution based on the EU's "acquis communautaire" and democratic norms. Addressing the Cyprus problem in 1988, then Vice President George H.W. Bush articulated these principles by stating: **"We seek for Cyprus a constitutional democracy based on majority rule, the rule of law, and the protection of minority rights."** Presidential candidate Bill Clinton echoed these principles in 1992, stating: **"A Cyprus settlement should be consistent with the fundamental principles of human rights and democratic norms and practices."**
- 2) Support modifications in the Annan Plan to make it democratic, workable, financially viable and just. Support of a democratic solution in Cyprus would be an important signal to the world community and particularly to the Arabs and Kurds in Iraq and to the rest of the Middle East.
- 3) Acknowledge that Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger encouraged and supported Turkey's invasion of Cyprus, failed to enforce U.S. laws requiring the immediate halt in arms to Turkey and refused to denounce Turkey's aggression, as Britain and most other nations did.
- 4) Call for the immediate return of Famagusta/Varosha to the government of Cyprus under U.N. auspices for the resettlement of refugees.

- 5) Call for the speedy demilitarization of Cyprus with a specific and short timetable. The continuing presence of the over 35,000 Turkish military occupation force has been a major, if not the major, impediment to negotiations between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The U.N. peacekeeping force as presently constituted, can handle internal security for the Greek and Turkish Cypriots during negotiations for a final settlement. The opening of the Green Line has demonstrated that security is not a significant problem.
- 6) Publicly call for Turkey to return the colonists promptly to their homes in Turkey. There are an estimated 100,000 illegal Turkish colonists from Anatolia in Cyprus in violation of the Geneva Convention which prohibits colonization by the occupying power.
- 7) Acknowledge that there is no legal distinction between Turkey's 1974 aggression against Cyprus and Iraq's 1990 aggression against Kuwait.

Turkey

Mr. President, there is a misconception regarding Turkey and its role in the Southeastern Mediterranean. The realities of the post September 11th environment clearly dictate a change of policy towards Turkey.

First, Turkey has proven to be an unreliable ally many times in the history of U.S.-Turkish relations with most recently, by Turkey's refusal on March 1, 2003 to help the U.S. open a northern front against Saddam Hussein's dictatorship. Given its unreliability as an ally, Turkey should not be granted any different treatment than France or Germany on this matter. Hence, we do not believe that Prime Minister Erdogan should have been accorded a White House visit in view of Turkey's refusal to help the U.S. in the war in Iraq. Besides, Turkey aided the Soviet military during the Cold War to the serious detriment of U.S. interests.

Second, the use of the Turkish political model to promote democracy in the Middle East is unrealistic for two main reasons: (1) Turkey lacks the political legitimacy in the Arab world to serve as a "model." The Iraqi Council's opposition to accept Turkish troops on their soil proves this. (2) Turkey is not a democracy. Freedom House rates Turkey as only "part free." It is a military-dominated state which violates human rights and the rule of law. The repression of its Kurdish minority, the invasion of Cyprus, the illegal blockade of Armenia and the continuous violation of the Greek borders, are examples of Turkey's aggressive action in the past decades, not to mention the threat they pose to the Kurds in northern Iraq. Turkey is a threat to its neighbors and uncritical U.S. support only exacerbates the situation and fuels instability in the region.

For the above reasons Mr. President, we ask you to reconsider and reevaluate Turkey's importance to U.S. interests and raise the above issues during your meeting with Prime Minister Erdogan on January 28.

Respectfully,

/s/ Gene Rossides

cc: Vice President Richard B. Cheney

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell
Secretary of the Treasury John W. Snow
Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld
Deputy Secretary of State Richard Lee Armitage
Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz
Chief of Staff Andrew Card
National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice
Under Secretary of State Marc Grossman
Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs A. Elizabeth Jones
Director of OMB Josh Bolten
The Congress