

# AKEL Bulletin

Edited by the  
International Relations Department  
C.C. AKEL

NO 49 | SEPTEMBER 2021



“Varosha, Entrapped by the divisionist  
machinations of Turkey”

Awaiting for the return of its lawful inhabitants  
in conditions of peace, not under foreign occupation.



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# The 23rd Congress of AKEL:

## A FORCE OF STRUGGLE - A FORCE OF CHANGE

The stronger AKEL is, the stronger the hope for the country



The 23rd Congress of AKEL was held in Nicosia, on 2-4 July 2021, with a one-year delay due to the pandemic caused by Covid-19 the consequences of which brought about further deterioration of the socio-economic situation for a large part of the working people. Nonetheless the Congress still focused on what had been set as the main objective: to debate thoroughly and conclude with decisions that would make AKEL stronger and more efficient so as to defend the working people and our country more resolutely.

One can unequivocally assert that the universal and powerful message conveyed by the 23rd Congress of AKEL is optimism and determination, so that AKEL and the Cypriot Left remain a powerful and leading force at the service of our people.

In the public debate, carried on the Party website and in the daily "Haravgi", and which preceded the Congress as well as in the debate at the Congress itself, a serious, broad and lively dialogue developed,

embraced by thousands of members of AKEL, but also a large section of society, covering all the issues of concern to AKEL and with regards its intervention in every field and at every level. We particularly appreciate the unprecedented interest and richness of views expressed in the dialogue that took place because, in our view, it represents an expression of the concerns, but also the great aspirations that exist among our people for the Left and AKEL.

The 23rd Congress of AKEL took place in extremely difficult social and political conditions for our country and people. Humanity, despite not having overcome the effects of the global economic crisis, was also called upon to confront the turmoil of the pandemic. The neighbourhood of the Eastern Mediterranean is boiling over with rivalries and militarisation. The nightmare of the final partition of Cyprus is more visible than ever in the modern history of our country and the occupying power's aggression has reached new levels.



The anti-social policies of the neoliberal Anastasiades-DISY government not only have left vulnerable groups of the population without any protection, but essentially drive them into poverty and marginalisation, widening inequalities through the shift in wealth that has been recorded over the last decade to the benefit of the privileged few. Labour relations are being deregulated and small and medium-sized businesses crushed by the arbitrariness of the banks and unequal and destructive competition.

At the same time, the Anastasiades - DISY government – a government steeped in corruption, authoritarianism and arrogance – manages to survive with the support of the financial and media system, controlling institutions and the state apparatus and by receiving the support of satellite parties, even of the fascist far-right too. Coupled with this is the fact that dangerous phenomena are being reinforced in society that are corrupting and clouding people's consciousness. Namely, racism, individualism and the logic of cronyism/clientelism, populism and compromise with the partition of our country.

The above is taking place at a time of AKEL's electoral retreat as recorded over the last two parliamentary elections (2016, 2021), while the change in the country's governance was not achieved in the 2018 Presidential Elections.

Reviewing all these facts and looking towards the future, the Congress approved the "Theses of the Central Committee towards the 23rd Congress", the introductory speech of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of AKEL Andros Kyprianou, the Report of the Central Control Commission and the Report on the finances of the Central Committee of the Party. The Congress elected the new Central Committee and the Central Control Commission. It also approved the Political Decision of the 23rd Congress which sets out the priorities of the Party for the next five years. (the 23rd Congress Documents



can be found at the following link: <https://akel.org.cy/23o-synedrio/?lang=en>



The Congress committed the new Central Committee to proceed with the convening of an Extraordinary and Constitution Congress. The Congress on the Party's Constitution will consider changes to the Party Statutes, following a structured inter-party discussion, while the Extraordinary Congress will be called upon to assess the progress recorded in the implementation of the decisions approved by the 23rd Congress.

The new Central Committee met during the Congress and elected Stefanos Stefanou to the position of General Secretary of the Central Committee of AKEL.

# IDENTITY OF THE 23rd CONGRESS OF AKEL

## Congress Election Committee figures

**A total of 1006/1278 (78.7%) delegates attended the 23rd Congress**

**MEN: 762 - 75.7% / WOMEN: 244 - 24.3%**

### REPRESENTATION OF DISTRICT ORGANISATIONS

Nicosia	365	men	274	women	91
Limassol	225	men	181	women	44
Larnaca	171	men	118	women	53
Famagusta	14	men	108	women	41
Paphos	70	men	59	women	11
Greece	12	men	11	women	1
Britain	14	men	11	women	3
TOTAL	1006	men	762	women	244

### ATTENDANCE BY DAY

Day 1	807 delegates attended
Day 2	926 delegates attended
Day 3	716 delegates attended

### AGE OF THE DELEGATES

Up to 30 years old	82
31 - 40 years old	157
41 - 50 years old	152
51 - 60 years old	246
61 - 70 years	258
71 years and over	111
TOTAL 1006	

### EDUCATION OF DELEGATES

Elementary	58
Medium	372
Higher	106
University	470
TOTAL	1006

### SOCIAL COMPOSITION

Employees	650
Farmers	6
Middle strata	91
Pensioners	227
Students	17
Housewives	6
Unemployed	9
TOTAL	1006

### PARTY POSTS

Members of the Central Committee	96
Members of the Central Control Committee	8
Members of the District Committee	118
Local militants (Secretaries/Local Party Bureau)	593
Members of Party Base Organisations	191
TOTAL	1006

First time at the Congress 176





### PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPATION FROM DISTRICT ORGANISATIONS

#### TOTAL

Nicosia	365 / 437	83,5%
Limassol	225 / 285	78,9%
Larnaca	171 / 203	84,2%
Famagusta	149 / 199	74,8%
Paphos	70 / 118	59,3%
Greece	12 / 15	80%
England	14 / 21	66,6%

#### DAY 2

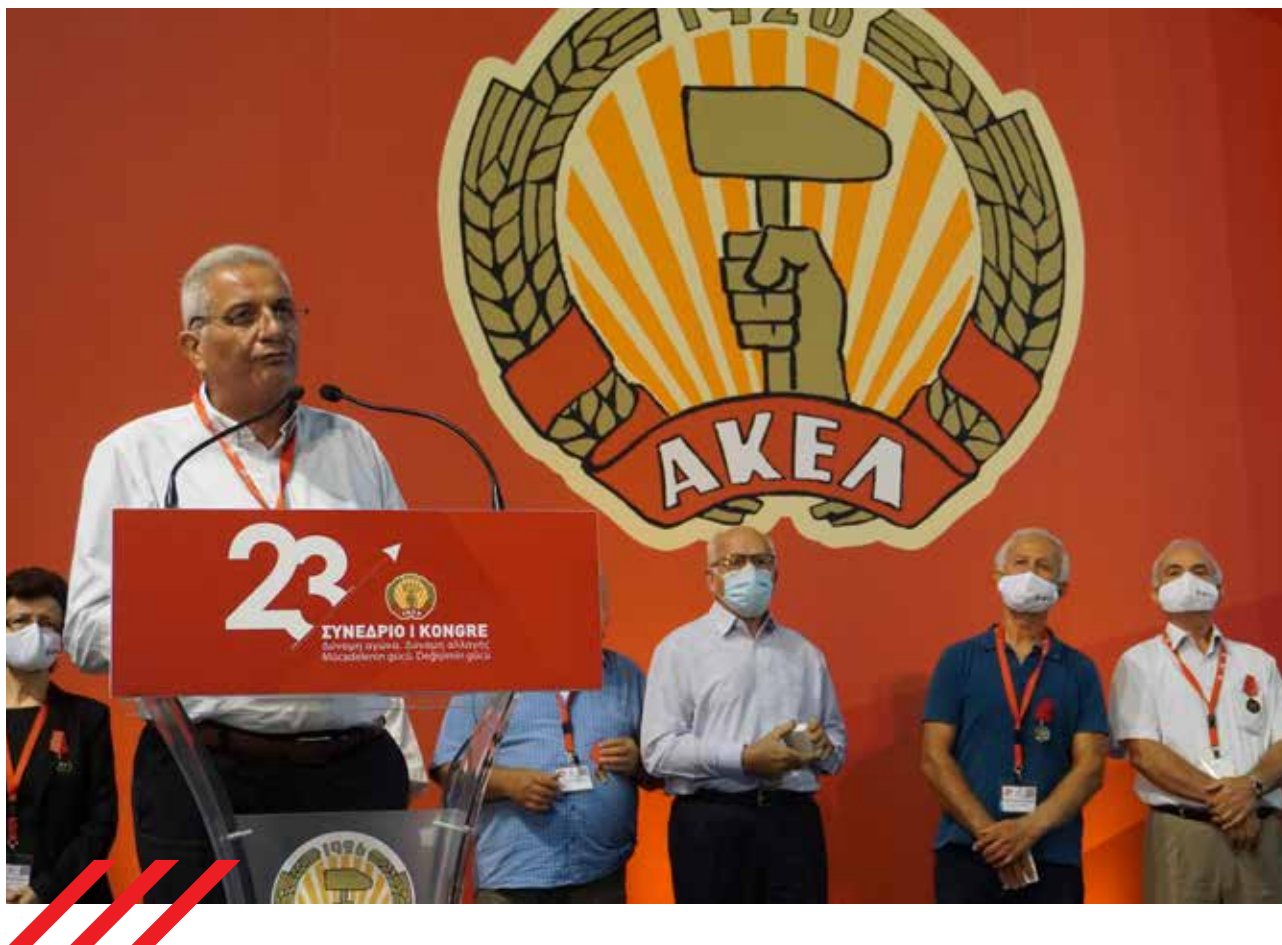
NICOSIA	319 / 365	87.40%
LIMASSOL	219 / 225	97.33%
LARNACA	162 / 171	94.74%
FAMAGUSTA	139 / 149	93.29%
PAPHOS	65 / 70	92.86%
GREECE	10 / 15	66.66%
ENGLAND	12 / 21	57.14%

#### DAY 1

NICOSIA	318 / 365	87.12%
LEMESOS	173 / 225	76.89%
LARNACA	131 / 171	76.61%
FAMAGUSTA	116 / 149	77.85%
PAPHOS	47 / 70	67.14%
GREECE	9 / 15	60.00%
ENGLAND	13 / 21	61.90%

#### DAY 3

NICOSIA	287 / 365	78.63%
LIMASSOL	147 / 225	65.33%
LARNACA	124 / 171	72.51%
FAMAGUSTA	03 / 149	69.13%
PAPHOS	32 / 70	45.71%
GREECE	12 / 15	80.00%
ENGLAND	11 / 21	52.38%



# Andros Kyprianou

## The General Secretary hands over the baton to the new leadership of the Party

Andros Kyprianou addressed the Party Congress for the last time as the General Secretary of the C.C. of AKEL. In his opening speech, he outlined his vision for Cyprus, the world and his Party starting from an evaluation of the current situation. Furthermore, he put forth the main tasks that the new Party leadership will be called to fulfill.

Andros Kyprianou has been the 7th leader of the Communist Party Cyprus-AKEL and held the position post from 2009 until the last Congress. He was not a candidate for the new Central Committee. He was reelected as AKEL MP for the district of Nicosia. As he mentioned in his speech he will remain an active cadre of the Party on the side of the new leadership.

A.Kyprianou concluded his speech by making a special reference from a personal point of view and expressed once more AKEL's vision for the future of the Party:



*"Before I close, permit me to make a personal reference.*

*I have already announced that I do not intend to run for the leadership of the party. I took this decision several months ago.*

*The need for renewal is a source of life for the Party and right now this is imperative. It becomes especially imperative after the disappointing election result we had. I see it as my duty to help the Party at this critical and defining juncture in its history.*

*Throughout the years I have had the honor of being in this position I have tried to give my best. To keep AKEL standing tall and consistent to its positions and policies. With steadfastness and sincerity, in unprecedented conditions, conditions of crisis and confronting merciless war and attacks against our Party.*

*I would like to thank all the comrades, the Party's militants and members, the friends of the New Forces who have worked with us over the years for having struggled together for principles, values, ideals, for the country, for the people of the Left, for the people of Cyprus. I regret that we didn't manage to do better, but I am sure that the force that is here today, the force that is out there waiting for a spark to be released, will become the momentum that will take AKEL to where it deserves to be.*

*Not running for the post of General Secretary of the Party does not mean I will be absent from our struggles. I will be with you, in the front line of the struggle. It would be an omission before I close my speech if I did not also mention those who are not with us today...*

*AKEL carries with it a heavy legacy from the past. Struggles, sacrifices, service, comrades who wrote*

*and became History. However, AKEL also has a lot of wealth at its service for the future.*

*It is the golden reserve in the youth. Young people with knowledge, experience and assets and above all selflessness to struggle. They are the hope of AKEL.*

*Volunteers who offer their all, from taking small initiatives for the construction of a neighbourhood park, to comrades in Municipal councils, voluntary organisations, solidarity networks, ready to reply every call issued by the movement to struggle and offer their services. They are AKEL's bastion of support.*

*We are talking about hundreds of anonymous members and cadres. You won't see any of them on television, they are not in the spotlight and in the news, nor do they figure on social media. But they are there and they are carrying out their duties quietly, for AKEL, for the People's Movement, for the country and for the people.*

*All of them are the wealth of AKEL. They carry on their shoulders the legacy of a movement that holds high the flag of the people, the flag of Cyprus. Heads up! We believe in our cause!!*

*We waged battles, we won, we lost, we fell, we got back again on our feet again and we marched forward!*

*That is what we will do now too.*

*United, determined and resolute.*

*History will be written by us. And we shall write it again!*

*Long live the working people's greatest gain!*

*Long live the force of hope, the force of the future and the people!*

*Long live the Party of the Cypriot people!*

*Long live AKEL!"*



# CV OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF AKEL STEFANOS STEFANOY

Stefanos Stefanou was born in Gerollakos (occupied areas) on 21st January 1965. After the Turkish invasion of 1974 he settled in Deftera, his father's hometown. He is married to Georgia Zenonos and has 2 daughters.

In July 2021 he was elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of AKEL.

He studied Political Science at the Academy of Social and Political Sciences in Sofia, Bulgaria. During his studies, he was President of the Cypriot Student's Organisation in Bulgaria. After completing his studies in 1989, he worked as a full-time militant of the United Democratic Youth Organization (EDON).

He has been a member of the Central Committee of AKEL since 1995, the Political Bureau since 2011 and the Central Secretariat since 2013.

In 1996 he was elected General Secretary of EDON, a post he held until 2001. From 2001 to 2008, he was appointed to the Office of the President of the Parliament, Demetris Christofias, as Special Advisor. From 2008 to 2013 he served as Government Spokesman in the Government of Demetris Christofias.



In the period 2013-2016, he served as the District Secretary of AKEL Nicosia - Kyrenia District Organisation.

From 2016 to 2021, he served as the Party's Press Spokesperson and Head of the Press and Communication Office of the C.C. of AKEL.

He was elected MP for Nicosia with AKEL-Left-New Forces in the elections of 22nd May 2016 and re-elected in the elections of 30th May 2021. He served as Deputy Chairman of the House Standing Committee on Refugees-Enclaved-Missing-Adversely Affected Persons, Member of the House Standing Committee on Development Plans and Public Expenditure Control, of the House Standing Committee on Financial and Budgetary Affairs and of the Ad Hoc House Committee on the Investigation of Issues Relating to Loans of Politically Exposed Persons and as Head of the Delegation of the House to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)

As of July 2021, he is a member of the National Council.

# INTERVIEW WITH THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF AKEL STEFANOS STEFANOY:

**We envision an AKEL that will open new paths and inspire**

11th July 2021, 'HARAVGI' newspaper

“AKEL has never been an introvert party, confined to its own shell. It was precisely its identity and its DNA that drove it to open doors, to be wherever the majority of society lives, breathes, works, struggles, dreams and aspires. The challenge is to convince the people that we are the hope of all those who are concerned about the country’s present and future.”

**Q: Three days of debate at the 23rd Congress on the future of AKEL and the pioneering role it is called upon to regain. How heavy do you feel the responsibility you are taking on as the new General Secretary in this mission?**

*SS: It is a great honor both for myself and Party’s collective leadership, but also a heavy responsibility to manage to live up to the trust shown in me by the Congress and the new Central Committee, but also to meet the expectations of the people of AKEL.*

**Q: “AKEL should not get trapped in obsessions, but should articulate a new discourse, which will draw on its long experience and its ideology.” Excerpts from your speech as the new General Secretary from the podium of the 23rd Congress. Was it a message to political opponents, an element of self-criticism or something else?**

*SS: The Congress was preceded by a frank public dialogue on what AKEL should do to overcome the difficult phase in which it finds itself. Congress itself also dealt with this issue.*

*At no time have AKEL’s messages ever pointed in a single direction. After all, what AKEL has to say*

*concerns Cyprus and society as a whole.*

*For that reason, the message is that AKEL has never been a party that is introvert, confined to its own shell. It was precisely its identity, its DNA that drove it to open doors, to be where the majority of society lives, breathes, works, struggles, dreams and aspires. That was what made AKEL a big force respected by friends and opponents alike.*

*The challenge for us now is to become once again the protagonists in the fields that shape progress and to convince the people that AKEL continues to be the force the people of labour, intellectual and mental labour, of young people and of all those who want to change things, can rely on. The challenge is to convince the people that we are the hope of all those who are concerned about the country today and its future.*

**Q: During the pre-Congress dialogue and at the Congress itself there was a lot of discussion about the party’s contacts with the people. What form does this contact take and what is its content?**

*SS: We want to talk to people, especially young people, within the Movement, but also with those*



We want AKEL to intervene more quickly, more promptly, more convincingly to protect working people, small and medium-sized businesses, farmers, young people, the popular strata and the whole of society from the anti-social policies being imposed.

*who, although professing to be left, do not trust the Left. We want to listen to them and identify common demands, common objectives and ways of working together, to achieve goals together and to take AKEL where it deserves to be.*

*We want to make our antennae more sensitive to social movements, to society at large so that we can develop a meaningful and interactive relationship, to listen, to take in the messages being conveyed and to react effectively. The overwhelming majority of society should feel that we are on their side, with them in their struggles and efforts for a progressive change in the country, for a better future for our Cyprus.*

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**Q: What stands out from the congratulations and good wishes you have received as the new General Secretary of AKEL?**

*SS: The fact that everyone, even people who do not belong to AKEL, are united in a common understanding and expectation: that Cyprus and Cypriots need a strong AKEL.*

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**Q: What is your first priority in terms of the Party's reorganisation?**

*SS: The election result showed that we didn't convince that part of society which we address seeking to win their support at the ballot box. This means that we have to look at what went wrong. We reflected on this before and during our Congress.*

*Many contributions and thoughts were put forward which can be used to revitalise our work and intervention in society.*

*We want AKEL to intervene more quickly, more promptly, more convincingly to protect working people, small and medium-sized businesses,*

*farmers, young people, the popular strata and the whole of society from the anti-social policies being imposed.*

*We want to continue to pave the way for the future of Cyprus with our positions and proposals.*

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**Q: And what is AKEL's first assertion, both inside and outside Parliament?**

*Both in and out of the House of Representatives we shall seek to provide relief for the majority of society suffering from the consequences of the crisis created by the pandemic. We shall seek to elaborate a concrete package of proposals for the day after the pandemic and to make it accepted by society, but also to promote it through Parliament.*

*We want to make our antennae more sensitive to social movements, to society at large, so that we can develop a meaningful and interactive relationship, to listen to the messages being sent and to react effectively.*

*We have already submitted proposals to the government for support to be provided to workers and small family businesses, for the creation of basic welfare and health infrastructures, the combatting of climate change and proposals aiming at addressing income and social inequalities*

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**Q: The goal of progressive change in the country is - do you think - the first challenge you are called upon to win as AKEL and the new leadership?**

*SS: The goal for progressive change is one of our priorities.*

*Long before the Presidential Elections we shall have the Municipal Elections and it goes without saying that we will seek to fulfill the electoral objectives*

*we will set. The Left has a long tradition in local government, it has made a major contribution to the development of the institution for the benefit of society. We have a stake in winning the elections and strengthening our presence, which we will translate into a contribution to serve citizen's interests.*

*As far as the big picture is concerned, the challenge for us as AKEL is to regain the confidence of that section of the people of the Left which, for various reasons, we have lost in recent years. We must prove that the Left can renew itself, find new paths, open up new roads and inspire. This is the AKEL we envision and we shall work for such an AKEL with all our strengths, with an open mind and an open heart.*

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**Q: What else can AKEL, together with the progressive forces of the Turkish Cypriot community, do to prevent the partition of Cyprus? The most pressing issue now is Famagusta. What's your comment on the developments?**

*SS: It is well known that AKEL has submitted a comprehensive proposal with suggestions on how the dialogue for the solution of the Cyprus problem can be resumed. We have of course also briefed the progressive forces of the Turkish Cypriot community about our proposal.*

*From there onwards, AKEL is constantly undertaking initiatives of both a small and large scope for the development of joint actions with our Turkish Cypriot compatriots, with the aim always of strengthening the voice of the Cypriot people, who is demanding liberation, peace and reunification.*



# Is the clock ticking dangerously against reunification?

Article by Stavri Kalopsidiotou (PhD in Public International Law), member of the C.C. of AKEL and the Cyprus problem Office



The Turkish provocative actions against the Republic of Cyprus have unfortunately not ceased. Although recent declarations of international organisations, including the EU, record that we are going through a period of de-escalation of the tension in the Eastern Mediterranean, this conclusion does not at all apply to what is actually happening in Cyprus.

The Turkish side's illegal actions in the enclosed city of Famagusta, with the protagonists being the partitionist Tatar and the Turkish President, are intensifying. However, it would be wrong and frivolous if this violation of international law, Resolutions 550(1984) and 789(1992) of the UN Security Council and of the temporary status quo in the area of Varosha were to be perceived as simply

just another provocative action. Which explains why, AKEL has supported the assumption of diplomatic initiatives and has undertaken various initiatives itself, in an effort to reverse the Turkish decisions and avert their implementation. Undoubtedly, the loss of Varosha will constitute a major blow to our efforts for the comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem.

After difficult discussions and the staggering insistence of the UN Security Council's penholders on Cyprus to avoid the explicit name and shame of Turkey and Tatar - following their 20th July 2021 announcement of illegal activities in Varosha additional to the unilateral actions endorsed as of 8 October 2020 - the body adopted a strong Presidential Statement. This condemns the recent

announcement by Turkish and Turkish Cypriot leaders on the further reopening of the sealed-off section of Famagusta (Varosha), calls for the immediate reversal of that course of action and for the reversal of all steps taken on Varosha since October 2020.

In addition to expressing its regret over those unilateral actions that run contrary to previous Council resolutions and statements it reaffirms its commitment to the agreed basis of the solution. Even more significantly, the aforementioned position is adopted by the latest Security Council resolution on the renewal of UNFICYP's mandate.

Effectively, the aforementioned activities are added to numerous other efforts by the Turkish side to alter the situation on the ground and expose that what is happening at Varosha is another expression of its general orientation towards the deepening the island's de facto partition. Undoubtedly, the preparations for the illegal colonisation of Varosha and/or with the call for the return of its lawful inhabitants under Turkish Cypriot administration and therefore under conditions of occupation overturn what has been agreed, challenge the settlement of the territorial issue as reflected in the maps previously submitted by the Turkish Cypriot side itself and contradict the UN Secretary General's Framework of 30 June 2017. In other words, they damage important aspects of the content of the solution and consequently undermine the prospect of a positive outcome.

The clock is ticking dangerously against the reunification of Cyprus; against the restoration of its territorial integrity and the reunion of its people, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Four years after the collapse of the Crans Montana conference and Turkey's exoneration by the international community for what had transpired, in the wake of the backtracking that occurred around convergences recorded, including the questioning of political equality, following the ensuing Turkish provocative



and illegal actions in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Cyprus and Varosha and Turkey's official targeting of a two state "solution" at the failed informal Geneva conference, the scope for taking substantive initiatives is getting slimmer. All the more so as attempts to find bridging proposals from various directions are fraught with serious dangers, if one were to consider that there is no median option between one state and two states.

The dilemma that weighs on the shoulders of the Greek Cypriot leadership in the shadow of these unfavorable developments and their cumulatively dangerous consequences is whether or not it will settle only for a campaign of condemnations. If the historical experience of the Cyprus problem teaches us anything, it is that the worst fait accompli have taken place during periods of prolonged negotiating stalemate. It is that the unproductive passage of time facilitates Turkey to take actions that consolidate the de facto partition.



If anything can prevent Turkey from consolidating further the permanent partition of Cyprus and its people, this is the resumption of substantive negotiations to put the Cyprus problem back on the rails of the prospect of a solution within the agreed framework or to reveal any of Turkey's intentions.

Most importantly, for the negotiations to be truly substantive and meaningful, they must resume from where they stopped in 2017, that is by respecting fully the convergences formulated up to their collapse - including that of political equality and effective participation – the Common Declaration of the two leaders of 2014 and the UN Secretary-General's Framework of Six Points. If this happens, the issue of Varosha will also be positively addressed, since the reaffirmation of the negotiating acquis cannot exclude the maps which had been submitted regarding territorial adjustments and which include the return of Varosha - as well as a wider area of Famagusta - under Greek Cypriot administration in the context

of a federal solution.

Assessing recent developments, prevailing dangers and the grave consequences of the negotiating stalemate AKEL has proceeded with the submission of a detailed proposal. In a nutshell, it provides a roadmap of initiatives which if assumed can facilitate the resumption of the negotiations; since it entails the necessary motives – without of course discounting valid Greek Cypriot concerns - and restores emphatically significant past convergences the questioning of which has burdened the effort to negotiate in a meaningful manner.

If we once believed that the horizon of the solution was long and there were many paths today, before it becomes too late, we must face reality. We are therefore called upon to take convincing initiatives, in essence to choose between federation or the definitive partition of Cyprus.



# JOINT DECLARATION

## Condemning Turkey's illegal actions in Varosha and the urgent need for the resumption of talks

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We recall that the ongoing military occupation of Cyprus by Turkey for forty-seven years is unacceptable and we assert that it must immediately be terminated. We extend our wholehearted support and solidarity to the struggle of all Cypriots, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, seeking to reunify their state through the agreed basis of bicomunal bizonal federation with political equality, as this is prescribed in the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

We condemn the intensified adverse activities of Turkey against Cyprus, as expressed through the creation of new fait accompli in and around the island. The recent and escalating negative developments at Varosha, the sealed-off part of Famagusta, are extremely alarming and we support all efforts aiming at their reversal. We stress that the Turkish provocations and illegal activities serve solely the permanent division of the Cypriots and of their common homeland.

With regards to the issue of Varosha we recall, inter alia:

- The illegal occupation of the city of Famagusta since 1974, a section of which was sealed-off and has remained uninhabited and under the direct control of the Turkish military ever since then;
- The core principles of international law and the UN Charter, the 1979 High Level Agreement between the leaders of the two communities in Cyprus, as well as the relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions, in particular Resolutions 550 (1984) and 789 (1992);
- The UN's position that the responsibility for the

status quo at Varosha belongs to Turkey, including the responsibility for any effort to alter its status contrary to the 1979 High Level Agreement and the relevant UNSC Resolutions 550 (1984) and 789 (1992);

- The inclusion of Varosha among the areas to be transferred under Greek-Cypriot administration following the comprehensive solution, in all the maps which had been introduced in previous rounds of negotiations.

- The Presidential Statement of the UNSC of 23 July 2021 which condemns the recent announcement by Turkish and Turkish Cypriot leaders on the further reopening of a the sealed-off section of Famagusta (Varosha), calls for the immediate reversal of that course of action and for the reversal of all steps taken on Varosha since October 2020. In addition to expressing its regret over those unilateral actions that run contrary to previous Council resolutions and statements it reaffirms its commitment to the agreed basis of the solution.

- The UNSC's statement of 9 October 2019, which reminded the importance of the status of Varosha as set out in its previous resolutions and reiterated that no actions that are not in accordance with those resolutions should be carried out, as well as its declaration of 9 October 2020, which deplored Turkey's unilateral action of 'opening' part of the area on 8 October 2020;

- The decisions of international organisations which call on Turkey to transfer the sealed-off area of Famagusta to the UN in accordance with the

relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and to refrain from actions altering the demographic balance on the island through any policy of illegal settlements;

- The statements of international organisations and states expressing their regret over the unilateral decisions of Ankara to proceed with the 'opening' of Varosha, initially as of 8 October 2020 and more recently as of 20 July 2021;

Considering the urgent nature of the situation in Varosha and its vast implications on the comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem, we demand,

- 1.** The immediate termination of all deplorable unilateral activities which alter the temporary status quo of Varosha in violation of the relevant UNSC Resolutions and seek to prepare the area for its illegal settlement.
- 2.** The return to Varosha of its lawful inhabitants following the unequivocal transfer of the sealed-off area under the control of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus, as prescribed in the aforementioned Resolutions.
- 3.** The termination of all Turkish illegal activities that raise further tensions on and around the island, create new divisionist fait accompli and undermine the prospects for the resumption of

meaningful direct negotiations, which constitutes the only available path for the reunification of Cyprus and its people.

- 4.** The immediate resumption of substantial negotiations on the basis of the agreed solution of bicomunal bizonal federation with a single international legal personality, single sovereignty and single citizenship, as well as with political equality between the two communities, as this is defined by the relevant UNSC resolutions, and from the point they left off at Crans Montana in 2017; therefore, on the basis of the Common Declaration of the two leaders of 2014, of his Six Points Framework of 30 June 2017 and of the convergences achieved by the end of the Conference.

In concluding, at this extremely crucial juncture for the future of Cyprus, we would like to reiterate our support towards its people, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, who continue to fight for bringing peace on their war-torn island, to curb any hegemonic interferences and reunite their country to provide a hopeful and prosperous future to the generations to come.

**The Joint Declaration is signed by political parties from all over the world.**





# US - Republic of Cyprus military cooperation

## Cyprus involved in US imperialism's plans for the Middle East



The one-dimensional approach in the foreign policy pursued by the DISY-Anastasiades government in recent years has been fully aligned with US foreign policy and the promotion of US interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Undoubtedly, it is no coincidence that the simultaneous upgrading of relations with other US-friendly countries, such as Israel, has also developed at the same time. Attaching itself to the US war machine in recent years the government's policy has caused problems in Cyprus' relations with traditionally friendly states that support the struggle of the Cypriot people and the strategic goal of reaching a solution of the Cyprus problem, as set out by the relevant UN resolutions.

The approval of the Menendez-Rubio bill by the US Congress and Senate to lift the non-lethal arms embargo on the Republic of Cyprus is a means of promoting US foreign policy in the region, which aims to prevail over its competitors, namely Russia and China. More specifically, the Bill in question includes, among other things, the demand put to the Republic of Cyprus to prohibit Russian warships from having access to Cypriot ports for refueling and supplies. This in effect represents a dangerous development for Cyprus as with the Menendez-Rubio Law's provisions, apart from damaging diplomatic relations with members of the UN Security Council,

an international conflict is transferred on the territory of our country, making it an arena of confrontation.

An example of Cyprus' alignment with US foreign policy is the Anastasiades government's decision to be included among the 20 of the 200 states that co-signed the US State Department's statement against Cuba. This action constitutes a clear interference in the internal affairs of a friendly sovereign state. Furthermore, also not accidental was the government's support for Israel, through the Foreign Ministry statement on the recent attacks waged on Gaza. Indeed, in addition to the Foreign Ministry, other government officials and the President of the ruling DISY party hastily expressed their public support towards Israel, turning Israel from a perpetrator to a victim.

The message sent out internationally by the Anastasiades-DISY government was that Cyprus, a country itself under occupation, is defending in every way an occupying power that is strangling the people of Palestine on a daily basis. These actions reveal the contradictory approach of the Anastasiades



government's foreign policy, which is not based on the defence of the principles of international law, nor does it take into account the consequences on the efforts to arrive at a solution of the Cyprus problem.

The US, seeking to assign Cyprus an upgraded role in its imperialist plans for the Eastern Mediterranean region, has further deepened its relations with Cyprus, through military cooperation as well. As of July 2020, Cyprus has agreed to participate in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) offered by the US. In the agreement there is an explicit reference that Cyprus' participation in this programme contributes to the promotion of the geostrategic interests and defence of the national security of the US.





Through this programme, it was agreed to establish a regional border security training hub in Larnaca, the 'Cyprus Centre for Land, Sea and Port Security' (CYCLOPS). The operation of CYCLOPS allows the US to provide training to National Guard officers on security issues, including customs and export control, port and maritime security, as well as cyber security. More specifically with regards to the operation of CYCLOPS, the US Department of State itself has made it its goal to counter the activities of what it terms "malicious regional actors" in the Eastern Mediterranean region. Work has already started since January 2021 and the Centre will be completed by the end of 2021 in the city of Larnaca. This project is being built and will operate with full US funding.

Furthermore, as part of the upgrading of US-Cyprus military relations, in January 2021, the Cyprus National Guard took part for the first time in the trilateral US-Cyprus-Greece military maneuvers and co-training exercise with the participation of the Special Forces in Crete. These maneuvers and military exercises are likely be a custom in the future as the US is seeking to upgrade military cooperation with Cyprus and Greece

in order to safeguard its interests in the region.

Unquestionably, this military cooperation isn't an exception as in recent years the DISY-Anastasiades government has made it its priority to upgrade its relations with NATO forces. In this context, Cyprus has been actively participating in the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) since 2017, which essentially complements NATO's activity. In addition, the Anastasiades government has signed military agreements with a number of countries, granting foreign forces access to ports, airports and territory for military activities.

Unfortunately, many questions are being raised about the DISY-Anastasiades government's policy to tie Cyprus to the US war machine. In fact, at a time when it should be focusing on how to resume negotiations, the government is proceeding with a series of military "defence and security" agreements, believing that this will prevent the imposition of fait accompli that Turkey is trying to impose in Cyprus.

The opposite is happening, as so far none of these



“partnerships” have helped stop Turkey’s aggressive actions, with the result that it is proceeding to open the enclosed town of Varosha under the control of the illegal regime in the occupied areas, whilst at the same time it is conducting continuous violations in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Cyprus for natural gas extraction. In addition, it is proceeding to operate an unmanned drone air base in the occupied village of Lefkoniko to carry out raids in the area.

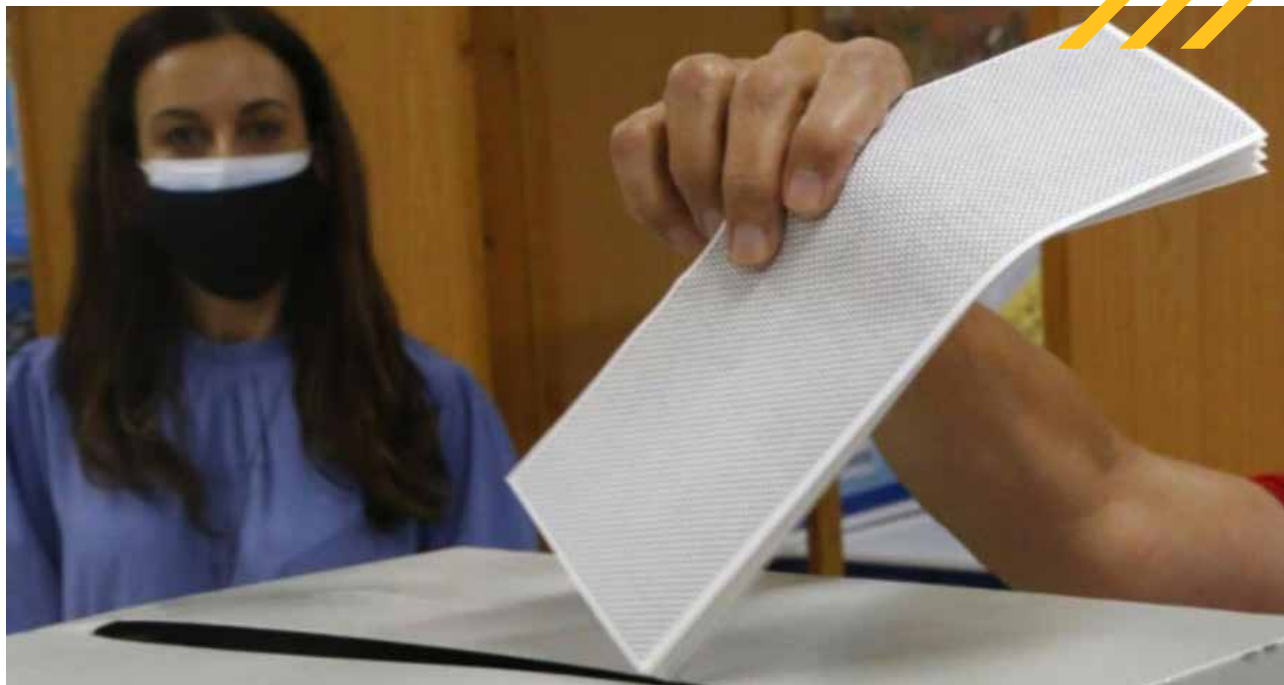
The Anastasiades government’s commitment to strengthening military cooperation with the simultaneous involvement of Cyprus in the US plans for the Middle East has resulted in moving away from

the goal of demilitarizing the country and achieving a solution to the Cyprus problem that liberates it from the Turkish army and reunites it within the framework of a bicomunal, bizonal federation.



AKEL, together with the People’s Movement, participated on 13 June 2021 held an anti-NATO event organised by the Cyprus Peace Council, under the slogan “Neither Cyprus in NATO - Nor NATO in Cyprus”. The event took place at the site where work is underway to house the US-funded training facility, the Cyprus Centre for Land, Open-seas, and Port Security (CYCLOPS) in Larnaca. The event was a reaction to the US-Cyprus military cooperation, in the framework of which the operation of the CYCLOPS training centre was agreed upon and which directly involves Cyprus in the dangerous US plans in the region.

# Parliamentary Elections in Cyprus



On 30 May 2021 parliamentary elections were held in Cyprus. AKEL unfortunately failed to reverse the downward trend it has recorded in previous elections in recent years. The party's share of the vote reached a historic low of 22.3%, that is a drop of -3.3%, which was added to the -7.1% drop recorded in 2016. In real terms, the drop in 2021 compared to the previous election was 11,000 votes, in addition to the 42,000 votes lost in 2016. Namely a total of 53,000 votes in ten years.

AKEL, assessing all the conditions and facts of the period, had concluded that it would be very difficult to recover the losses of the previous elections. Thus, the Party had set the goal of recording a small increase in its percentages from the previous elections. It is worth noting that during the campaign it appeared that this goal could be realized, and even that our Party could come first. However, the election result fell far short from the goal we had set. In addition, there were also multilevel and multidimensional reasons that led to this result.

The elections took place in a difficult international and European environment which the Left, not only in our country but also internationally, is called upon to confront. The neoliberal policies and approaches which undermine institutions, cultivate the ground for populist and nationalist movements, dismantle labour relations and abolish political, worker's and social rights put pressure on the Left, its principles and visions. This environment inevitably affects national developments and processes in each individual country and consequently affects Cyprus too and of course its political and electoral environment.

During this period the conditions of poverty and hardship which a large section of the popular strata suffered had increased as a result of the economic and banking crisis and the government's antisocial policies. The pandemic came to aggravate the living conditions of even more working people and exerted pressure on society in general.

More specifically, unemployment and inequalities





have increased, work projects have been suspended, thousands of small and medium-sized businesses have closed down, there has been a big reduction in workers' incomes (according to EU figures, Cyprus recorded the second biggest reduction in workers' incomes), whilst socio-economic and labour insecurity in society has grown sharply. In this context, the psychological problems caused by people's confinement at home, the numerous bans and restrictive measures applied to deal with the coronavirus must also be taken into account.

Therefore people's anger was bolstered, in addition to the unemployment, job and economic insecurity that existed before and deteriorated with the coronavirus, as well as by the problems caused by the government's erratic, contradictory and erroneous decisions and measures, such as the delays and problems with vaccinations. In addition, a series of scandals that came to light acted as a catalyst towards this end.

The above resulted in the reinforcement of phenomena that have had a negative impact on social consciousness. These phenomena have caused an even greater "loosening" of the ideological, political and emotional relationship of voters with political

parties and made the vote even more vulnerable and the subject of manipulation by populism and selfish individualism. De-ideologisation and depoliticisation were strengthened, in many cases conspiracy theories replaced rational thought and aversion to politics intensified. These in turn further fuelled apathy, indifference and pessimism about the prospects of the country and society, further reinforcing the conservative turn of Cypriot society.

In such an environment, and with populism reaching new levels, the tendency to equate and level the parties was reinforced. The narrative "all the parties are the same" became very popular and determined the political and electoral behaviour of a significant section of the electorate, especially among the young generation. The protest vote and abstention represented their choice

Thus, there was a strong tendency for voters to defect from parties in parliament, either towards abstention or to small and newly-formed parties, which, without having programmatic positions or any ideological-political cohesion, benefited from the protest vote. We point out that the parties that didn't manage to get elected to parliament received 15% of the vote which, together with the 34% abstention, represents almost



half of the total number of voters. The exception to the above unfortunately was the fascist ELAM party which almost doubled its percentage vote to 6.72% and is now the fourth largest party in parliament.

In these conditions, AKEL didn't manage to convince that it is different, that it does not belong to the parties to which a significant part of society blames its misery and problems on. In addition, it had to face the problem that its core political positions a priori were clashing with the society's dominant perceptions, which are promoted and imposed by the establishment with the powerful means at its disposal in shaping social consciousness, such as for example with regards the immigration issue.

This does not, of course, mean that AKEL should abandon or alter its positions of principle that stem from its ideology. Far from it. But it must show particular care, perseverance and consistency in the effort to make society understand these positions and to repel any attempts to misinterpret them.

There was another negative phenomenon that greatly affected AKEL. A significant part of its core social and electoral base, workers and the popular strata who are paying the greatest costs of the crisis,

considers that the party didn't protect them enough from the economic crisis and the government's anti-people's policies and, in general, does not act as a protective shield for the rights of working people and society.

The phenomenon also appeared, as a dogmatic extension of the above, of AKEL being blamed for the government's failures and erroneous policies or for the discomfort caused by the state.

These are perceptions that must give the party cause for reflection and for it to try harder and more specifically in a more concrete way to strengthen its presence where people work and live. To make its presence more visible and its intervention more effective, both inside and outside Parliament. To put more focus on social and labour issues. To improve its elaboration and formulation of policies/proposals and to enhance its intervention and penetration in society by upgrading the functioning of its Auxiliary Bureaus.

Finally, it is imperative that the class-based trade union movement, despite the admittedly prevailing difficult conditions, find ways to strengthen its activity and presence at the workplace.



# Forest fires in Cyprus

Article by Christina Nikolaou, Head of the Environment Bureau  
of the C.C. of AKEL

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The first weekend of July 2021, will be go down as one of the most devastating in Cyprus, given that the fires that broke out in the Larnaca and Limassol mountainous areas were catastrophic. Four people lost their lives, many more their houses and huge areas of agricultural and forest land were destroyed. From the very first moment the newly elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of AKEL Stefanos Stefanou visited the affected areas and communities to express AKEL's sympathy and to assure them that we will try to mitigate as much as possible the consequences of the devastating fires.

The recent fires have demonstrated the need to define a central overall policy for combating fires and other natural disasters, both with regards their prevention and extinction, but above all a methodology for the rehabilitation of burnt affected areas.

Forests and agricultural land are an invaluable natural resource, especially for Cyprus and the particularly adverse effects on the natural and human-made environment and on the activities of mountain and rural populations can be combated to a considerable extent by the assumption of the appropriate management measures of a technical and economic nature in burnt areas.

In addition to the direct compensation that the state must provide to those affected by the devastating fires, AKEL proposes the following:



**1.** State services with forest firefighters, staff, machinery, fire engines, fire-fighting vehicles and planes must be strengthened, together with increasing the number of seasonal firefighters of the Forestry Department, the Fire Brigade and the Game and Fauna Service,

**2.** The Forestry College should operate again based on news plans to meet the needs of today and the future,

**3.** Local communities must be provided with fire-fighting trucks with proper training of those responsible for their use, as well as the ensuring the training of volunteer groups.

**4.** Anti-erosion and flood protection works must be constructed, especially in the cases where built-up areas or human-made activities are threatened. The construction of works and projects to protect the soil from erosion and prevent the creation of geological landslides and flooding is a priority.

**5.** The fire went as far as within the boundaries of the drinking water dams of Germasoyia and Kalavaso, which is a matter of concern as the impact of the effects of fires on water has already proved to be disastrous in many cases

and therefore preventive measures must be taken to avoid overflow of water.

**6.** Preservation of soil fertility (management and harvesting of burnt wood debris)

**7.** Regeneration of plant cover and conservation of fauna by restoring - repairing the ecosystem in terms of vegetation and agricultural land.

**8.** Establishment of a team of experts - scientists for the management of Environmental Disasters and crises in connection with Civil Defence.

The above proposals constitute good practices for the post-fire management at the landscape level and will contribute towards reducing the subsequent fire risk. The state must take immediate action to prevent such events from recurring.

The AKEL Larnaca and Limassol District Committees have already visited and recorded the needs of the affected communities. On Thursday 22 July, Giorgos Loucaides again visited all the villages of the affected areas and had meetings with the local community councils to make sure that competent departments of the relevant Ministries, and the government are proceeding with the area rehabilitation plan and compensation of those who have lost their property



# International Activity



13 June

## Anti-NATO mobilisation of the Cyprus Peace Council “Neither Cyprus in NATO-Nor NATO in Cyprus”

In view of the NATO Summit held on 14 June, the Cyprus Peace Council (CPC) organised an anti-NATO mobilisation in Larnaca, at the site where works are underway to house the Cyprus Centre for Land, Open-seas, and Port Security (CYCLOPS). The choice of the venue of the event was deemed necessary in order to express the reaction to the US-Cyprus military cooperation that has been developing lately. A cooperation promoted by the right-wing Anastasiades government that is pushing to Cyprus be increasingly tied to the NATO war machine. AKEL participated and supported the event.





## 6 July

# CPC World Summit of Political Parties

AKEL participated online in the World Summit of Political Parties “For the well-being of the people: the responsibility of political parties”. The Summit was organised on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of China. The AKEL delegation was headed by Stefanos Stefanou, the General Secretary of the C.C. of AKEL, who, together with the Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Cyprus H.E. Mr.Liu Yantao, followed the Summit.

More than 500 political parties from 160 countries from all over the world participated in the Summit.



14 July

“End the US Blockade of Cuba”

## Mobilization outside the Cuban Embassy in Nicosia

AKEL supported the mobilisation of the Cyprus-Cuba Friendship Association which was organised to show support and solidarity with the Cuban government and people against the attempts to undermine their gains. The ongoing attempts to incite violence and destabilization in Cuba on the pretext of the intensification of humanitarian issues related both to the problems caused by the ongoing blockade of Cuba by the United States and the pandemic are yet another attempt to undermine Cuba's independence and sovereignty, its socialist path of development. The mobilisation joined the voices of many other friends of Cuba around the world who are crying out against the efforts of the US, and particularly of certain anti-Cuban circles, to provoke political chaos in the country. The mobilization in Nicosia took place outside the Cuban Embassy, where Cuban Ambassador Omar Leyva RAFULL also sent his own message.

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