



CYPRUS: 50 years

still divided

A HISTORY OF FOREIGN INTERVENTIONS, MILITARISATION AND NATIONALISM THE MULTIFACETED EXPRESSION OF IMPERIALISM IN CYPRUS

-At the crossroads of three continents (Asia, Africa and Europe) Cyprus has suffered since time immemorial from multiple foreign invaders, settlers and occupiers. It was conquered by Hittites, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Romans, Byzantines, Franks and Venetians and the Ottomans.

-1878: Cyprus was put under British colonial rule following the Ottoman rule.

-The imperialist powers of the 20th century USA, Britain and NATO have sought the transformation of Cyprus into an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" in the Mediterranean (presence of British military bases since 1960, Turkish occupation since 1974) as part of their plans for the "New Middle East".

-For the last 50 years, 37% of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus remains under the illegal military occupation of Turkey.

To the expense of the freedom of all its people, of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Republic of Cyprus has been used by imperialist forces as another tool in effecting the complete strategic rearrangement of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East region; through the redrawing of borders, foreign interventions in the internal affairs of states, the overthrow of "non-friendly" governments and the fostering of religious and ethnic conflicts.

FROM BRITISH COLONIALISM TO INDEPENDENCE WITH HEGEMONIC FOREIGN GUARANTEES AND AN ETHNICALLY DIVISIVE CONSTITUTION

The tyranny of the British colonials completed the repression exercised upon the working class by the local bourgeois class. The Communist Party of Cyprus was founded in 1926 having among its primary aims the struggle against exploitation and the liberation from British colonialism through a broad united front of anti-colonial forces of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. In 1941 AKEL –the successor of CPC - was founded to lead the mass political struggle for freedom.

The anti-colonial struggle gradually grew with the increase in popular involvement. During those years Cypriots fought for their independence.

The ten years that followed, 1945-1955, were years of an intense and hard anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist struggle which demanded the right to self-determination and further political freedoms for our people. At the same time these were years of intense class struggle.



In 1955 the anti-colonial struggle took the form of armed struggle. AKEL was in favour of mass political struggle. Despite the heroic self-sacrifice of many young Cypriots, the armed struggle led the Cyprus problem to dangerous deadlocks; exploited by the British imperialism which aimed at a solution serving its own interests.

Under the threat of partition or even the complete occupation of Cyprus by Turkey, the British imposed the Zurich-London agreements. Agreements that left on the island foreign troops, British military bases and imposed a constitution that undermined the normal co-existence of the two communities. The ethnically divisive nature of the Constitution facilitated the fostering of ethnic conflict in Cyprus to the benefit of foreign interests. The agreements were sealed with the anachronistic Treaty of Guarantee that put the Republic of Cyprus under the hegemonic control of three guarantor powers, namely Britain, Turkey and Greece.

Ankara's expansionist aims and NATO's plans to convert Cyprus into an unsinkable aircraft carrier of the Alliance in the Eastern Mediterranean, threatened the very existence of the young independent Republic of Cyprus.

Within the country, significant forces both within the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities did not believe in independence. They saw it as a transitional stage, the ones towards ENOSIS (union with Greece), the others towards TAXIM (partition). Following the intercommunal conflict of December 1963, Cyprus engaged in a struggle of survival.

1964 – 1974. This period constituted a decade of struggle for the defence of the independence and unity of the Republic of Cyprus. Paramilitary groups committed crimes against civilians in both communities while Turkish Cypriots had created their own controlled areas throughout the island. Foreign decision-making centres aimed at undermining Cyprus from within. Willing collaborators in these plans were the Athens' junta and the local extreme right-wing. Conspiracies took place for the violent overthrow of Makarios and the fascist illegal organisation EOKA B waged an orgy of terrorism through the assassination of democratic citizens, abductions, bomb attacks on police stations etc.

TURKISH INVASION IN 1974 AND THE ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS UNTIL TODAY

15 July 1974 – Greek Junta coup d'etat:

Under the orders of the Greek junta and the transatlantic decision-making centres the treacherous tanks moved the heroic resistance of the democratic forces was not in a position to stop them.

20 July 1974 – Turkish Invasion:

The fascist coup was followed by the Turkish invasion. Despite Turkey's allegations that it was carrying out an intervention under the Treaty of Guarantee, its intervention was an illegal act of aggression.

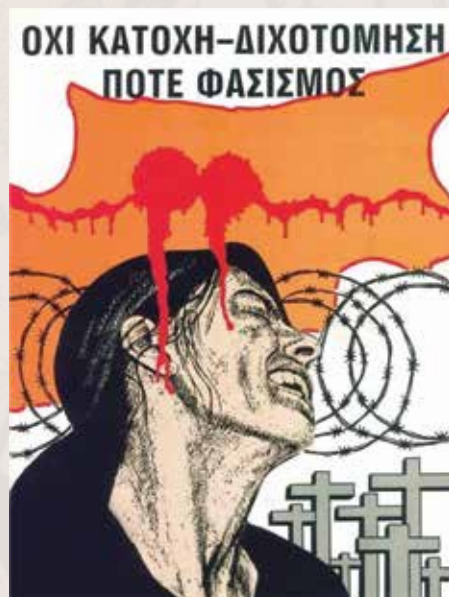
Until today, 40,000 Turkish troops occupy 37% of the territory of Cyprus and turned 170,000 that is 1/3 of the population into refugees. Around 40,000 Turkish Cypriots were forced by Turkey to move to the northern part of the island, thus completing the segregation. Fundamental freedoms and human rights are being violated.

An attempt is carried out to alter the demographic structure of the island by the mass settling of the occupied areas by Turkish citizens. It is now estimated that their number exceeds the number of Turkish Cypriots in the occupied areas.

Simultaneously, the illegal usurpation of Greek Cypriots' properties in the occupied areas makes the property issue one of the burning and most perplexed problems of any solution sought.

Missing people.

The 1963-64 inter-communal conflict and the 1974 Turkish invasion left behind about 2000 missing Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. In the past few years a breakthrough was achieved by the Committee on Missing Persons and the two communities are working together in collecting information on the fate of the missing persons and proceed with exhumations and DNA identification.



THE CYPRUS PEACE PROCESS

Since 1974, the UN has been trying to facilitate the solution of the Cyprus problem. Numerous UN Resolutions call for withdrawal of Turkish troops and settlers and for the restoration of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus as well as the respect of the inalienable rights of refugees to return to their homes and enjoy peacefully their properties.

1977 – The agreement on a BBF solution

The Makarios – Denktash High Level Agreement of 1977 and the Kyprianou – Denktash High Level Agreement of 1979, the then leaders of the two communities, provide for the transformation of the Republic of Cyprus from a unitary state to a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality, as this is described by the Security Council resolutions, with two regions, each one to be administered by the respective community. The same Agreements provide for the demilitarisation of the Republic of Cyprus and the respect of fundamental freedoms and human rights of all Cypriots. Nevertheless, these Agreements have never been implemented because of Turkey's intransigence and insistence on a solution allowing it to perpetuate its presence and interests on the island.

THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

After numerous failed peace processes throughout the years, under the UN auspices, a Cypriot-led peace process was initiated for the first time in 2008 when Demetris Christofias was in the leadership of the Greek Cypriot community. This process enabled the continuation of the negotiations during another phase between 2015-17 which were terminated with the tragic failure at the Crans Montana Conference on Cyprus in July 2017. After 2020 the election of the nationalist Ersin Tatar as a leader of the Turkish Cypriots brings a new deadlock in the process due to his unacceptable positions on a two-state solution.

•2008: A Cypriot-led process starts when Demetris Christofias was in the Presidency of the RoC

As a result of the policies and initiatives undertaken by the ex-President of the Republic Cyprus com. Demetris Christofias, the beginning of substantive negotiations, between the leaders of the two communities of Cyprus on the 3rd of September 2008, was made possible.

In a following effort to avoid the collapse of the peace process, in early June the two leaders and the UN Secretary-General decided to hold a second round of direct talks in the context of the Conference of Cyprus towards the end of the same month. In his report towards the UN Security Council of 28 September 2017, two months after the collapse of the Conference, the UN Secretary-General observed that the sides failed to walk the last mile, wasting a historic opportunity regarding the solution of the Cyprus problem.

Since 2017 the Cyprus problem has entered a dangerous period of unproductive passive inaction with regards to the negotiations and of multiple illegal Turkish activities. During this period we witnessed President Anastasiades's regressions, the promotion of "new ideas" that negated previous key convergences recorded and the protracted involvement of the two leaders in a blame-game, resulting in the UN Secretary General not being convinced of the prospect of a meaningful resumption of negotiations.

•2020-today - A period of provocation and partitionist positions by the Turkish side

Following the failure of the Conference of Crans Montana, Turkey had become more aggressive against the Republic of Cyprus. It has been strengthening its expansionist ambitions against the sovereignty and sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus. The carrying out of

seismic surveys and drilling within the territorial waters and the EEZ of Cyprus constitutes a flagrant violation of the UN Law of the Sea.

At the same time, the escalating machinations for the colonisation of the enclosed area of Famagusta adversely affect the status of the area, violating the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and undermine the prospects for

a comprehensive solution.

Finally, the imposition of the partitionist Ersin Tatar to the leadership of the Turkish Cypriot community in October 2020 has been serving the Turkish machinations against the Republic of Cyprus. A grave development has been the official submission by Turkey and Tatar, during the unofficial meeting of Geneva in April 2021, of their unacceptable proposal for a two states' solution. A proposal which is outside the UN framework.

Since December 2020, AKEL had submitted a proposal to the President of the Republic regarding what he should do to address the dangerous regression and create the preconditions for a meaningful resumption of the negotiations with the prospect of a successful outcome. The same proposal was submitted to the current President but both had no response on it.

AKEL stresses that, in order to fight against the Turkish illegal activities and raise the prospect for a comprehensive solution, there is no other alternative than the resumption

THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

The negotiations between Demetris Christofias and the ex-Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat lasted for almost 1 and a half year. During this period significant convergences were achieved on certain chapters like Governance and Power Sharing, Economy and EU Affairs. Nevertheless, significant disagreements remained on the rest of the Chapters.



Unfortunately, the election of the nationalist Dervish Eroglu in the leadership of the Turkish Cypriot community in 2010 created even more obstacles in the efforts for finding a solution in the Cyprus Problem as herenounced the convergences achieved in the previous period.

When the right-wing Nicos Anastasiades becomes the President of Cyprus in February 2013, twelve months were wasted unnecessarily in trying to draft a new joint declaration, issued at last in February 2014. A new period of lack of negotiations had followed.

2015-2017 The new process and the failure in Crans Montana

The assumption of the leadership of the Turkish Cypriot community in April 2015 by the renowned pro-solutionist and progressive Turkish Cypriot politician Mustafa Akinci, revived the prospects for a new peace process. His commitment in restarting negotiations from where they had been left by Christofias- Talat, infused hope regarding the fate of the direct talks which restarted. Nevertheless, for more than a year the process went through phases of regression. From June 2016 onwards, the negotiations intensified. Notwithstanding that major problems remained, the two leaders committed themselves to the process.

In November 2016, although Akinci agreed to discuss the difficult territorial issue without a previous solution of the other chapters, at the time that the process came within range of a convergence, President Anastasiades broke off the effort for unconvincing reasons. Since then, a steady regression had begun inevitably linked to the presidential elections of 2018.

of the negotiations under the auspices of the UN, and more specifically from where they had been left off at the Crans Montana talks.

It is our firm belief that unless the Cyprus problem is resolved, none of the sides directly involved, including Turkey, nor the actors implicitly concerned, will be relieved from the deficits of the current status quo (that is non-static) and its projected deterioration. On this critical juncture, AKEL expects Turkey and Tatar to reconsider the benefits stemming from a comprehensive solution and demands the immediate termination of any provocative and illegal activities which embed the permanent division of our country. Simultaneously, it reminds the international community of the pressing need to resume the negotiations in the agreed framework and from where they left off if the prospect of the solution is to be kept alive.

The newly elected President Nicos Christodoulides (2023) had to face the attitude of Turkey for a two-state solution while the gap between the two sides remains still unbridged. The appointment of a Personal Envoy by

September 2024

the UN Secretary General for researching the possibility for the resumption of the negotiations doesn't seem to bring any positive developments at the moment. Despite the fact that the unacceptable positions lie on the side of the Turkish Cypriot leader, the international community doesn't seem to have been convinced by Nicos Christodoulides' willingness for a solution.

APPEAL FOR SOLIDARITY

The solidarity of our friends, in view of the next critical period, is necessary more than ever before in supporting with all the political means possible our struggle for the reunification of our country and our people. AKEL has proceeded a Solidarity Statement with the occasion of the 50 years since the coup d'etat and Turkish invasion that was under-signed by numerous foreign parties.



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