



National Federation of Cypriots in the UK

Εθνική Κυπριακή Ομοσπονδία Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου

Working for a Free, United Cyprus

Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, SW1A 2AA

20 July 2019

Dear Prime Minister,

Today, UK Cypriots mark the tragic 45th anniversary of the illegal Turkish invasion and subsequent military occupation of the northern part of Cyprus – a member of the Commonwealth and EU. Sadly, still no resolution to the injustices committed by Turkey on the island has been found. This tragic anniversary is a poignant one for the UK Cypriot community, many of whom are refugees, and are desperate to return to their homes and to see a free, united Cyprus.

Today, we also mourn forty-five years of suffering for the relatives of the Cypriot people who went missing during Turkey's military invasion of the island and who remain unaccounted for to this day. We also condemn the utter injustice of the island's continuing division, the ethnic cleansing, the cultural genocide as well as the religious desecration of the occupied northern part of the island that was highlighted in the recent Foreign Office review led by the Bishop of Truro.

Unfortunately, efforts to reunify the island have not yet produced a successful outcome due to Turkey's continued unacceptable demands around its own influence in a reunified Cyprus. Turkey's insistence on a 'right to unilateral intervention' after a solution to the Cyprus issue, as well as its desire maintain a permanent military presence on the island cannot be accepted as part of the security structure of a modern 21st century country. Indeed, during the 2017 Crans Montana negotiations, United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, made it clear that the current system of guarantees, with intervention rights, was not sustainable. Cyprus needs a security system that will provide safety for all its people. A large number of Parliamentarians and HM Opposition have been clear that the current system of Guarantees and foreign troops have no place in a 21st century reunited Cyprus. It is time that HM Government was equally clear on this crucial issue. If guarantees and foreign troops would be unacceptable in the UK, it should be unacceptable in Cyprus.

One of the most tragic consequences of Turkey's brutal invasion of Cyprus is that over 1,100 people are still missing; their fates yet to be determined and their bodies yet to be found. I urge you to do all that you can to help end the suffering of the relatives of the missing persons. Turkey refuses to cooperate fully and has prevented access to certain key areas (for example military camps) and has not provided enough information about relocated remains and mass burial sites. The issue of missing

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A complete list of member organisations and the names of all of the current officers and members of the Secretariat of the Federation can be found on the Federation's website.

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persons is a shocking humanitarian consequence of Turkey's illegal invasion and its resolution is long overdue – the UK can make a real contribution on this issue immediately.

Our community, as well as the wider international community, are becoming deeply concerned by President Erdogan's increasingly authoritarian and aggressive policies towards Cyprus and the wider region. Forty-five years ago, Turkey invaded Cypriot soil with tanks and today it is invading Cypriot waters with ships. Turkish warships and drillships are currently in the Republic of Cyprus' Continental Shelf and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Such activities are a flagrant breach of International and European Law and the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus, and we welcome HMG's opposition to the drilling. Unfortunately, in the face of international criticism and EU sanctions, Turkey has chosen to escalate the situation further. Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu has dismissed EU sanctions as "valueless", and instead Turkey is proceeding with a new, illegal, drilling operation within the Territorial Sea of the Republic of Cyprus, near Karpasia and threatening to send more ships into Cyprus' EEZ. Instead of engaging in dialogue, as the international community calls on her to do, Turkey is deliberately avoiding doing so, to create new fait accomplis. Therefore, on this, the 45th anniversary of the Turkish invasion, the time has come for the UK Government and the international community to take clear and decisive action against Turkey. The UK Government has led the international community's response to acts of aggression by other countries; therefore, it cannot remain silent on Turkey, especially given the historic ties and obligations.

Over the last forty-five years, the world has changed enormously, and the UK has played a positive role in defending and advancing the principles of justice, human rights, democratic values and international law.

The United Kingdom remains a crucial player in relation to Cyprus. Not only does it have historic treaty obligation under the Treaty of Guarantee, which it signed in 1959, it also maintains military bases on the island and it is Cyprus' partner in the Commonwealth and in the United Nations, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. It is also a strategic ally of Turkey. Ankara ought to realise that the only way to deal with the problems she herself creates, is through a constructive and decisive dialogue that will lead us to a solution based on the relevant UN Resolutions, High Level Agreements and the principles upon which the European Union is founded. A solution that will, amongst other things, address the challenges we currently face because of the unacceptable military occupation by Turkey. Now is the time for our Government to do more and use the leverage it has in order to exert real pressure upon Turkey to persuade that country, which holds the key to a solution in Cyprus, to engage positively and constructively towards a just and sustainable solution.

You have the power to make a lasting difference in relation to Cyprus and, on this tragic anniversary, I urge you to exercise this proactively and constructively.

Yours sincerely,



Christos Karaolis
President, National Federation of Cypriots in the UK