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**Letter dated 10 February 2021 from the Permanent Representative
of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 10 February 2021, addressed to you by Mehmet Dâna, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 44, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 10 February 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I am writing in response to the letter, dated 18 January 2021, addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative in New York, circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council ([A/75/723-S/2021/61](#)), which, yet again, distorts the realities on the ground. In order to set the record straight, I would like to bring the following to your kind attention.

Regarding the claims of so-called “infringements of international air traffic regulations” and “violations of Cyprus’ national airspace”, I wish to underline that flights within the sovereign airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are carried out with the full knowledge and permission of the relevant authorities of the State, over which the Greek Cypriot administration in South Cyprus has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever. The civil aviation authority of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is the only competent body to provide air traffic and aeronautical information services within its own national airspace, and notices to airmen are issued in accordance with article 3 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention).

The baseless assertions in the said letter regarding the use of Turkish Cypriot ports and airports are also false since the Greek Cypriot administration has no jurisdiction or right of say over Northern Cyprus. Furthermore, those allegations ignore the present realities on the ground, namely, the existence of two independent, self-governing States on the island of Cyprus, each exercising sovereignty and jurisdiction within its respective territory.

As regards the false statements concerning Ercan Airport in North Cyprus, it should be reiterated that the technologically up-to-date Ercan area control centre and airport provide regular, reliable and safe air traffic services. All flights within the sovereign airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and permission of the Civil Aviation Department of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, over which it has full jurisdiction and control. However, unwillingness on the part of the Greek Cypriot side to cooperate with the Turkish Cypriot civil aviation authorities on the matter, contrary to the calls made in your reports on Cyprus for cooperation between the two sides and international actors on matters concerning the island as a whole, can at times endanger the safety of air traffic over the island.

The legislation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on aeronautical safety meets all standards and recommendations of the International Civil Aviation Organization, ensuring aviation safety and security by regulating all aspects of civil aviation, including the operation of airports and the management of air traffic. All airports in Northern Cyprus are in full conformity with international standards, and necessary upgrades have been performed to keep up with the developing technology. Moreover, the number of air traffic controllers has been increased in accordance with the growing number of flights over the years and the Ercan area control centre is in regular and close cooperation with the Ankara area control centre in order to ensure the safe conduct of all flights in the region. In 2019 alone, the number of passengers who used Ercan Airport stood at 4,035,276. Moreover, 27,760 planes used Ercan Airport for arrival and departure and 224,898 planes used the Ercan advisory airspace in the same year. In that regard, it must also be stressed that the Turkish Cypriot side is committed to upholding the highest standards in the field of air navigation safety, in full conformity with the Chicago Convention of 1944, and that it is ready to cooperate with the Greek Cypriot authorities on this very important issue. Availing myself of the present opportunity, I would like to remind the Greek Cypriot side that its counterpart is, and has always been, the Turkish Cypriot side, not Turkey.

Moreover, the unjust isolation imposed on the Turkish Cypriots, which the Greek Cypriot side attempts to reinforce by unilaterally calling all airports and seaports in Northern Cyprus “illegal”, is in complete violation of international law and is incompatible with the call made by the then Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in his report to the Security Council dated 28 May 2004 (S/2004/437), where he clearly states: “I would hope that [the members of the Security Council] can give a strong lead to all States to cooperate both bilaterally and in international bodies, to eliminate unnecessary restrictions and barriers that have the effect of isolating the Turkish Cypriots and impeding their development.”

Contrary to the claims of the Greek Cypriot representative, it should be emphasized that none of the Security Council resolutions on Cyprus describe the legitimate and justified Turkish intervention of 1974, undertaken in accordance with article 4 of the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, as “invasion” or the subsequent presence of Turkish troops on the island as “occupation”. Such allegations are nothing but pure Greek Cypriot forgery aimed at distorting the historical facts and realities of the island. In this context, it is important to recall the dramatic statement made before the Security Council on 19 July 1974 by Archbishop Makarios, the Greek Cypriot leader at the time, in which he openly accused Greece, not Turkey, of invading and occupying Cyprus. His remarks, which came only four days after the Greek/Greek Cypriot coup of 15 July 1974, are well recorded in the annals of the United Nations and hardly require further elaboration.

As for the false accusations regarding the closed area of Maraş (Varosha) in the said letter, which are merely based on rhetoric, I wish to remind once again that the closed area of Maraş is part of the territory of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, where our Government has sole jurisdiction and authority. In this regard, decisions taken are in line with international law and our opening in the closed area of Maraş, which has become the symbol of the status quo on the island, is a positive development that should be supported, not criticized, by the international community.

Regarding the efforts to find a freely negotiated and mutually acceptable settlement in Cyprus, the Greek Cypriot representative is yet again attempting to blatantly misinform and mislead the international community. This is a futile attempt to hide the fact that more than 50 years of negotiations carried out on a federal settlement framework have decisively failed because of the categorical rejection of the Greek Cypriot side to share power and prosperity with the Turkish Cypriot people. The Greek Cypriot insistence on paying lip service to such a settlement is solely aimed at keeping the Turkish Cypriot side trapped in an endless negotiating process while it continues to reap the benefits of the “unacceptable” and “unsustainable” status quo. The Greek Cypriot side should no longer be allowed to consume the resources as well as the time of the international community to further its own anachronistic political agenda. In view of the foregoing, it is long overdue that, instead of insisting on the said “tried and failed” basis, the upcoming five-plus-United Nations informal meeting is utilized by the Greek Cypriot side to explore new and realistic ideas sincerely so that it could yield a positive outcome. The Turkish Cypriot side is ready to negotiate a settlement model based on two States with sovereign equality and believes that negotiations based only on sovereign equality will bear fruit.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 44, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mehmet **Dânâ**
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus