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REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION  
IN CYPRUS

1. In my report of 10 June 1966 on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/7350, paras. 49-54), I gave an account of recent developments in the Trypimeni-Chatos-Knodhara area. In brief, the Government on 24 April 1966 began improving a track between the Greek Cypriot villages of Trypimeni and Vitsadha, whereupon the Turkish Cypriots, contending that the road would split a purely Turkish area and endanger their security, deployed armed men in ten positions south of Trypimeni. Some Greek Cypriot farmers stopped their harvesting nearby despite Turkish Cypriot assurances of their security. To prevent an armed confrontation, UNFICYP deployed troops in the area and engaged in urgent negotiations with the Government and the Turkish Cypriot leadership.
2. As these negotiations have not succeeded in resolving the problem, I consider it necessary to inform the Council about the latest developments in the situation which may lead to a dangerous increase in tension in the area and may even result in a possible threat to the peace in the Island.
3. During June, arrangements were successfully made for harvesting under UNFICYP observation on land owned by Greek Cypriot farmers in the vicinity of the Turkish Cypriot positions (S/7350, para. 53). The harvesting was subsequently completed without any serious incidents.
4. Tension however remained high, mainly because of the fortified positions established in the area since 21 April 1966. The Government has become increasingly impatient over the delay in the elimination of the Turkish Cypriot positions, especially as it had suspended work on the Trypimeni-Vitsadha road project. This was done on the basis of a Turkish Cypriot offer at a meeting of the Political Liaison Committee on 28 April, subsequently conveyed to the Government, to discuss arrangements for free passage of Trypimeni traffic through Knodhara, that would

enable Greek Cypriot civilians to use the existing road, as in the cases of the Kyrenia road through the main Turkish Cypriot enclave north of Nicosia and the coastal road through the Limnitis enclave (S/7350, para. 52).

5. As to this free-passage plan, the Turkish Cypriot leadership subsequently indicated that it contemplated something different from the procedures employed either under the Kyrenia road agreement (S/6102, annex III), or the existing arrangement for the passage of Greek Cypriots through the Turkish Cypriot enclave of Limnitis (S/7350, para. 104). In the case of Trypimeni, the Turkish Cypriots maintained that if Greek Cypriots moving between Trypimeni and Nicosia, or Famagusta, were not to be searched by Turkish Cypriot police elements but only by the UNFICYP Civilian Police, the same procedure should apply, mutatis mutandis, to Turkish Cypriots travelling between the cluster of Turkish Cypriot villages in the Knodhara area and the Turkish quarter of Nicosia.

6. This idea, subject to the proviso that Turkish Cypriots would remove all positions constructed since work began on the road project, was broached by the Force Commander to the Minister of the Interior of the Government of Cyprus in a letter on 10 June 1966.

7. In his reply, on 13 June 1966, the Minister of the Interior stated that the Government felt unable to accept the suggestion that it abandon its responsibility of checking Turkish Cypriot vehicles, which was necessary in the interest of security. The Minister pointed out that the Government had agreed to suspend work on the Trypimeni-Vitsadha road project pending a proposal from the Turkish Cypriots for free passage through Knodhara, but the Turkish Cypriots had used the interval to multiply their fortified positions in the area, although they had given assurances through the United Nations that they would begin to remove some of the new positions. So far not a single position had been removed.

8. Finally, the Minister expressed his grave concern over the delay and hoped the United Nations would now act quickly to ensure either free passage through Knodhara or non-interference with the completion of the Trypimeni-Vitsadha road project. Failing that, he warned, the Government was bound to take steps to provide the village with proper access; the Government had an undisputed right and responsibility to do so.

9. Since my report of 10 June 1966, my Special Representative and the Force Commander have had a number of meetings with the Government and the Turkish Cypriot leadership on the matter, and have put forward various proposals with a view to improving the situation.
10. Throughout the negotiations which UNFICYP has been conducting on this problem, the Government has taken the position that, as it had halted work on the road, it had to insist on the removal of all Turkish Cypriot positions in the area before discussions with UNFICYP on the question of free passage of the inhabitants could be held. For its part, the Turkish Cypriot leadership felt that discussions with UNFICYP on normalizing the situation could start without the pre condition set by the Government, and refused, in particular, to remove its fortified positions.
11. In the hope of contributing to a solution, an adviser of the Vice-President was flown in an UNFICYP helicopter to the scene on 14 June. The following day UNFICYP was informed that the adviser had observed fifteen positions: ten manned Turkish Cypriot positions - three of them old positions (i.e. erected before 21 April) - and to the rear of these, five unmanned positions; some of these positions had been constructed after a shooting incident which occurred on 19 May. UNFICYP was also informed that the Turkish Cypriot leadership was prepared, as a gesture of goodwill and in order to reduce tension, not to man four of the ten positions hitherto manned.
12. A subsequent reconnaissance carried out by senior UNFICYP officers revealed that this would not alter the situation to an appreciable degree, since all the key forward positions would remain occupied.
13. At a further meeting on 28 June, the Turkish Cypriot leaders made essentially the same proposals they had advanced on 15 June (para. 7 above). They were prepared to cease manning four positions, and, depending on the progress of negotiations for the free passage in the area of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots, three further positions might be vacated; at a still later stage, the last three manned positions, which they maintained were old ones, would be converted into

observation posts. UNFICYP inquired whether the Turkish Cypriots would be prepared to abandon all their positions in return for the evacuation of the National Guard positions south of Trypimeni and an undertaking by the Government to UNFICYP not to use force in the foreseeable future or without giving prior notice to UNFICYP. The Turkish Cypriots were not receptive to this idea and the matter was not pursued with the Government.

14. The Government continued to insist that all Turkish Cypriot positions should be removed. The Foreign Minister emphasized that the Government's stand was above reproach. He pointed out that when UNFICYP had asked the Government to suspend the Trypimeni-Vitsadha road project (S/7350, para. 52), the Government had agreed, but the Turkish Cypriots had only set up additional fortified positions. All the Government was now asking was the removal of all positions in the area before entering into discussions with UNFICYP on the question of free passage. There was no reason for the Government to accept the Turkish Cypriot proposal for defortification by stages.

15. In a further effort to break the dangerous stalemate, UNFICYP on 4 July put forward a plan providing, essentially, for the complete and simultaneous evacuation of all Turkish Cypriot and National Guard positions within the confines of a triangle described by the Trypimeni/Ayios Khariton and Trypimeni/Knodhara roads, and the introduction of increased UNFICYP surveillance to prevent any form of armed confrontation in the zone. Following the full implementation of these measures, UNFICYP's good offices would be used to find a peaceful solution to the problem of movement of the inhabitants. This plan was fully endorsed by me and I informed the parties concerned accordingly.

16. The Government accepted the UNFICYP plan. The Turkish Cypriot leaders, while not rejecting it as such, informed UNFICYP that they could not accept the plan in its present form, as it did not fully satisfy the basic security requirements of the Turkish Cypriot inhabitants of the area. They felt that the zone concerned should be enlarged so as to include, in addition to the National Guard positions south of Trypimeni, the Government positions on higher ground north of that village. Alternatively, the zone should be reduced in such a way as not to include the three Turkish Cypriot positions which, according to the Turkish Cypriot leaders, had been erected before 21 April (see para. 11 above). They emphasized that the

UNFICYP plan seemed inconsistent in that it asked the Turkish Cypriots to remove both new and old positions, while the Government was only asked to remove newly erected positions south of Trypimeni.

17. The Government has always contended that there were no Turkish Cypriot positions before 21 April in the zone specified in the UNFICYP plan. Neither did UNFICYP, which has had its Civilian Police units stationed in that area for a considerable time, observe any positions before that date, although it is not ruled out that there may have been occasional observation (listening) posts. A position may be defined as either a trench system or a series of posts sited close together and providing all-round defence; an observation (listening) post is a place from which one man, or at most two, can observe an area; it is in itself not a defensive position, because one or two men alone cannot usefully defend it.

18. At a meeting held on 11 July, the Turkish Cypriot leaders maintained their stand and reiterated, in particular, that their three positions should not be affected in any way by UNFICYP's plan (para. 16 above). However, they advised Mr. Bernardes and General Martola that, in order to better the atmosphere and facilitate the search for a solution, they would by 13 July on a unilateral basis, without corresponding measures by the Government, vacate seven manned positions, leaving the three positions occupied. This promise was made good on 13 July.

19. The Force Commander held two further meetings with the Turkish Cypriot leaders on 14 and 16 July in an attempt to persuade them to agree to a withdrawal from the remaining three positions, but no material progress was achieved.

20. On 19 July my Special Representative and the Force Commander informed the Foreign Minister of the stand taken by the Turkish Cypriot leaders and advised him that UNFICYP would continue to urge the Turkish Cypriots to comply fully with the UNFICYP plan.

21. As I bring this situation to the attention of the Security Council, I wish once again to address an earnest appeal to all concerned for prompt acceptance and implementation of the UNFICYP plan for a solution of the difficulties which have arisen in the Trypimeni area. The plan, in my best judgement, is fair and impartial and will not impair the security of either the Greek or Turkish Cypriot inhabitants of the area or affect the positions of principle of either side.

Its acceptance would demonstrate the desire of the parties to avoid any increase in tension at this sensitive juncture, and their readiness to heed the call of the Security Council, in its resolution of 16 June 1966, urging them to act with the utmost restraint and to make determined efforts with a view to achieving the Council's objectives.

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