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QUESTION OF CYPRUS

Letter dated 4 November 1976 from the Permanent Representative of  
Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the problem of over 2,000 persons still missing, as a result of the invasion of Cyprus by Turkey in July/August 1974. Notwithstanding repeated efforts by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and in utter disregard of General Assembly resolution 3450 (XXX) of 9 December 1975, the Turkish Government continues not to give any information as to the fate of the missing persons, by pretending that there are no undeclared persons in their hands, thus evading its responsibility for the unaccounted disappearance of these persons.

There is concrete evidence that a great number of the missing persons were taken as prisoners by the invading forces and were alive in their hands. Some appeared in photographs taken by foreign diplomats in prisoner-of-war camps or on ships transporting them to Turkey; some were visited by the Red Cross in places of detention; others appeared on lists of prisoners of war prepared by the Turkish authorities themselves; some sent messages to their families over the Turkish radio; a number were, on the evidence of their co-prisoners, together with them after capture but have not been released along with the remaining prisoners, and no explanation has so far been given as to their disappearance.

The Turkish Government persists in not agreeing to any procedure for tracing the missing persons and refuses to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross to enter the area under the occupation of the Turkish Army.

My Government feels that the constant agony regarding the fate of the missing persons, which tragically affects the everyday life of their families, cannot be allowed to continue without due investigation. It, therefore, holds that every possible means has to be applied for an international inquiry into the matter by the International Committee of the Red Cross, or by another appropriate way, in order to clear up its wholly unacceptable situation.

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Your Excellency is, therefore, requested to exert every further effort, in close co-operation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, towards the tracing and accounting for persons missing, as provided by General Assembly resolution 3450 (XXX) of 9 December 1975.

I should be grateful if this letter were circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 118.

(Signed) Zenon ROSSIDES  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of  
Cyprus to the United Nations