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LETTER DATED 11 FEBRUARY 1975 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose herewith the copy of a letter dated 3 February 1975 addressed to you by H.E. Mr. Rauf R. Denktaş, Vice-President of the Republic of Cyprus and the head of the Autonomous Turkish Cypriot Administration.

It is hoped that the baseless allegations that were raised by Ambassador Zenon Rossides, the representative of the Greek Cypriots in the United Nations, in his letter of 20 January 1975 (S/11603) will thus be exposed.

I should be grateful if you could circulate this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Osman ÖLCAY
Permanent Representative

Letter dated 3 February 1975 from Mr. R. R. Denktas,
Vice-President of the Republic of Cyprus, addressed
to the Secretary-General

I would like to refer to Mr. Zenon Rossides' letter to you, protesting against the already long overdue recognition of the right of freedom of movement to the Turkish Cypriot refugees in the British Sovereign Base Area of Akrotiri, which was circulated as Security Council document S/11603 of 21 January 1975.

Before expounding on the untenable and ill-conceived statements of Mr. Rossides, may I reiterate once again that, for the reasons already mentioned in my letter to Your Excellency of even reference dated 21 January 1975 (S/11615), Mr. Rossides cannot speak on behalf of the Republic of Cyprus as a whole. In the circumstances prevailing since December 1963, and more emphatically so since the coup of 15 July 1974, the most that Mr. Rossides can do is to speak on behalf of the Greek Cypriot community, and his communications to Your Excellency should be evaluated accordingly.

The decision to evacuate the Turkish Cypriot refugees from the Sovereign Base Area of Akrotiri to Turkey is neither illegal nor arbitrary. It is a humanitarian decision which is in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations Organization, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants on human rights. It is, therefore, most regrettable that Mr. Rossides should resort, for political expediency, to lodging a protest with the United Nations Organization against the taking of such a humanitarian action by the British Government which could not but receive the general approval of all the honourable Members of the august Organization. It should be borne in mind that the Turkish Cypriots had taken refuge at the Sovereign Base Area of Akrotiri in order to save their lives from the Greek and Greek Cypriot armed elements who had overrun their villages, ransacked and looted their properties, burnt down their houses and been responsible for mass massacres of whole village populations, including breast-fed babies. These refugees, who were mostly women and children and elderly people, were entitled under the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and the subsequent Protocol of 1967 to be issued with the necessary certificates of refugee status, enabling their evacuation to a country of their choice. In fact, it was not the evacuation of these people but their retention in the Akrotiri Sovereign Base Area against their will that was illegal. But such illegality did not, of course, bother Mr. Rossides, because it suited the political objectives of the Greek Cypriot leadership that these people should remain in the Sovereign Base Area and, together with the rest of the Turkish Cypriots in the south, who are being held as virtual hostages, be treated as pawns in their hands for political bargaining.

Quite apart from the legal aspect of the matter, Your Excellency will appreciate that there was a moral obligation to evacuate these people. With the onset of winter, their already desperate condition had become still worse, calling for urgent action. Gastro-intestinal and respiratory infection threatened to become epidemic. The death toll among children and elderly people, who could not withstand the fierce winter conditions, was on the increase. The head of

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mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross, based on reports from ICRC delegates and doctors, strongly recommended that, in view of fierce winter weather, not only medical cases but also children and elderly people should be evacuated from these camps. It is worth noting that a 35-year-old Turkish Cypriot lady (Mrs. Djafer) died of leukemia on the last day of the evacuation. Our constant pleas to have her brought near her family in Nicosia had been refused. Her body has just been brought to the Turkish sector of Nicosia by her 15-year-old son, who was also unable to come to Nicosia until this tragedy. Apparently Mr. Rossides would rather see more Turks die in the bases than see them free.

Mr. Rossides' allegation that the evacuation of these refugees will change the demographic character of the island and that it will prejudicially affect the whole effort for a just and peaceful solution through negotiation, is as baseless as his other allegations. The evacuation of the refugees will, on the contrary, increase the chances of a just and peaceful solution of the Cyprus problem. It was the existence of these vulnerable Turkish Cypriot populations scattered all over Cyprus, whom the Greek Cypriots regarded as hostages in their hands, that encouraged the Greek Cypriot leadership's hitherto intransigent and negative policy which prevented the finding of a just and lasting solution to the Cyprus problem.

It is hoped that Mr. Rossides and the Greek Cypriot Administration he represents will awaken to this reality and, instead of advancing baseless allegations (which only prove their ill intentions against the co-partner community of the Republic of Cyprus), will co-operate with us for the finding of a just and lasting solution to the problem of Cyprus.

I shall be grateful if Your Excellency will kindly have this communication circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) R. R. DENKTAŞ
Vice-President
Republic of Cyprus
