



Security Council

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Letter dated 31 July 2019 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 30 July 2019 addressed to you by İsmet Korukoğlu, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Rauf **Denktaş**
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.



**Annex to the letter dated 31 July 2019 from the Chargé d'affaires
a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

The Security Council adopted resolution [2483 \(2019\)](#), on 25 July 2019, regarding the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). The detailed observations of the Turkish Cypriot side regarding the resolution (see enclosure) have already been presented to the President of the Council verbally as well as in writing at our meeting on 25 July 2019.

Upon instructions from my Government, I would like to underline, once again, the views of the Turkish Cypriot side, in particular vis-à-vis the issue of consent as well as the modalities of the operations of UNFICYP within the territory of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. As you are well aware, one of the governing principles of United Nations peacekeeping operations throughout the world is the requirement that the consent of parties to the dispute is sought, in line with resolution [2436 \(2018\)](#), which is also referred to in resolution [2483 \(2019\)](#), as well as the Brahimi Report, in which it is clearly stated “that consent of the local parties [and] impartiality ... should remain the bedrock principles of peacekeeping”. Thus, UNFICYP can operate on both sides of the island only on the basis of the consent of both parties. Otherwise, UNFICYP “risks becoming a party to the conflict”, as stated in the “United Nations peacekeeping operations: principles and guidelines”. Indeed, this principle of consent is also fundamental to the Secretary-General’s good offices mission which treats the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot sides of the island on an equal footing. Furthermore, since the political process is directly interlinked with the peacekeeping operations, not seeking the consent of one of the sides in relation to UNFICYP, namely the consent of the Turkish Cypriot side as one of the two sides of the political process would constitute a serious shortcoming in this regard. This begs the question as to why the United Nations is opting to ignore this vital general requisite in the case of UNFICYP.

Moreover, at a time when the Secretary-General in his recent report ([S/2019/562](#)), which was welcomed by the Security Council in its resolution [2483 \(2019\)](#), referring to both the international actors as well as the Greek Cypriot side, states that “concerns about recognition should not in themselves constitute an insurmountable obstacle to increased cooperation”, the refrainment of the United Nations from seeking the consent of or cooperating with the Turkish Cypriot side in this regard contradicts the spirit of the Secretary-General’s report as well as the Security Council resolution.

Needless to say, the consent for the extension of the mandate of UNFICYP sought and obtained prior to the adoption of the resolution [2483 \(2019\)](#) from the Greek Cypriot side, which purports to be the long-defunct “Government of Cyprus”, only covers the operations of UNFICYP in Southern Cyprus. In view of this fact, I feel obliged to state that, for the time being, as a gesture of the goodwill of the Turkish Cypriot side and with the permission of our Government, UNFICYP personnel will continue to operate within the borders of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and we will maintain our cooperation with UNFICYP, while at the same time continuing to request that it works with us to develop the modalities of its operations in Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if this letter as well as its enclosure, transmitted herewith, would be circulated to the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) İsmet **Korukoğlu**
Representative

Enclosure

Talking points on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus by the United Nations Security Council

(July 2019)

- **The overarching paragraph 55 of the UN Secretary-General’s report of 10 July 2019 which states that *concerns over “recognition” should not in themselves constitute an insurmountable obstacle to increased cooperation amongst communities, local and international actors* is of vital importance in terms of triggering the commencement of a constructive relationship between the two sides, leading to building of trust and establishment of cooperation and interdependence between them as well as international actors. Hence, though not sufficiently reflected in the Resolution, approval of the Report by the UNSC will certainly mean that UNSC also concurs with this.** We hope and trust that in the upcoming resolutions, the UNSC will make stronger references on the matter, which will facilitate not only implementation of CBMs and empowerment of the Technical Committees but real cooperation and communication between the two peoples and their sides.
- **The issue of the unjust isolation imposed on the Turkish Cypriot side can no longer be overlooked, nor be absent from the present Resolution.** More than fifteen years have elapsed since the report of the then UN Secretary-General to the Security Council dated 28 May 2004 (S/2004/437), where it was clearly stated that “there exists no rationale for pressuring and isolating the Turkish Cypriots”. The imbalance created by the perpetuation of the isolation reinforces the Greek Cypriot inclination to act unilaterally instead of thinking in terms of direct communication and cooperation. The imposition of this isolation is also the most important element exacerbating the deep crisis of confidence between the two peoples and the two sides, preventing cooperation and thus creation of interdependence and development of a healthy relationship between the two peoples and their sides. **Hence paragraph 55 of the UNSG’s report should be embraced more openly by the UNSC in its future resolutions.**
- **OP1, OP4(a), OP15:** Though the resolution refers to a consensus starting point, which in essence is about reaching a common vision, it fails to state the fact that after a year of consultations, Ms. Lute’s efforts have clearly failed and in fact turned into an open-ended process itself.

The wording in the said paragraphs, unfortunately, attempts to put the sides in a “straitjacket” not allowing them to talk about different alternatives for a negotiated settlement on the island, thus not giving them a real chance to overcome the apparent lack of common vision between them. As known, the Turkish Cypriot Government Programme states that all alternatives for a negotiated settlement should be discussed so that the sides can agree on a common vision, the very reason for the impasse of 51 years in Cyprus.

Furthermore, the references in these paragraphs as regards the previous negotiation process and the Conference which took place in Crans-Montana, Switzerland, in 2017, are outdated and do not reflect the prevailing realities of today.

In this regard, it is unfortunate that **OP1** suffices it to refer to the collapse of the Conference in Crans-Montana as a mere “conclusion”, and continues to place emphasis on the aftermath of the Conference in which there has been a “lack of

progress". Needless to say that it is impossible to achieve progress when there is not even a current process underway.

This approach undermines the fact that it was the collapse of the Conference itself, which is what necessitated the appointment of UN Consultant Jane Holl Lute in the first place. Hence, wording which omits to diagnose *why* there has been a lack of progress following Crans-Montana is incomplete, since the reason for the lack of progress is the very fact that there was no process because the process had collapsed in Crans-Montana.

- **OP5:** This paragraph should have better reflected the relevant part of the UN Secretary General's report (S/2019/562) as regards the mechanisms for cooperation, which was the case to an extent in the draft versions of the resolution, however, it has been watered down to the extent that it might give the excuse to the Greek Cypriot side to refrain from establishing mechanisms with the Turkish Cypriot side at the civilian level that would benefit the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots alike and help address island-wide matters.
- **PP5 and OP2:** The wording in these paragraphs are insufficient in that they would have no effect of diffusing or reducing tension. A pertinent and concrete call for diplomacy and cooperation between the two co-owners of the Island on the issue of hydrocarbons around the island is what is needed in terms of diffusing and reducing tension. It should be recalled that with a view to diffusing tension and paving the way for cooperation and thus creation of interdependency, the Turkish Cypriot side has made constructive proposals to the Greek Cypriot side in 2011, 2012 and most recently on 13 July 2019. These proposals of the Turkish Cypriot side prove that it is making determined effort to diffuse tension and establish cooperation between the two sides, whilst these efforts are not reciprocated by the Greek Cypriot side. Hence, if what is intended by the UNSC is diffusing of tension, the Council should have at least referred in the Resolution that diplomacy and cooperation on the matter is needed.
- **OP7:** In addition to the access to 30 military sites in 2018, the Turkish Cypriot side granted access to 30 more military sites for the works of CMP recently. However, this positive development was not noted in the Resolution.
- **PP7 and OP6:** Believing that the CBMs are vital for bridging trust and establishing cooperation between the two sides in Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriot side has fulfilled all of its responsibilities to implement the CBMs as agreed by the two leaders and is ready for further CBMs.

There is mistrust between the two sides, hence we concur with the view that there is a need for renewed efforts to implement CBMs in an open-minded and creative manner, including the issue of the natural resources around the island which belongs to the Turkish Cypriot side, as one of the two equal co-owners of the island. As the Turkish Cypriot side, we are open to discussing existing and new CBMs, which will enable the two sides to cooperate. We hope and trust that the Greek Cypriot side will be encouraged in this regard.

The first step as regards the CBMs should be the elimination of the isolation and obstructive policies of the Greek Cypriots side imposed on the Turkish Cypriot people, the most important element poisoning the relations between the two peoples and preventing their cooperation. Again Paragraph 55 of the UNSG's report is of essence in this regard, which should have been more openly included in the Resolution.

- **Op4(b):** While we welcome the call to empower all Technical Committees, the wording overlooks the fact that it is due to lack of political will on the part of the Greek Cypriot leadership which has slowed down, or even unilaterally halted the works of some of these committees. A case in point is the *ad-hoc* Committee on harmonization of the Turkish Cypriot side with EU law, which was established to prepare the Turkish Cypriot side for a future settlement. The work of this Committee has been halted by the Greek Cypriot side.
- **Op4(c)** The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus has revised its schoolbooks in the past, promoting a culture of tolerance and mutual understanding. However, the Greek Cypriot side refuses to remove discriminatory language against the Turkish Cypriot people from its textbooks. The Greek Cypriot administration even has the audacity to attempt every year to send to the Greek Cypriot school in Karpaz, North Cyprus, text books containing racist remarks about Turkish Cypriots.

The Resolution also falls short of referring to the lack of a Turkish primary school in South Cyprus in spite of the official recommendation made in previous UNSG reports.

- **OP11:** There is a call to both sides to agree on a plan of work for a mine-free Cyprus. This omits the fact that the Turkish Cypriot side has made multiple concrete proposals in 2013, 2015 and 2018 for a mine-free island. It is unfortunate that all these proposals have been turned down by the Greek Cypriot side.

As regards to the agreement of 26 February 2019, the wording pertaining to the issues of demining overlooks the Greek Cypriot side's delaying tactics and lack of cooperation with UNFICYP, causing postponement of the completion of works until 2020.

- **OP9:** Greek Cypriot side's military and civilian violations along and inside the buffer zone are being continuously observed by the Turkish Cypriot side and are communicated to UNFICYP on a regular basis. The Greek Cypriot side's attempts to change the status of buffer zone should not go unnoticed.

Furthermore, encouraged by the Greek Cypriot administration, the Greek Cypriot farmers not only come as close as the Turkish Cypriot positions along the ceasefire line but also occupy farming areas belonging to Turkish Cypriot farmers in the Buffer Zone.

There is no reference to the Greek Cypriot university in Pile/Pyla, which was constructed and continues to operate without the authorization of UNFICYP. UNSC failing to refer in its reports the violations by the Greek Cypriot side leads to further violations by the Greek Cypriot administration. Hence, presently, an extension is being built at the said university, which is also not referred to in the Resolution despite it is referred to in the UNSG report. These are attempts by the Greek Cypriot side to extend its so-called authority into the buffer zone.

The Turkish Cypriot side has put on record of its view that the strategic review of UNFICYP should include a review of its mandate in light of the changing circumstances on the Island. It is a reality that UNFICYP's civilian, not its military component, plays a role in liaison and engagement by means of monitoring and reporting on issues concerning the two sides. Therefore, the presence of the military component of UNFICYP is no longer necessary as it does not serve as a deterrent in preventing violence on the Island.

- **PP8 and PP10:** As regards references to the "Government of Cyprus", it should be recalled that the 1960 Republic of Cyprus, established by international agreements of 1959 and 1960, was destroyed by the Greek Cypriot partner.

Since then, there has not been a joint administration capable of representing the whole of Cyprus, either legally or factually. Each side has since ruled itself, while the Greek Cypriot side has continued to claim that it is the **“Government of Cyprus”**. The two separate and simultaneous referenda held on 24 April 2004 on the comprehensive settlement plan of the then UN Secretary-General has highlighted, once again, the **fact that the island of Cyprus is comprised of two distinct peoples and administrations**. Hence, this reference is unacceptable.

It should be recalled that **in line with the Brahimi Report (2000), the consent and approval of all concerned parties**, which constitute a bedrock principle of peacekeeping operations, is necessary for the success of such operations and this principle undoubtedly applies to the operations of UNFICYP, which has to cooperate with two politically equal parties to the dispute in Cyprus. The reference in **PP8** only to the agreement of the Greek Cypriot administration regarding the extension of the presence of UNFICYP is contradicting the aforementioned bedrock principle as well as Resolution 2436 which is also referred to in the present Resolution as it overlooks the need for consent and approval of both sides, hence UNFICYP “risks becoming a party to the conflict” as stated in the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines.

The Turkish Cypriot side has repeatedly put on record the need to establish a formal agreement/framework which arranges and defines the relationship between UNFICYP and our authorities. This could be in the form of a **Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)**, or another mutually acceptable format, as long as it is reached with the consent of UNFICYP and the Turkish Cypriot relevant authorities. Such a step would surely challenge the unacceptable status quo.

- **PP8 and PP10**: The reference to the “Government of Cyprus” is sufficient in itself for us to **reject the resolution in toto**. We would like to remind that UNFICYP could only function in our territory as our guests, in the spirit of goodwill and cooperation, and according to the decisions made and modalities set by the TRNC Government.