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LETTER DATED 17 AUGUST 1973 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
CYPRUS TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to refer to the communication addressed to Your Excellency by the Permanent Representative of Turkey (S/10973) enclosing a letter from Mr. Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot interlocutor, in which the latter tries to cast doubt as to the unitary state being the agreed basis of the current intercommunal talks in Cyprus. That this, however, has all along been the basis is beyond dispute; and indeed without that basis the talks could not have proceeded.

The Secretary-General's report S/10005 of 2 December 1970, paragraph 120, states:

"The two sides have also indicated that a settlement can be worked out on the basis of an independent, sovereign and unitary state of Cyprus, in which the two communities participate. This limited consensus indicates that there is basis for at least some kind of accommodation."

The substance and correctness of the above statement was not questioned and was accepted by both sides in the Security Council meeting that followed on 10 December 1970, the Permanent Representative of Turkey at that meeting having referred specifically to the said paragraph 120 in terms of full approval. Subsequent reports of the Secretary-General confirm that basis for the talks.

The definition on the other hand of a "unitary state", within the framework of which the current talks are being conducted, is a matter for juridical interpretation in accordance with the generally accepted legal meaning of the term for which there is ample authority, as we have already explained in the Security Council.

Mr. Denktash further speaks of "acquired rights and status" by the Turkish Cypriot community beyond the normal minority rights, obviously referring to the Constitution under the Zurich and London agreements. But even the abnormal excesses in minority rights, provided for in the said constitution, do not alter the latter's basic character of a unitary state. The effort, therefore, now made by Mr. Denktash towards transforming that basis into one of federation is untenable and self-defeating. Untenable, as contrary to the agreed basis of the talks and as patently unworkable. Self-defeating, as in violation of the very constitutional basis on which Mr. Denktash purports to rely for his claim of "acquired rights and status".

Regarding deconfrontation, the need for which has been repeatedly urged by UNFICYP, my Government is on record in the Secretary-General's reports over the years as accepting it on all occasions, while the Turkish Cypriot leadership is equally on record as rejecting it.

As to Turkish Cypriot displaced persons the Government, as is well known, has done everything for their return to their homes and in a drive to that end has reconstructed or repaired 343 houses. Regrettably, however, in most cases and with very few exceptions the Turkish Cypriot leadership prohibited and prevented their return, for purely political reasons in complete unconcern for the humanitarian aspect. This situation is reflected in the Secretary-General's report (S/8286) where the following appears in paragraph 127:

"For some considerable time, the Government has urged the refugees to return to their homes, assuring them that they will be in safety there, and in some villages it has repaired or rebuilt abandoned Turkish Cypriot houses..."

The report further states that "it is known that the Turkish Cypriot leadership does not favour the return of the refugees to their homes..." and that "there can be little doubt that one of the major reasons for its attitude is a political one..."

It is characteristic that the fuss now made by Mr. Denktash for the return of the Turkish Cypriots in places like Omorphita is again motivated by political and military objectives, as Omorphita is one of the most sensitive points on the line of military confrontation, the continuance of which is due to the attitude of the Turkish Cypriot leadership as shown above.

On the question of freedom of movement, the positiveness of the Government's action in having unilaterally removed all restrictions on the movement of all Turkish Cypriots throughout the island and the negativeness of the Turkish Cypriot leadership in unreasonably refusing to respond, despite repeated urges of the United Nations Force, has been the subject of appropriate comment in a number of the Secretary-General's reports. Yet, Mr. Denktash finds no difficulty to complain that there are certain restricted military areas in which there is no free entry for the Turkish Cypriots. This, however, is in no way a discriminatory measure, but a case of normal military restriction applying equally to all citizens.

Finally, as to the separatist policy enforced on the Turkish Cypriots by their leadership, prohibiting any contacts or dealings with the Greek Cypriots - to which reference was made in my statement in the Security Council - it is idle for Mr. Denktash to try to dispose of it as "fabricated allegation", in disregard of very clear reference to it in the Secretary-General's report S/6228, paragraph 55, and in face of the relevant detailed discussion on the subject in the Security Council meeting (S/PV.1270, pp. 12-14) which more than fully bears out the reality of that situation.

The fact, however, that Mr. Denktash chooses now to deny the existence of that policy may perhaps be an encouraging sign of realization that ethnic or racial segregation is indefensible and generally condemnable. For indeed it is the extremist policy of division in the pursuit of the hopelessness of partition, that underlies all the difficulties placed in the way to a just and workable solution of the problem of Cyprus, as yearned by the bulk of the Cypriot people, Greek and Turkish alike. They well understand and feel that partition is the worst of all calamities that can befall any people, and realize that their true interests as citizens of Cyprus can best be promoted through conciliation and co-operation to their common benefit and that of peace in the area and the world.

Your Excellency is kindly requested to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Zenon ROSSIDES

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Cyprus
to the United Nations
