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LETTER DATED 27 FEBRUARY 1964 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF CYPRUS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I wish to refer to the communication of the Permanent Representative of Turkey, submitting a letter from Mr. Rauf Denktaş (document S/5561). This letter is essentially a repetition of the exaggerated misrepresentation of facts, contained in the statement of the Turkish Representative in the Security Council. Mr. Denktaş alleges that the Turkish minority is being deprived of its rights and reduced to the position of "underdogs". To show how untenable and irresponsible this statement is, one need only mention that even if all the constitutional amendments proposed by the President - to which he obviously refers - were adopted, the rights of the Turkish minority in Cyprus would be far in excess of the rights enjoyed by any other minority in any part of the world.

Even the unparalleled overprivileges of the Turkish minority, such as for instance its 30 per cent representation in the legislature, while its population ratio is less than 18 per cent, were unaffected by the proposed amendments. This means that unequal political rights, discriminating in favour of the Turkish, and against the Greek, citizens would continue.

Furthermore by these amendments additional rights were given to the Turkish minority. The Turkish Vice-President of the Republic would be entitled to deputize for the President during the latter's absence or incapacity, and the same would apply to the Turkish Vice-President of the House of Representatives in the absence or incapacity of its President. These rights, under the existing provisions, devolve only on Greek officials.

Would a Constitution so amended make "underdogs" of the Turkish minority?

The right of final veto was proposed to be abolished as a negative and blocking measure, which in the absence of any substitute for positive action inevitably led to deadlocks.

The other points were mainly aimed at doing away with divisive and discriminatory provisions in the Constitution, such as divided towns, divided Courts of Justice, divided majorities in the legislature, and other divisions, which as experience has demonstrated give no actual benefits to the Turks, but are unworkable and equally destructive to both communities and the population as a whole. Worse still, by their very divisiveness those provisions had become a growing cause of antagonism and friction which led up to the present crisis. However, Mr. Danktash would seem to be more concerned with retaining and accentuating division as a means to partition, rather than with the welfare of the Turkish minority. For partition, with an eye to annexation, is the policy pursued by the Turkish Government through its extremist agents in Cyprus. It is in the pursuance of this aim that the Constitution, in the eyes of the Turkish Government, must remain divisive and unworkable - that Turkish extremism in Cyprus must be encouraged to inter-communal clashes and to that end the expectation of military intervention from Turkey must be kept alive through the so-called Treaty of Guarantee, so that the Republic of Cyprus may finally be disrupted.

The rest of the letter irresponsibly repeats loose and wholly unfounded charges of "massacre" and "genocide" with an eye in the lavish use of the words characteristic of particular historic association with them. However, the doctrine "calumnies, calumnies il restera toujours quelque chose" has never served a good or a true cause and never finally prevailed.

The recent events in Cyprus are indeed most regrettable. Particularly as the destiny of this island has been, and is, that of a bridge of unity and not of a focus of friction and violence to which the Turkish partition policy has brought to it. The obvious cause and the instrument of inter-communal trouble should be eliminated if peace is to return to the island and co-operation among the various sections of its people be resumed.

Please accept, etc.

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

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

Z.R.