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**Security in
Cyprus: Threat
Perceptions,
Possible
Compromises
and the Role of
the EU**

Security in Cyprus: Threat Perceptions, Possible Compromises and the Role of the EU

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Executive summary

1. One-and-a-half years ago a 76 percent majority of the Greek Cypriots rejected in a referendum the comprehensive UN Plan for the reunification of the island, while two-thirds of the Turkish Cypriots voted in favour of it. The so-called Annan Plan would have established a “United Cyprus Republic” of two constituent states, thus ending the long-standing division of the country. The Annan Plan was supported by the EU as a “historic compromise” (European Parliament) as well as by Greek Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan.
2. One of the main arguments put forward by the Greek Cypriots for rejecting the plan was its perceived deficiency in regard to their security. As this study shows, the threat perceptions of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot community are very different. In the Turkish Cypriot community that ousted the long-time Turkish Cypriot nationalistic leader Rauf Denktash from power with the “quiet revolution” of 2002/2003, the threat perceptions have changed. Nevertheless, both communities, although to a different degree, have an exaggerated perception of the threat supposedly posed by “the others” to their community. According to the Annan Plan, the Turkish troops on the island would be reduced in stages from currently 20000 – 35000 to a maximum of 650 soldiers. This study argues that such a symbolic force of 650 Turkish soldiers, which the Greek Cypriots fiercely object, would not pose any serious threat to the security of the Greek Cypriots. Neither would another security provision of the Annan Plan concerning the status of the guarantor powers of Cyprus (Great Britain, Greece and Turkey) constitute any serious threat to the Greek Cypriots. The right of these powers to intervene, in very specific circumstances only, is again just a matter of symbolism. On the other hand, the removal of all Turkish troops and the abolition of the guarantor powers’ intervention rights – demanded by the Greek Cypriots nearly unanimously, but objected by a majority of Turkish Cypriots – would not make any difference to the security of the Turkish Cypriots either.
3. As EU Commissioner Olli Rehn has stated, the EU membership of the Republic of Cyprus itself “ensures that neither inter-communal violence nor military intervention should occur again”. However, unfortunately the security

issue has a highly symbolic value for both communities, and each of the two sides seems to find it very difficult to abandon its current convictions. Therefore, this study argues for moves to change the current threat perceptions, so that the opposing views of the majority of the two communities do not spoil any future unification approach. This should be done through confidence-building measures in general (see the following paragraphs) and through unilateral demilitarisation measures, for example by Turkey (a reduction of troops stationed in Cyprus) and by the Greek Cypriots (a removal of weapons and ammunitions from the homes of the Greek Cypriot reservists). The EU should initiate a security dialogue between the two communities to encourage such steps. Additionally, the EU could facilitate the planning of conversion in Cyprus, seen as any future agreement will include the near total demilitarisation of the island. The EU has a wide range of knowledge in conversion planning, since many member states have downsized or are downsizing their forces considerably.

4. As the analysis of interviews with political and civil society leaders of both communities in Cyprus carried out for this study and of recent polls suggest, that there is room for compromises in regard to the security issues. It could be possible to find an agreement on a quicker withdrawal of Turkish troops than foreseen in the Annan Plan and on the postponing of a decision concerning the total troop withdrawal and the abolition of the guarantor powers' rights to a later date. The idea of some kind of European force stationed in Cyprus instead of Turkish and Greek troops should also be explored.
5. Security is only one of the contested issues and security perceptions are embedded in the general political climate. Therefore, this study analyses the main developments after the Greek Cypriots' rejection of the Annan Plan in April 2004. Some positive steps have been taken (for example: ongoing roundtable discussion between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots parties; opening of further crossing points between the North and the South; demining of the UN buffer zone). In April 2005, the Turkish Cypriots voted Mehmet Ali Talat, a staunch supporter of the island's reunification, into the presidential office. Nevertheless, the general political climate between the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot leadership remains hostile. The Greek

Cypriot President Papadopoulos has not even been willing to meet his Turkish Cypriot counterpart, Mehmet Ali Talat.

6. The “Republic of Cyprus” is a member state of the EU since 1 May 2004. While formally the whole of the island now is part of the EU, de facto the EU ends at the Green line between the Turkish Cypriot North and the Greek Cypriot South. While internationally recognised as sole representative of the island, the Republic of Cyprus de facto only represents the Greek Cypriots. Currently, the Turkish Cypriots who voted in favour of unification and EU membership neither have any voting rights to the organs of the Republic of Cyprus, nor are they represented in the EU, nor can they enjoy the democratic rights and social benefits of EU citizens.
7. The unusual decision to allow the accession of a divided country to the EU was taken already in 1999. The EU then dropped unification as a precondition of an accession of Cyprus. It yielded to the Greek government’s threat to veto the entire enlargement process with the eastern European countries if Cyprus were not admitted irrespective of a prior settlement.
8. The ongoing division of Cyprus creates practical and political problems for the European Union. For example, up until now it was impossible to implement the pledge by the EU to end the isolation of Turkish Cypriots because of the uncompromising objections of the Greek Cypriot government. Also, in conjunction with the accession negotiations of the EU with Turkey, the Cyprus issue is high on the agenda. It will remain there even after the negotiations have started, because the Greek Cypriot government has an interest in keeping Turkey in the docks, hoping to thus extract even more concessions from Turkey. Additionally, with a growing opposition to an EU accession of Turkey in the EU, politicians and governments of some EU countries show their preparedness to use Cyprus-related demands to derail the accession course of Turkey. The issues raised (diplomatic recognition of the Greek Cypriot Republic of Cyprus, opening of Turkish ports and airports to Greek Cypriot ships and aeroplanes) would already have been solved for good if the Greek Cypriots had accepted the UN unification plan. Furthermore, these issues have nothing to do with a solution to the underlying problem – the division of Cyprus. It is argued in this report that the actual task the EU should deal with is to bring about the unification of

Cyprus. Once again, the recent debate about the recognition of the Republic of Cyprus has shown the lack of a coherent EU policy on Cyprus.

9. To achieve a settlement, new negotiations have to take place and changes to the current Annan Plan have to be agreed upon by the conflicting parties, the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. The negotiations will take place under the auspices of the UN which has a long experience in dealing with the Cyprus conflict. The leaders of the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots agree that these negotiations will have to be based on the Annan Plan. However, the Greek Cypriots have not yet presented “a list of focused, finite, manageable, prioritised proposals” (UN Under Secretary General Sir Kieran Prendergast) concerning the changes to the plan they demand. Even when they do, the difficult task will be to get the majority of Greek Cypriots on board without losing the support of the majority of the Turkish Cypriots.
10. Currently the gap between the stated positions of the parties is wide and the confidence between them is low. Therefore a new round of negotiations under the auspices of the UN is not on the agenda, as the UN rightly concluded in June 2005. This study argues that a way out of the deadlock may only be found by unilateral or agreed confidence-building measures undertaken by both the Greek and Turkish Cypriot authorities so that a momentum for mutual understanding, reconciliation, rapprochement and realism can be created. Only then can negotiations under the auspices of the UN be given a new chance.
11. In this paper it is argued that the more time is passing, the more difficult it might be to achieve the unification of Cyprus. For example, Turkey’s current support for a unification could weaken as a reaction to a growing unfavourable climate in the EU concerning Turkey’s accession. Therefore, it is important to find a solution to the Cyprus conflict as quickly as possible. This is in the interest of the Cypriots and the EU alike. The EU would no longer have to deal with the “abnormality” of having a divided member state. Furthermore, a unification of Cyprus would enhance the international credibility of the EU and its common foreign and security policy, as this would show its ability to solve an ethno-political conflict in its own backyard by compromise, while it is engaged in mediating similar conflicts in the Balkans and the Middle East. Also, it would disentangle the Cyprus conflict and the EU – Turkey

accession negotiations thus facilitating a debate among EU citizens about the pros and cons of Turkey's accession, in which smokescreen arguments related to the Cyprus – Turkey relations could not be used anymore.

12. As in many other protracted ethno-political conflicts, external actors can only play a limited role in bringing about a solution. It is mainly up to the Greek and Turkish Cypriots to find a solution that is agreeable to both. However, this study argues that the EU is in a unique position to actively assist in reaching a settlement. The Cyprus conflict is now a conflict on EU soil. The reputation of the EU is high in the Greek and Turkish Cypriot community alike. Also, as interviews with leading politicians from both communities analysed in this study suggest there is an interest in confidence-building measures sponsored by the EU in both communities. Lessons learned from fostering peace in Northern Ireland, the only similar case of an EU involvement in an internal conflict of a member state, are also to be considered.
13. In principle, the EU institutions and EU member states have two options: one, to continue to do the 'bare minimum' in terms of conflict resolution in Cyprus (and leave this issue solely to the Greek and Turkish Cypriots and the UN) or, two, to change track and implement an active mediation and arbitration policy. In this study, it is suggested that the EU institutions and the EU member states should choose the latter option. There are several 'soft power' mechanisms of the EU at hand that could be used to achieve an early unification of Cyprus. Recently, the EU has started to be somewhat more pro-active in regard to the Cyprus conflict. The statements of EU enlargement Commissioner Ollie Rehn in Cyprus in May, the appointment of Ambassador Jaako Bloomberg as a Special Adviser to Rehn, and the first ever discussions between representatives of the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots under an EU umbrella about the Trade and Aid Regulations to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots are steps in the right direction, however, they are far from enough.
14. Surely, there are restrictions to activities the EU can undertake, because one side of the conflict, the Greek Cypriot member state, has a say in the Union and could block decisions in the European Council when unanimity is needed. The opposition of the Greek Cypriot government to the proposed EU regulations about ending the economic

isolation of the Turkish Cypriots in the Council have shown that they are willing to use their powers. However, this paper argues that the EU institutions and the member states certainly have room to manoeuvre that they can use if they want to. The EU is not condemned to act as a 'hostage' of the Greek Cypriots. The EU parliament and the EU Commission are not restricted by a necessity to decide unanimously, and the majority of EU member states could work out a co-ordinated policy. Thus a 'European spirit' concerning the Cyprus conflict could be defined and limits of tolerance shown. All this would influence the communities on the island including the Greek Cypriot administration.

15. This paper argues for an active mediation and arbitration policy of the EU and its member states on Cyprus. The EU institutions should use their moral-political and financial weight to change the current stalemate in Cyprus by promoting confidence-building measures (unilateral, reciprocal unilateral or agreed) taken by the two sides in Cyprus. Such measures should get financial supported by the EU. In the following, this study suggests some important steps of a comprehensive and coherent EU policy on Cyprus:
 - Put more political weight on efforts to overcome Greek Cypriots' objections against ending the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. The fact that the Turkish Cypriots are prepared to turn over the territory of Varosha to the Greek Cypriot administration even before an comprehensive settlement, and the fact that Turkey is willing to end all restrictions on Greek Cypriot ships and aeroplanes in exchange for an end of the isolation could be a basis for a compromise.
 - Initiate other measures of confidence-building and reconciliation, funded by a special EU "Cyprus Reconciliation Fund". Possible measures could be:
 - Teaching of both the official languages to all secondary school students.
 - Organisation of a common Cypriot Olympic team for the next Olympic Games in 2008.
 - Financial support of joint economic activities of Greek and Turkish Cypriots.
 - Appoint a high profile Special EU Envoy for Cyprus by the EU Commission and the EU Council to mediate and arbitrate confidence-building and reconciliation measures.

- Invite Turkish Cypriot representatives, at least as observers, to the European Parliament and to other bodies of the EU, for example the “Committee of the Regions”.
16. An active mediation and arbitration policy of the EU and its member states should also include the elaboration and promotion of a European base line in regard to a new round of negotiations under the auspices of the UN. Also, the EU should ask the leaderships of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots for a conciliatory approach and for realism. It should especially support the UN Secretary General advice to the Greek Cypriot government to provide “a list of focused, finite, manageable, prioritised proposals” for changes it wishes to make to the Annan Plan. The EU should reiterate its support for the Annan Plan as a basis for new negotiations and also its belief that the plan is fully consistent with EU laws. The EU Special Envoy should play a role in promoting the “European base line” and in helping the Greek and Turkish Cypriots prepare the negotiations for a comprehensive settlement.
 17. It is far from certain that an active EU policy towards the Cyprus conflict will lead to the desired aim of achieving a comprehensive settlement or even less far-reaching confidence-building measures in the near future. In the end the preparedness of the Turkish and the Greek Cypriots to find compromises will be decisive. However, the EU institutions and the member states can and should influence the developments.

I. Introduction

More than one year ago the Greek Cypriots rejected a comprehensive UN plan for the reunification of Cyprus, the last divided state in Europe. While the Greek Cypriots are now members of the EU, the Turkish Cypriots in the northern part of the island, the self-declared “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus”¹, where two-thirds of the population supported the so-called Annan Plan, can neither enjoy the democratic rights nor the economic advantages of EU citizens.

The EU now has to deal with this new situation of having a divided country as a member state. On top of having to look for ways of bringing a unification of the island about, the unresolved Cyprus conflict will be a constant thorn in the coming accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey. As the gap between the positions of the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots remains wide and the confidence between the communities and their leaders low, new negotiations on a comprehensive solution are not on the agenda for the foreseeable time. Thus the only way left to prepare the ground for a settlement in the future is to look for confidence-building measures in a wider sense now. The EU could and should play a unique role in bringing the necessary changes about.

In this paper, the reader will first find a short description of the history of the Cyprus conflict (Chapter II) and of the Annan

¹ The “Republic of Cyprus” is the internationally recognised state for the whole island. Since 1964 only Greek Cypriots have been electing its government. Since 1974 the area, which is under control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus ends at the Green Line. In the North, the Turkish Cypriots proclaimed themselves as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983, but this state is only recognised internationally by Turkey, although in many aspects it has the features of a state. In this paper the names used by the two sides are used as well (Republic of Cyprus, TRNC), although the international legal status is different. Often for better distinction terms are added, for example “Greek Cypriot President”, “Turkish Cypriot President”, etc. The terminology used is not meant to support the demand for a political recognition of the TRNC – a demand that even the Turkish Cypriots don’t have anymore. But it is meant to stress the *de facto* equal status of the two communal groups living in Cyprus, whose leaders *de facto* represent only their own group. In a future united Cyprus, as in principle agreed to by the community leaders, there will be two constituent states of the Federation. The leaders on both sides will be pretty much the same. With this perspective of a United Cyprus Republic in mind, the author prefers to look at the so-called TRNC as the future component state of the United Cyprus, the “Turkish Cypriot Republic” as it is called in the Annan Plan.

Plan including the latest development in regard to negotiations under the auspices of the UN (Chapter III).

Then, as security worries were one of the main reasons for Greek Cypriots to reject the Annan Plan, the security perceptions of Greek and Turkish Cypriots are analysed (Chapter IV and V). These perceptions and possible compromises in the field of security are discussed in Chapter VI.

The paper then examines the history of the EU involvement including recent activities of the EU up until August 2005 (Chapter VII). The perceptions and wishes of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots in regard to an EU role in the solution of the conflict are discussed in Chapter XIII. Then, EU policy in respect to the Northern Ireland conflict is briefly analysed in Chapter IX. Last but not least, the policy options of the EU in respect to the Cyprus conflict are discussed and policy recommendations are made in Chapter X.

A main topic of this study is to analyse and discuss the perceptions of the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot communities concerning security as well as their interests in an involvement of the EU. Therefore, to a large extent, the paper is based on interviews with representatives of the political elite and the civil society of both communities.

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II. A short history of the Cyprus conflict and the differing security perceptions of both sides

The debate about the terms of a unification of Cyprus is full of connotations regarding the history of the conflict. However, perceptions of history is divided along ethnic lines. The Greek Cypriot population – currently about 80 percent of the 800 000 inhabitants of the island – and the Turkish Cypriot population (about 18 percent) have a quite different “collective memory”² of the past.

Cyprus was dominated by outside powers most of the time³: First, Greeks and Romans in classical times, later the Byzantine Empire and the Venetians. From 1571 until 1878, Cyprus belonged to the Ottoman Empire, after that it was under the rule of the British Empire until 1960. Only then did Cyprus become an independent state.

Even if we skip the answer to the question of who was first in Cyprus – settlers from Anatolia, as plates in the Greek Cypriot Cyprus Museum suggest or settlers from Mycenae around 1500 BC⁴ – it is undisputed that the Greek population has always constituted the vast majority on the island.

Greek and Turkish Cypriots have lived scattered all over the island, at least for the last few hundred years, often in mixed settlements. Socially and politically though they mostly kept themselves separate. Their educational system, for example, introduced under British rule in the 19th century, was based on native tongue. For a long time both teachers used schoolbooks were “imported” from the ‘motherlands’ Greece and Turkey. The Turkish Cypriots were Muslims, the Greek Cypriot Greek Orthodox Christians. Both communities increasingly defined their cultural identities by their allegiance to their respective ‘motherlands’.

² Harry Anastasiou: *Communication Across Conflict Lines: the Case of Ethnically Divided Cyprus*. Journal of Peace Research 2002, vol. 39, no. 5, p. 581ff, (Anastasiou 2002)

³ For the history of the conflict see inter alia: David Hannay: *Cyprus – The Search for a Solution*, New York/London 2004, p. 1ff; Heinz A. Richter: *Geschichte der Insel Zypern 1878 – 1949*, Mannheim 2005, p. 99ff; Peter A. Zervakis: *Die europäische Perspektive für das geteilte Zypern: Eine neue Chance zur Lösung des Zypern-Problems?* Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft, 2/2004, Wiesbaden, p. 460ff, (Zervakis 2004); Bruno Schoch: *Zypernkonflikt vor einer Lösung?*, HFSK-Report, Frankfurt 2004, p. 14ff

⁴ Thomas: *Last Exit to Paradise?*; in: Thomas Diez (editor): *The European Union and the Cyprus Conflict*, Manchester and New York 2002, p.142, (Diez 2002)

Enosis versus Taksim

From the Greek Cypriot perspective Cyprus is regarded as a Hellenistic island. The aim of the vast majority of Greek Cypriots in the middle of the 20th century, while Cyprus still was under British rule, was not an independent Cypriot state, but “enosis” – unification with Greece. To achieve this, they even started an armed struggle against the British colonial masters between 1955 and 1959.

The Turkish Cypriots rejected the idea of a unification of the whole island with Greece. In reaction to the Greek nationalism many opted for “taksim” (partition or double enosis, with the northern part of the island becoming a part of Turkey).

1959/60: Cyprus becomes an independent state

In 1959, a set of agreements between the colonial power Great Britain and Greece and Turkey established the “Republic of Cyprus”⁵ as a unitary state.

To secure bi-communal decision-making procedures, the Turkish Cypriots were provided with wide-ranging veto-powers, which could mainly be exercised by the vice-president. The vice-president had to be a Turkish Cypriot, who, as all the representatives in parliament, was to be elected only by his ethnic community.

Great Britain, Turkey and Greece were given the status of “guarantor powers”, which had the duty to preserve the territory and the constitutional order of the new state. The “Treaty of Guarantee” obliged the three guarantors to consult on the measures that had to be taken in case of any problems arising. It even gave them the right, if there was no agreement reached, to intervene by military means unilaterally under very specific circumstances: for preserving the territory and the constitutional order of the new state.

According to this treaty a small contingency of Greek (950) and Turkish (650) troops were allowed to be stationed on the island. On top of that Great Britain, in a crude but successful move, secured for itself the sovereignty over two military bases on the island (99 square miles, 3 percent of the territory).

Both, the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot leaders, bore great resentment and felt hostility against the agreements. Especially the Greek Cypriots were not happy with not having obtained what they actually fought for: unification with Greece.

⁵ Comp. the following paragraph: Nicola Polat: *Self-determination, violence, modernity*, p. 104f, in Diez 2002

They pursued this goal even after 1960, because for their leader Archbishop Makarios and most of the Greek Cypriot community the “Republic of Cyprus” was at best regarded as an interim solution. The Greek Cypriots were also reluctant to have to share the power in the new state with the 18 percent Turkish Cypriot numerical minority. A symbol of this mood is the choice of the national anthem of Greece as the national anthem of the Republic of Cyprus by the Greek Cypriot majority.

1963/64 civil war

The constitution of 1960 with its power-sharing agreements might have worked, if a co-operative spirit had prevailed in both communities.⁶ But this was not the case. After only three years Archbishop Makarios, the then President of the Republic, asked for drastic changes in the constitution. These changes would have eliminated many of the Turkish Cypriots’ veto powers. A few provocations by Greek Cypriot paramilitaries were enough to start the civil war of 1963/64. About one-half of all the Turkish Cypriots were forced to leave their homes and property behind to go to live in enclaves for some years, areas mainly populated by their own ethnic kin under difficult conditions⁷. Even the capital Nicosia was divided. In the end several hundred people, mainly Turkish Cypriots, were killed, 483 Turkish Cypriots and 32 Greek Cypriots are still missing⁸.

As a result of the clashes, the Turkish Cypriots withdrew from participation in the institutional structures of the Cypriot state.

A Turkish military intervention (as a guarantee power) was averted only because US President Johnson put strong pressure on Turkey⁹. Against the background of the Cold War the US administration was afraid of a growing influence of the Soviet Union in the Eastern Mediterranean, an area regarded as strategically important to the USA because of its proximity to the oil-rich Middle East. At that time the USA were worried of Cyprus developing into a “Mediterranean Cuba”. The mainly Greek Cypriot communist party of Cyprus, AKEL, was well represented in the parliament. President Archbishop Makarios’ ties to the movement of the non-aligned countries and to the

⁶ Hannay, 2004, p. 4; Zervakis, 2004, p. 461.

⁷ see Hubert Faustmann: “neafon”, 03/2002: „Gibt es Sicherheit für alle auf Zypern?“, p. 18.

⁸ Anastasiou 2002, p. 582.

⁹ Aylin Guney: *The USA’ Role in Mediating the Cyprus Conflict*, “Security Dialogue” (PRIO), Oslo, vol. 35, no. 1, March 2004, p. 31f.

Soviet Union were getting stronger. In the crisis of 1963/64 Makarios even repeatedly called for a Soviet military intervention in the event of a Turkish intervention on the island.

By averting a Turkish intervention, the USA succeeded in avoiding a damaging military clash between the NATO partners Greece and Turkey with all its possible repercussions for a military involvement of the Soviet Union. But in March 1964, the Cyprus Conflict was carried to the UN Security Council thus internationalising it for the first time. From now on the USSR had an indirect say regarding the future of Cyprus.

Security Council Resolution 186 of 4 March 1964 called upon all states to refrain from interference in Cyprus, as demanded by the Cypriot President Makarios and backed by the Soviet Union. It also called for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force to prevent further clashes and for UN mediation. UN forces in Cyprus have been stationed there since 1964.

Implicitly the UN resolution of 1964 recognised Cypriot government of President Makarios as the sole internationally legitimate body for the entire republic, although the constitutional arrangements with the Turkish Cypriots were no longer in force and the Turkish Cypriots were no longer represented in the institutions of the Republic¹⁰.

1974: Greek Cypriot Coup and Turkish intervention

Even though the relations between the two ethnic communities of Cyprus improved in the following years, no agreement about the future of a common state could be reached. On 15 July 1974, a new dimension was added to the conflict: the military junta that was governing Greece at that time orchestrated a *coup de état* in Cyprus. Right extremist Greek Cypriot nationalists together with Greek soldiers stationed in Cyprus ousted the President, Archbishop Makarios, from power. Their aim was the unification of the whole island with Greece. The rebels declared Nikos Sampson for President – a man who was well-known for having committed atrocities against the Turkish Cypriots in the clashes of the 1960s.

After the coup Great Britain and Turkey, the two other guarantor powers, were not able to agree on a common policy. So Turkey, on its part, intervened five days later unilaterally with a overwhelming military force. It justified this action by citing the

¹⁰ Faustmann 2002, p. 18 calls the circumstances in which the Greek Cypriots managed to get the recognition as legitimate government of the whole of Cyprus “dubious”.

immediate danger the Turkish Cypriots were in. Turkey also argued that as a guarantor power it was its duty and right to protect the constitution that had been violated by the coup. But even after the coup collapsed and Makarios returned into office the Turkish forces stayed in Cyprus. They advanced even further and occupied in the end 38 percent of the island. Gruesome atrocities happened on both sides. In the end there were about 2850 casualties of war and about 1600 mainly Greek Cypriots missing¹¹. 162 000 Greek Cypriots had to flee to the south, 40 000 Turkish Cypriots moved north to the area controlled by the Turkish Army.

Since then Cyprus is divided by a so called “Green line“, an internal border with barbed wire and mine fields¹². The two virtually mono-ethnic parts are separated by a UN controlled buffer zone.

Contradicting perceptions of the events of 1963/64 and 1974

The experience of violence, pain and suffering because of the events in the 1960s and in 1974 has led to a specific perception of ‘history’, ‘truth’ and also of ‘security’ among the Cypriots. These perceptions have a major impact on the ongoing debate about reunification of the island. It has to be taken into account that the “features of nationalism have historically marked both the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities” (Anastasiou 2002)¹³.

For most Greek Cypriots the conflict started with the Turkish invasion in 1974. The division of Cyprus is regarded as the result of the Turkish invasion and occupation. The forced expulsion of 160 000 Greek Cypriots from their homes and the casualties of the war are in the forefront of their collective memory. Consequently for the Greek Cypriots ‘security’ in a narrow sense means to have the certainty of never again being threatened by a Turkish military invasion¹⁴. In a broader sense they want to be certain that the Cypriot state is not and never will be dependent on Turkey and that it can work smoothly without having to be afraid of Turkish Cypriot or Turkish obstructiveness.

For the majority of Turkish Cypriots the perspective is different. Turkish troops are not regarded as invaders, but as a peace force. They brought peace to the Turkish Cypriots, as before 1974, they often had to live under conditions of perpetual

¹¹ Anastasiou 2002, p. 583

¹² The clearing of the minefields has only began in 2004

¹³ Anastasiou 2002, p. 582

¹⁴ Faustmann 2002 p. 21

siege, in bloody conflicts with Greek Cypriots. The Turkish Cypriots' collective memory is marked by the attacks of Greek Cypriots against them in the period of 1963-74, with hundreds of dead and about 500 still missing persons. 'Security' for them implies the personal security against military and paramilitary attacks and the security as a community against political, cultural and economical domination by the Greek Cypriots.

The nationalist leaders of both sides perpetuated and instrumentalised these perceptions for their own political aims, "preventing thereby the possibility of perceiving and understanding the pain and the grievances of the other side" (Anastasiou, 2002)¹⁵.

Negotiations 1974 – 1999

From 1974 onwards, a UN peacemaking process of some kind or another was underway. In 1977 and 1979 the respective leaders of the two communities, Makarios and his successor Spyros Kyprianou for the Greek Cypriots and Rauf Denktash for the Turkish Cypriots, reached so called "High-level Agreements" about the framework of a settlement. It called for a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation thus acknowledging that the bi-communal unitary state of 1960 had gone beyond recall. But despite this conceptual breakthrough, which still forms the base of any unification efforts, breaking down this general agreement into a detailed plan for a settlement was not possible.

In 1983, with a unilateral declaration of independence, Denktash proclaimed the Turkish Cypriot part of the island as the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus". This move complicated the negotiation process. The UN condemned the secessionist state and called on all states not to recognise the TRNC. Until today it has only been recognised by Turkey. The Greek Cypriots, afraid to lose their international recognition as the only legal authority in Cyprus, have called the authorities in the North "illegal", a "pseudo state" and flatly reject any dealings with its authorities except when the leaders of the two communities come together under the auspices of the UN.

In the following years all UN efforts to agree on a settlement failed, be it because of the intransigence of the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash who had the backing of the political and military elite of Turkey, or be it because of the victory of the non-reconciliatory Greek Cypriot politician Glafkos Cleridis in the presidential elections of 1993 after the then UN Secretary-

¹⁵ Anastasiou 2002, p. 590

General Bouthros Ghali had produced a “Set of Ideas” for solving the Cyprus conflict.

Later on in the 1990s, Denktash even hardened his stance by demanding the recognition of the TRNC as a precondition to any meaningful talks about a unification – an anathema to the Greek Cypriots. Because of the long history of failed talks Cyprus has rightly earned its nickname “graveyard for diplomats”.

The Genesis of the Annan Plan

In 1999, the UN started a new initiative for solving the Cyprus conflict. The Secretary General saw a “window of opportunity” for a settlement mainly due to changed international circumstances¹⁶:

- The Cold War-like relations between Turkey and Greece had begun to thaw.
- The EU had started membership application talks with Cyprus, i.e. with the Greek Cypriots. Although the Helsinki EU-Council in 1999 had decided that a unification of Cyprus was not a precondition for an accession, it was hoping for a unification of Cyprus before the end of the accession negotiations.
- In the same EU-Council meeting Turkey was accepted as a EU candidate country with several political preconditions that had to be met before accession negotiations could start.

The new UN efforts were supported especially by the EU and by the USA. The latter were highly interested in a EU membership perspective for Turkey. To achieve this end it was deemed helpful, if not even a necessary prerequisite, to solve the Cyprus conflict.

Direct and indirect talks between the two Cypriot community leaders took place under the auspices of the UN from 1999 to 2002. A first version of what later became known as the Annan Plan was released in November 2002. But parallel to the EU summit in Copenhagen in December 2002 and again at separate talks in The Hague in March 2003, the parties failed to agree to the then revised version of the Annan Plan. In both rounds Denktash refused to accept a settlement, which did not involve prior recognition of the TRNC. The Greek Cypriot leader Tassos Papadopoulos, who was elected as President of the Greek Cypriots only in February 2003, also had many objections to these versions of the Annan Plan, but he managed to hide behind

¹⁶ See: Diez 2002 p. 3f, 117 ff, 139ff; Zervakis 2004, p. 480ff.

Denktash's "No"¹⁷. So publicly the blame for the failure fell solely on Turkish Cypriot President Denktash.

Only in February 2004, did a new round of negotiations start with the aim to reach an agreement and put it to simultaneous referenda before 1 May 2004, the date of Cyprus' accession to the EU. This last effort seemed at that time to be vindicated, because three important developments had taken place in the year before.

In April 2003, the Turkish Cypriot authorities had unilaterally relaxed restrictions at the Green Line, allowing Cypriots to move freely across the Green Line. In the first year, three million crossings of the Green Line took place with very few incidents reported.

In December 2003, the elections of the Turkish Cypriot assembly in the North were won by the parties supporting reunification. Mehmet Ali Talat, the leader of the main winning party, was elected as Prime Minister of the Turkish Cypriots. Thus for the first time since 1974, Rauf Denktash had lost his grip on the Turkish Cypriots.

The Turkish government, led by Prime Minister Erdogan, had taken the strategic decision to bring Turkey nearer to the EU and to achieve this, he was prepared to compromise on the Cyprus question.

In the end, after a new rounds of talks in Nicosia and in Burgstock/Switzerland, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan released the final version of the Annan Plan on 31 March 2004¹⁸.

III. The Annan Plan and the referenda

1. The Annan Plan (general content) and basic compromises

The Annan Plan was the first detailed and comprehensive plan for the settlement that had been put together in the long history of the Cyprus conflict. It was a plan worked out by the UN, taking into account the year-long talks between the leaders of the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. However, a genuine 'give and take' did hardly take place between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. So as agreed before by the conflicting parties, the UN was obliged to "fill in the blanks" as it felt appropriate.

¹⁷ See the doubts about Papadopoulos' support for the UN Plan mentioned by Kofi Annan already in 2003: *Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus*, UNSC document S/2003/398

¹⁸ This plan is also called Annan Plan V. *The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem*. www.Cyprus-un-plan.org.

The Annan Plan was supported by the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and – though much more tacitly – by the Prime Minister of Greece, Kostas Karamanlis, as well as by the then newly elected pro-solution Prime Minister of the Turkish Cypriots, Mehmet Ali Talat. At the talks in Burgenstock, Talat had replaced Turkish Cypriot President Rauf Denktash as representative of the Turkish Cypriot community in the end.

The Annan Plan also had the explicit backing of the US, the EU Commission, the European Parliament and Javier Solana, the General Secretary of the European Council and High Representative for the “Common Foreign and Security Policy” of the EU.

However, the then President of the Turkish Cypriots, Rauf Denktash, and the President of the Greek Cypriot administration, Tassos Papadopoulos, rejected the plan and asked their community to vote against it in the referenda that were to take place on the 24 April 2004.

The Annan Plan would have established a new “United Cyprus Republic” with a federal government and two constituent states: the “Greek Cypriot State” and the “Turkish Cypriot State”¹⁹. The “United Cyprus Republic” was to be a bi-communal, bi-zonal state as the leaders of the two communities had in principle already agreed to in the late 1970s, based on the political equality of the two ethnic communities.

The basic compromises enshrined in the plan were:

- **A common Cypriot federal state, the “United Cyprus Republic” with a rather weak central government and rather strong constituent states.** Thus on the one hand, the two-state solution that Denktash had fought for and that the Greek Cypriots had fiercely opposed, was rejected. On the other hand the self determination of the communities on a wide scale was provided for as especially the Turkish Cypriot had wished.
- **Power-sharing arrangements in the federal state executive and legislative secured the political influence of the Turkish Cypriots above their numerical number of 18 percent of the population through a weighted system of**

¹⁹ www.cyprus-un-plan.org. See also about the provisions of the plan in detail: House of Commons (Great Britain) Foreign Affairs Committee: *“Cyprus – second report of Session 2004-2005”*, February 2005 p. 16ff; Heinz-Jürgen Axt: *“Zypern: der Annan-Friedensplan und sein Scheitern”*, in: *Südosteuropa-Mitteilungen 02-03/2004*, pa 49ff, Munich

votes in the government and in the two chambers of the federal parliament²⁰.

- **Return of about one-fifth of the land currently under Turkish Cypriot administration to the future Greek Cypriot State.** (By this provision, about 100 000 Greek Cypriot refugees could return to their former homes and property under Greek Cypriot administration. 50 000 Turkish Cypriot though, the current inhabitants of areas to be exchanged, would have to be resettled to another place in the Turkish Cypriot State.)
- **Return of part of the property or/and a compensation** for Greek Cypriots' property remaining in the area of the new Turkish Cypriot State and Turkish Cypriots' property in the area of the Greek Cypriot State.
- The establishment of a “**Reconciliation commission**” to promote understanding tolerance and mutual respect between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots”²¹.
- **Radical demilitarisation of Cyprus.** Abolition of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot forces and a phased reduction of

²⁰ Some details of the constitutional power-sharing arrangements are: The Legislative consists of two chambers: A **Senate** (48 members, 24 from each community) and a **House of Representatives**: (48 members, elected by proportional representation but at least 25 percent of the representatives must come from any constituent state). Decisions are taken by simple majority but at least 25 percent of the votes in the Senate must come from one constituent state (in special cases the percentage is increased to 40 percent). The Executive is headed by a **Presidential Council**, which is elected with special majority by the Senate and confirmed by simple majority in the House of Representatives. It consists of six voting members. At least two of them have to be from each constituent state, i.e. at least two have to be Turkish Cypriots. Decisions are made by simple majority but at least one vote from representatives of each constituent state is needed. Two of the members of the Presidential Council become **President and Vice President**. They have to come from different constituent states and they rotate office every 20 months. The central administration is composed proportionally according to the population ratio with the exception of the police force which would be manned at a 50/50 ratio. See Hubert Faustmann: *The Cyprus Question Still Unresolved: Security Concerns and the Failure of the Annan Plan*; in: *Südosteuropa-Mitteilungen* 06/2004 München, footnote 28: *The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem* (www.Cyprus-un-plan.org). Main Articles. 31 March 2004, Articles 2 and 5. See Annex I, Articles 30 and 31 for the administration and the police.

It should be stressed that the Annan Plan did not include any veto right by the Vice President as the constitution from 1960 foresaw for the Turkish Cypriot Vice President. So it is much more orientated towards building cross-community support for decisions in the federal state.

²¹ www.Cyprus-un-plan.org; Annex VIII: Reconciliation Commission, p. 134f

Turkish troops from the island from currently 20 000 – 35 000 to a maximum of 650 soldiers.

2. The security provisions of the Annan-Plan: Radical demilitarisation

In general ‘security’ is a relative term because there is no such thing as “complete security”²². This is even more so the case in Cyprus, where the often differing perceptions about security that the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots have allow no other solution than a compromise. The Annan Plan, taking into account the historical experience of internal ethnic strife and external intervention, deals with the issue of security in Cyprus on levels going beyond the traditional interpretation of security as security against an external aggression²³:

- In international relations, it keeps the guarantor powers’ status of Greece, Turkey and Great Britain as provided in the provisions of the Zurich and London treaties that established the Republic of Cyprus in 1959/60.
- In terms of the internal security of the minority community it provides for a power-sharing arrangement that covers cultural, political, and even some social aspects of security.
- In terms of the internal security of one ethnic community in relation to the other it provides for some military means of Turkey and Greece and of the UN.
- In terms of individual security it lays down the rule of law in a democratic society in general and provides a framework for settling individual property claims.

Concerning the security of the state, it forbids secession – one of the main worries of the Greek Cypriots – and likewise “enosis” (unification with Greece) – one of the main worries of the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey.

Its security provisions in a narrow definition of security envision a nearly total demilitarisation of the island²⁴:

- **The Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot forces including the reserve units are to be dissolved within**

²² Faustmann 2004, p. 46f

²³ For the debate on a broad security concept, so-called “Human Security” see: Michael Brzoska: *Human Security – mehr als ein Schlagwort?*, in: *Friedensgutachten 2004*, Münster 2004, p. 156ff

²⁴ *The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem*. 31 March 2004, Main Articles. Article 8. Paragraph 1b and Annex IV: Additional Protocol to the Treaty of Alliance. If not mentioned otherwise, the following quotes are from this source.

three years. Currently, the Turkish Cypriot forces consist of 5000 military personnel in active and 26 000 in reserve units. The Greek Cypriot forces consist of 10 000 soldiers in active and 60 000 in reserve units²⁵.

- **The Turkish troops currently stationed on the island – 20000 to 35000²⁶ – are to be radically reduced in stages:**
 - to a maximum of 6000 within three years;
 - to a maximum of 3000 within seven years,
 - to a maximum of 650 soldiers within 14 years time or the date of EU accession of Turkey, whichever is sooner.
- Greece, which currently has a contingent of 1250 soldiers in Cyprus, would have the right to station a similar amount of troops on the island as Turkey with one difference: The final strength of its force could consist of 950 soldiers compared to the allowed maximum of 650 Turkish soldiers. The latter provision and the latter troop level are provisions of the Treaty of Alliance, one of the Treaties with which the Republic of Cyprus was established²⁷.
- In 2010 and thereafter every three years Cyprus, Greece and Turkey should review the troop levels of the remaining Greek and Turkish forces “with the objective of their total withdrawal”.

²⁵ For the figures see: IISS: Military Balance 2004/2005 p. 85f.

²⁶ There are no official figures of the amount of Turkish soldiers in Cyprus. Normally they are estimated to be about 35 000. But the British Minister of State, Denis MacShane, put the amount of Turkish troops between 20-35000 according to a report by the “Cyprus News Agency”, of 22 March 2005. A high-ranking European diplomat, currently based in Cyprus, told me in a personal interview on 2 February 2005 that he estimates that 20-25000 Turkish soldiers are on the island.

²⁷ In the Annan Plan, the details of these provisions were changes from the 2003 to the final 2004 version of plan. The UN tried to accommodate concerns of both sides: Instead of 6000 Turkish troops, which according to the fourth version of the Annan Plan would have been permitted to stay in Cyprus for 14 years, the maximum was reduced to 3000 from year seven to fourteen. Thus the Greek Cypriot demand for a further significant reduction of troop levels was met. In exchange, meeting a demand by Turkish Cypriots and Turkey, the provision of the earlier version of the Annan Plan, namely that after 14 years *all* Turkish and Greek troops had to be withdrawn, was changed. The final Annan plan permitted the presence of 950 Greek and 650 Turkish troops – for an unlimited period of time, as long not otherwise agreed between the parties. See: *Report of the UN Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus*, 28 May 2004 (S/2004/437), Paragraph 47.

- **The UN is to increase its forces**, currently about 850, to several thousand to maintain “a secure environment” and to “monitor the implementation” of the agreement.

Another security provision of the Annan Plan is related to the **status of the guarantor powers of Cyprus** according to the treaties of 1959/60. The rights of Great Britain, Greece and Turkey remained in principle untouched, including the provision of the “Treaty of Guarantee” that gives them the “right to take action with the sole aim of re-establishing the state of affairs”²⁸, concerning the “independence, territorial integrity, security and constitutional order” of Cyprus. This provision was adapted to the new state of affairs, i.e. it not only covers the new federal state, the United Cyprus Republic, but also the two constituent states²⁹.

The Annan Plan **did not change** any provisions of the treaties of 1959/60 concerning the **British military bases** in Cyprus. Currently, there is 3275 military personnel in the British Sovereign Bases. Although these bases are seen as an anachronistic relict of the colonial past, nobody wanted to touch this issue in the UN-sponsored talks.

Demilitarisation of Cyprus according to the Annan-Plan

	Turkish Troops	Greek Troops	Turkish Cypriot Forces	Greek Cypriot Forces
2004 (and current levels)	20000 - 35000	1 250	5 000	10000
2007 - 2011	max. 6000	max. 6000	0	0
2011 - 2018 (or the date of EU accession of Turkey, whichever is sooner)	max. 3000	max. 3000	0	0
After 2018 (or the date of EU accession of Turkey, whichever is sooner)	max. 650	max. 950	0	0
In 2010 and thereafter every three years:	Cyprus, Greece and Turkey should review the troop levels of the remaining Greek and Turkish forces “with the objective of their total withdrawal”.			

²⁸ *Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus*, Nicosia 1960, Part II Appendix B, Art. IV; cit. in: *Jürgen Reuter: Der Uno-Zypernplan – eine politische und rechtliche Analyse*; Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Auslandsinformationen 2/2003, p.31

²⁹ *The Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem*. 31 March 2004, Annex III: Additional Protocol to the Treaty of Guarantee. Article 1.

3. The referendum in the North

On 24 April 2005, 65 percent of the Turkish Cypriot electorate in the North voted in favour of the Annan Plan. The 35 percent, who said “No”, followed the call of their, at that time, still acting President Rauf Denktash, who had campaigned against the plan. The big majority of the “Yes” vote was the result of a “quiet revolution” that had taken place among the Turkish Cypriots in the years before. In 2001/2002 a popular mass movement emerged after the collapse of several banks that were connected to the autocratic system of President Rauf Denktash. The movement opposed Denktash undemocratic policy and especially his non-conciliatory policy later in the negotiations with the Greek Cypriots. The demands of the opposition were reunification and EU-membership. The desire to improve the living standards, to end the economical and political isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, and the wish for more democracy in Northern Cyprus were the motives of the mass movement.

Turkish Cypriots (TRNC) – Main political parties

President: Mehmet Ali TALAT (CTP) elected by popular vote (55.6%) in April 2005

Parties of the governing coalition	(% parliamentary elections 2005)
CTP or RTP (Republican Turkish Party); socialist; in April 2004 pro Annan Plan Leader (and Prime Minister): Ferdi Sabit Soyler	44,51 %
DP (Democratic Party) soft nationalists; in April 2004 neither pro nor anti Annan Plan Leader: Serdar Denktash	13,47 %
Opposition	(% parliamentary elections 2005)
UBP (National Unity Party) nationalistic, in April 2004 fiercely against Annan Plan Leader: Dervis Eroglu	31,67 %
BDH (Peace and Democracy Movement); left-wing in April 2004 pro Annan Plan Leader: Mustafa Akinci	5,84 %

In the spring of 2003, the movement brought about 40 000 to 80 000 people to the streets – of a population of 200 000. In

December 2003, the pro-solution parties won the parliamentary election, although only by a narrow margin. The main opposition party, the socialist CTP (Turkish Republican Party) with 38 percent of the vote had to establish a coalition with the rather anti-solution middle ground party of Rauf Denktash's son Sedar Denktash. With Mehmet Ali Talat, the leader of the CTP, a staunch supporter of the Annan Plan was elected Prime Minister of the Turkish Cypriots.

Another factor which contributed to the referendum results in the North were the policy changes that had taken place in Turkey. There the government, and with it its Cyprus policy, had changed profoundly after the AKP won the elections in 2002, with their leader, Erdogan as elected Prime Minister. One of his major goals is to bring Turkey into the EU. To further this goal he was willing to radically change the Turkish policy on Cyprus.

4. The referendum in the South

In the South, the Greek Cypriots voted against the Annan plan with a huge majority of 76 percent. Only 24 percent were in favour of it. The biggest opposition party DISY, a conservative party that had lost the elections in February 2003, campaigned for a "Yes" vote. But as opinion polls suggest, nearly 40 percent of the people, who voted for DISY in the last elections, preferred to vote "No" in the referendum.

The communist AKEL party (with about one-third of the votes the biggest party) was usually seen as the most rapprochement-friendly in the Greek Cypriot political spectrum. Nevertheless, it decided to back the "No" vote. One main reason was that AKEL did not want to break with President Tassos Papadopoulos, who, in a fiercely emotional TV speech, had asked the Greek Cypriots for a "resounding 'No'". AKEL had brought Papadopoulos to power in 2003 and is the main coalition partner in his government.

Republic of Cyprus (Greek Cypriots) – Main political parties

President: Tassos PAPADOPOULOS (DIKO), elected by popular vote (51.5%) in February 2003

Parties of the governing coalition (in April 2004 against Annan Plan)	(% parliamentary elections 2001)
AKEL (“Progressive Party of the Working People”); communist Leader: Dimitris Christofias	34,71%
DIKO (Democratic Party); right wing Leader: Tassos Papadopoulos	14,84 %
EDEK (Social Democratic Movement); social democrats Leader: Yiannis Omirou	6,51%
Opposition (in April 2004 in favour of Annan-Plan)	(% parliamentary elections of 2001)
DISY (Democratic Rally) conservative Leader: Nikos Anasstasiadis	34 %
EDE(United Democrats) liberal Leader: George Vassiliou	2,59 %

Apart from this internal policy factor there are a number of other factors that influenced the decision of the Greek Cypriots. **Long term factors** were, amongst others, the **perception of history** and deep rooted nationalistic **prejudices about “the Turks”** in general.

The Greek Cypriots widely see themselves solely as victims of the Turkish aggression in 1974, whose rights have to be restored (return of all property, return of all refugees. For over 30 years now this one-sided perception has been perpetuated by the political elite, the media and the education system. They make hardly no effort to understand “the others” (the Turkish Cypriots). A self-critical view on the politics and the atrocities committed by the Greek Cypriot community in the past is almost not existent.³⁰ Films of Greek Cypriots about such atrocities, for example, are not shown on Greek Cypriot television³¹. For many

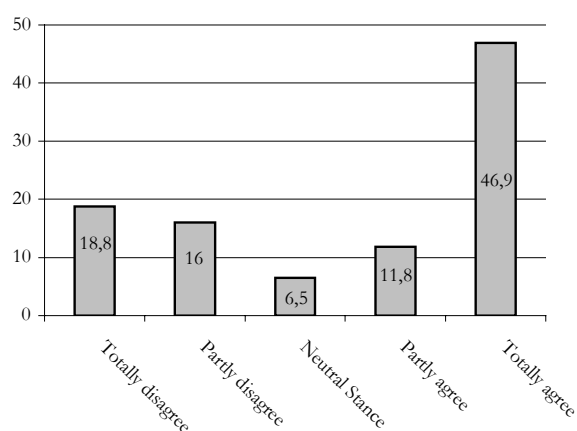
³⁰ See i.a.: Peter Loizos, Professor emeritus of the London School of Economics and Political Science, Department of Anthropology, Greek-Cypriot; speech held in London, October 1974, (Manuscript kindly provided to the author by Peter Loizos)

³¹ The film “The Voice of Blood” by Tony Angastiniotis, 2004 is one example. See: “Athener Zeitung”, 3 June 2005

years now the political discourse in the Greek Cypriot community has been dominated by a maximalistic approach. Greek Cypriots, who dared to disagree, were often called “traitors”. A public debate about the necessity to compromise did not take place, although reunification, the proclaimed aim, was always in the centre of the political debate. The presidential elections were repeatedly won by the candidate who portrayed himself as the tougher, less compromising politician³².

Greek Cypriot prejudices against the Turks

“I could never trust a Turk”



Alexandros Lordos: *Civil Society Diplomacy*, 2005, p. 11

There are also deeply routed nationalistic prejudices among the Greek Cypriots against Turks and Turkish Cypriots. According to a recent survey, 46,9 percent of Greek Cypriots “totally” and 11,8 percent “partly” agree with the sentence: “I could never trust a Turk”³³. 50 percent “totally” or “partly agree” with the belief that “The Turkish Cypriots are devious and self-serving”³⁴.

³² In 1993, the liberal President George Vassiliou, who supported the UN Secretary-General Bouthros Ghali’s “Set of Ideas” for solving the Cyprus conflict, was defeated by the “Set of idea” opponent Glafkos Cleridis. In 2003 Tassos Papadopoulos, the leader of the rightwing nationalist DIKO, won with the support of the communist AKEL against Cleridis i.a. with the argument, Cleridis was too weak in the ongoing negotiations about the Annan Plan.

³³ Alexandros Lordos: *“Civil Society Diplomacy: A new approach for Cyprus?”*, February 2005; (www.cypruspolls.org/CivilSocietyDiplomacy.pdf), p. 11. Only 18,8 percent “totally disagree”.

³⁴ *ibid.* p. 9. “totally agree” (34%) or “partly agree”(16%) while only 22,4 % “totally disagree”.

Influenced by these long-term factors there is a long list of objections the Greek Cypriot government as well as the Greek Cypriot public voiced to the specific provisions, or at least to their perception of the Annan Plan³⁵.

The main objections by Greek Cypriots are

- the security arrangements: the stationing of Turkish troops on the island, and the rights of the guarantor powers,
- the safeguards for the implementation of the plan,
- the return of the refugees and property rights,
- the provisions concerning Turkish immigrants (“settlers”) to Northern Cyprus,
- the economic cost of unification,
- the power-sharing arrangements.

There were other factors securing the “No”-vote: Some Greek Cypriots seem to have been psychologically frightened by the “leap into the unknown”. Some were worried about their income as they were afraid of losing some of their tourism business to the Turkish Cypriot North after unification. Last but not least the belief was widespread that “a better deal” could be achieved in the future. Since the Greek Cypriots knew that they would become members of the EU independent of the results of the referenda, they hoped to be able to use their new status to put pressure on Turkey.

Anyway, between one-fourth and one-third of Greek Cypriots are against unification in any case. A poll conducted in May 2004³⁶ shows that 28.2 percent prefer the division of the island, either in its present form or by establishing two separate internationally recognised states. Permanent division has even more supporters among the younger age groups (18-24 and 25-34 year olds) with 41 and 35.4 percent respectively.

³⁵ See: Declaration by the President of the Republic Mr Tassos Papadopoulos regarding the referendum of 24th April 2004, 7 April 2004; <http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/pio/pio.nsf/All/B7CC10D781AC186AC2256E7000254D3E?OpenDocument&highlight=Annan>

³⁶ Craig Webster and Christophoros Christophorou: *Spring Survey 2004: Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, and the Future: The Day After the Referendum*, Survey by CYMAR Market Research Ltd., Nicosia, June 17, 2004, p. 8; (www.cothm.ac.cy/English/%20Research4.htm). A study by Alexandros Lordos comes to similar results. Accordingly 29 percent of Greek Cypriots are “not opposed” to a two-state solution. Alexandros Lordos: *Can the Cyprus Problem be solved? Understanding the Greek Cypriot Response to the UN Peace Plan for Cyprus*. Nicosia November 2004, p. 16; (www.cypruspolls.org/GreekCypriotsReport.pdf)

It is impossible to prioritise the role of the various concerns of the Greek Cypriots – and neither in the negotiation process nor afterwards did the government try to do so. However, the security concerns did play a dominant role in the official declarations of the Greek Cypriot President³⁷ and in the mind of the Greek Cypriot “No” voters. According to an exit poll, three-quarter of the “No”-voters stated that security concerns constituted the most important reason for their vote³⁸. The UN Secretary General acknowledged the decisive role of the security aspect in his report to the Security Council of the UN after the referendum: “[...] fears regarding security and implementation appear to be prominent amongst Greek Cypriots – based, to a significant extent, on historic distrust of Turkish intentions.”³⁹

5. Current situation: No new negotiations in sight

After the Greek Cypriots’ rejection of the Annan Plan, the UN Secretary-General asked the Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos to declare in writing which changes to the Annan plan he thinks are necessary⁴⁰. Papadopoulos has until today consistently refused to do so claiming that to put detailed demands on the table would harm the negotiation position of the Greek Cypriots. This governmental inactivity was criticised by the opposition parties, which repeatedly called for “initiatives” and “moves” from the Greek Cypriots’ government to avert a cementing of the status quo.

Only in May 2005, more than one year after the referendum and after internal and international pressure on Papadopoulos had been building up, did he send an envoy to the UN to at least verbalise those areas of the plan, where the Greek Cypriots demand changes. Then, in late May, in a fact-finding mission, UN Under-Secretary General, Sir Kieran Prendergast, visited Cyprus, Ankara and Athens “to take the pulse”. In conclusion of this mission he stated in the UN Security Council that “all parties wished to see some sort of resumption of active United Nations good offices, and accepted that the United Nations plan should

³⁷ For example: *Statement by the President of the Republic, Mr. Tassos Papadopoulos, to the Foreign Media*, of 25 April 2004.

³⁸ The poll was conducted by the Greek Cypriot TV channel »Mega« on 24 April 2004.

³⁹ Report of the UN Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus, 28 May 2004 (S/2004/437), Paragraph 84f.

⁴⁰ This pledge was reiterated by Kofi Annan’s spokesmen in March 2005”. See: “Cyprus Mail“, 31 March 2005

serve as the document on which negotiations would resume”⁴¹. Nevertheless, to launch new negotiation initiatives would for the moment be “inadvisable”:

“The gap between the stated positions of the parties on substance appears to be wide, while confidence between them does not seem high; rather the contrary. These two factors, especially in combination, make efforts to establish common ground extremely difficult.”

In the talks with the UN, the Greek Cypriot President had raised his concerns touching most main issues of the Annan Plan: security, power-sharing, citizenship, residency, property, territory, economy, transition periods and guarantees of implementation. The details of his concerns were not made public. In general, according to Prendergast’s report, Papadopoulos claimed that the Annan Plan “gave the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkey ... nearly everything they wanted, more than they needed, and more than was fair”. Papadopoulos obviously believes that future negotiations can only be successful if the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkey understand this point of view and “if they are prepared to meet outstanding Greek Cypriot concerns during the course of negotiations”⁴².

The UN Under-Secretary General made clear that he does not share the view of Papadopoulos. He implicitly, and rightly, characterised the position of Papadopoulos as not helpful for initiating a new round of negotiations. Prendergast explicitly criticised the Greek Cypriot president for not elaborating “focused, finite, manageable, prioritised proposals”. He added: “A prioritised and exhaustive list of concrete proposals for negotiation would be an important advance, because it is very hard to address a long list of concerns in an ordered way if they are expressed without modulation or indication of their relative importance”.

Turkish Cypriot President Talat has stated his desire for a new round of negotiations on the Annan Plan. According to UN Under-Secretary General Sir Kieran Prendergast, in his talks with

⁴¹ *Sir Kieran Prendergast UN USG’s Briefing to Security Council*, 22.6.05. Full Text: www.moi.gov.cy/moi/pio/pio.nsf/All/018FE74699B17053C225702900437FAF?OpenDocument&highlight=Prendergast. The following quotes are from this report.

⁴² Quote from Sir Prendergast’s report. Dimitris Christofias, the leader of the main governing party AKEL argued similarly: According to “Politis”, 2 June 2005 he said: “Turkey has to come to the decision that in the Annan Plan it got much more than what is justifiable and that it has to give back that, what is not justifiable”.

him, Talat stressed his willingness “to entertain minor changes within the parameters of the plan”. However, at the same time, he said that “certain key features – political equality, partnership, bi-zonality, bi-communality, the guarantee and alliance treaties – were the essence of the plan and should not be eroded”. Talat called Greek Cypriots’ demands “outside of the parameters of the UN plan and unacceptable to the Turkish Cypriot public”.

Thus currently a new round of negotiation under the auspices of the UN on a settlement in Cyprus is not in sight, although the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot leader claim to be in favour of an early settlement. As long as the attitudes and policies on the ground in Cyprus don’t change, this situation will remain. To achieve such a change, Prendergast rightly proposed to both leaders to take measures “either by agreement or, perhaps better still unilaterally, to build confidence”.

IV. The threat perception of the Greek Cypriots and their demands

1. The threat perception

As the security worries of the Greek Cypriots were a main reason for their “No”-vote, a closer look at the threat perceptions of both communities and the security situation in Cyprus is necessary to discuss potential lines for compromise on this issue.

Politicians from the Greek Cypriots’ governmental camp see Turkish “occupation troops” as a “big threat”, states the current Minister of Defence and vice president of the Social Democratic Party EDEK, Kyriakos Mavronikolas⁴³. In his opinion, there is always a danger of “hot incidences”. Andros Kyprianou, a leading politician of the communist AKEL, is not afraid of an attack, “but if fanatic people create problems, then it might ignite something”⁴⁴.

The 650 Turkish soldiers that are allowed to remain in Cyprus according to the Annan plan until Greece, Turkey and

⁴³ Kyriakos Mavronikolas, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus and Vice-president of the Social Democratic Party EDEK. Interview with the author in Nicosia, 1 February 2005. Further quotes of his in this chapter are from this interview, if not mentioned otherwise.

⁴⁴ Andros Kyprianou, member of the AKEL politburo, Speaker of AKEL. Interview with the author in Nicosia, 4 February 2005. Further quotes of his in this chapter are from this interview, if not mentioned otherwise.

Cyprus agree otherwise are seen by President Papadopoulos as a “bridgehead”⁴⁵ for a possible military invasion by Turkey.

Although politicians regard EU membership of Cyprus often as not that important for the security of the Greek Cypriots, opinion polls show that 73 percent of the Greek Cypriots feel security to be the most important thing the Greek Cypriots have gained from their EU membership.⁴⁶

Leading politicians of the “Yes” camp contradict the threat perception of the governmental parties. Even now, with 20 000 to 35 000 Turkish soldiers in Cyprus, the threat to Greek Cypriots seems to be neglectable. Sokrates Hasikos, the vice president of the main opposition party DISY and former Minister of Defence, for example, reckons: “After the EU accession of Cyprus and after Mr. Erdogan became Prime Minister of Turkey, there is no threat of a Turkish attack. Because Turkey is orientated towards an EU accession, a crisis would not be in its interest”⁴⁷. This applies even more to the 650 Turkish soldiers who, according to the Annan Plan, would have the right to remain in Cyprus. In his view, to call this symbolic military presence a “military threat” is “a joke, especially, if you consider that mainland Turkey is only 60 miles away from Cyprus”.

Although Hasikos concedes that many Greek Cypriots are afraid of Turkey, he is of the opinion that “psychologically in the minds of many the threat is much bigger than in reality”. Hasikos also knows from experience how Greek Cypriot governments can contribute to create such a perception: “As Minister of Defence in the last government I myself have made up the numbers in regard to Turkish troops that supposedly newly came on the island”, he admits.

Civil society in the Greek Cypriot community reflects the views of the political parties. But because the main mass organisations like the PEO union and the Refugees Association are closely related to the communist AKEL, the balance is even more tilted to the government’s point of view. The leader of the left-wing PEO union, Bambis Kiritsis, who is also a member of the AKEL politburo, for example, proclaims: “We would even

⁴⁵ *Letter by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Tassos Papadopoulos, to the U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan*, dated 7 June 2004, published in “Cyprus Mail”, 10 June 2004. See as well: “Aide Memoire”, unpublished and undated (end of April/beginning of Mai 2004) by the Government of Cyprus (in the possession of the author).

⁴⁶ “Eurobarometer 62”, Autumn 2004 Cyprus”, p. 1

⁴⁷ Sokrates Hasikos, Vice-president of DISY. Interview with the author in Nicosia, 31 January 2005. Further quotes of Hasikos in this chapter are from this interview.

feel insecure with one Turkish soldier left on the island. We don't trust the good will of Turkey"⁴⁸.

Persons and groups in civil society, who are challenging the predominant nationalistic views of the Greek Cypriots and pressing for reconciliation efforts, are very weak and have hardly any influence on the political debate in Cyprus. Only very few question, for example, the necessity and usefulness of the Greek Cypriot military forces, the National Guard. The journalist Dionisos Dionisiou proposed the dissolution of the National Guard. In his view, it has no military meaning against the overwhelming force of Turkey and its dissolution would be a useful good-will gesture⁴⁹. His, however, is a lonely voice in the desert.

Politicians from the opposition are hesitant to publicly demand a reduction of the duration of the military service from currently 25 months to 14 months, although in their view, this would be perfectly viable. "They would stone us immediately", one of them asserts. The government is not considering any reduction of the service. The Defence Minister Mavronikolas says: "As long as there is an army occupying the north of the island there can be no discussion of reduced military service". AKEL spokesman Kyprianou is a little less rigid in his approach. He sees the possibility for a reduction of the military service, if Turkey withdrew some of its troops from Northern Cyprus unilaterally.

In spite of this threat perception the Greek Cypriot defence budget has been reduced quite significantly over the past years due to fiscal considerations, from US \$429 million in 2000, to US \$260 million in 2002, and US \$148 million in 2004.⁵⁰ In addition to this, the large-scale military exercises involving Greek troops and thousands of Greek Cypriot reservists that used to take place every year were cancelled in the last few years⁵¹. Nobody claims that these reductions in funding and in exercises have led to a deterioration of the security situation of the Greek Cypriots. This indicates that even government parties regard the alleged military threat of Turkey to be considerably smaller than proclaimed.

⁴⁸ Bambis Kiritsis, General Secretary of the Pan-Cyprian Federation of Labour PEO, interview with the author, Nicosia, 31 January 2005

⁴⁹ Dionisos Dionisiou, Politis 20 February 2005

⁵⁰ For the figures see: International Institute for Strategic Studies: Military Balance 2002/2003, London 2002, p. 257 and: Military Balance 2004/2005, London 2004, p. 290

⁵¹ In a reciprocal unilateral move the Turkish/Turkish Cypriot military exercises in Cyprus have also been cancelled.

In respect to the intervention rights of the guarantor powers Britain, Turkey and Greece, the parties that supported the Annan Plan, the conservative DISY and the liberal United Democrats, are not worried that Turkey would ever use them again. They stress the totally different circumstances Cyprus is in today with a new relationship having emerged between Turkey and Greece, the EU membership of Cyprus and the EU-orientation of Turkey. Again, as in the case of the Turkish troops remaining on the island, they see the intervention rights rather as a symbolic provision that would not have any significance in the real world. This opinion was already voiced by the then Greek Cypriot President Glafkos Cleridis (DISY), when, at the negotiating table in 2002, he had withdrawn his objections against the continuation of the guarantor power status calling them “concessions ... in order to satisfy some of (The Turkish Cypriot) anxieties”⁵². He was not afraid of any negative effect on the security of the Greek Cypriots by these concessions.

Today’s governing parties, the “No” supporters in the referendum of 2004 fiercely oppose the so-called “intervention rights” of Turkey, Greece and Great Britain. They have a negative perception of the current political course of Turkey. Nikos Kleanthou, the Vice-President of DIKO, the party of the Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos, for example, states: “Turkey has not changed. I am not sure that Turkey would not intervene in Cyprus again. Erdogan is under the guardianship of the military”⁵³. To them, the use of the intervention right by Turkey is something that could happen in reality. President Tassos Papadopoulos claimed that the 650 Turkish soldiers remaining in Cyprus indefinitely allowed Turkey “again to intervene militarily through a bridgehead” and, together with the intervention right, “make full independence impossible”⁵⁴.

2. Changes demanded by Greek Cypriots concerning the security provisions of the Annan Plan

With regard to the security issues, the changes demanded are obvious, as they have been raised by Papadopoulos from the

⁵² *Reply of Mr. Cleridis to the Document of Mr. Denktash dated 17 April 2002*, non-paper of the Greek Cypriots 19.4.2002, Cit. in Reuter, (2003), p. 32

⁵³ Nikos Kleanthou, the Vice President of DIKO. Interview with the author in Nicosia, 1 February 2005

⁵⁴ *Letter by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Tassos Papadopoulos, to the U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan*, dated 7 June 2004, published in “Cyprus Mail”, 10 June 2004. See as well: “Aide Memoire”, unpublished and undated (end of April/beginning of Mai 2004) by the Government of Cyprus (in the possession of the author).

beginning. In the meantime the opposition parties have also endorsed these demands in the National Council,⁵⁵ a meeting of the Greek Cypriot party leaders. So now the Greek Cypriots parties demand unanimously:

- **All Turkish and Greek troops must leave the island after a transitional period.**
- **The right to unilateral intervention by the guarantor powers Britain, Turkey and Greece must be abolished.**

In the personal interviews with Greek Cypriot politicians, further demands and specifications regarding the security provisions of the Annan Plan were mentioned.

- **Shortening of the period of withdrawal of the Turkish troops.** According to the Annan Plan Turkish troops would have to be reduced from a currently estimated 20000 – 35000 Turkish soldiers to a maximum of 6000 within three years, and to a maximum of 3000 within seven years after an agreement coming into force. The Defence Minister Mavronikolas wishes the reduction to 6000 to take place in six months and to 3000 Turkish soldiers within 18 months⁵⁶. The DISY politician and former Minister of Defence Sokrates Hasikos also supports a tighter time scale for the removal than envisaged in the Annan Plan. However, he seems to be more flexible saying that “the objective problems of such a removal of troops have to be taken into account”⁵⁷.
- If the intervention right of Turkey (and the other guarantor powers) cannot be removed from the treaty completely, the **intervention right could be limited to the respective constituent state**, according to politicians from some government and all opposition parties⁵⁸. This would mean that – under very specific circumstances⁵⁹ – Turkey would only have the right to restore the constitutional order in the Turkish Cypriot constituent state, but would not have an intervention right in the Greek Cypriot constituent state.
- The proposal to station EU or NATO troops on the island instead of Turkish and Greek soldiers to provide for the

⁵⁵ See report about the National Council meeting on the 12.4.05: „Politis“, 13 April 2005.

⁵⁶ Mavronikolas, see footnote 43

⁵⁷ Hasikos, see footnote 47

⁵⁸ Defence Minister Mavronikolas (social democratic EDEK), see footnote 43, and George Vassiliou, leader of the liberal “United Democrats” and former President of Cyprus 1987-1992 in interviews with the author on 1 February 2005.

⁵⁹ see footnote 28

security of the Turkish and Greek community is supported by the opposition party DISY and some political commentators⁶⁰. Other opposition politicians like former President George Vassiliou do not see a need for EU troops, because he thinks that the UN peacekeeping forces are sufficient to do the job. In the government block, communist AKEL which opposes membership to NATO in principle, shares the view that the UN forces can provide the necessary security. So does the party of President Papadopoulos, DIKO⁶¹.

A survey carried out in September 2004⁶² indicates that quite a large majority of Greek Cypriots support the main demands of the political parties concerning the security chapter of the Annan Plan. The eventual withdrawal of all the Turkish and Greek contingents of 650 soldiers, respectively 950 constitutes an “essential” improvement of the plan for 58 percent of the population, a further 27 percent state that it would be “nice to have”. 61 percent consider it as “essential” that the guarantor powers do not have the right of unilateral intervention, while 24 percent see such change as “nice to have”. Even more, 76 percent, consider “the withdrawal of Turkish troops ...much sooner” as planned for in the Annan Plan as “essential”, while 20 percent think such change as “nice to have”⁶³.

In a separate poll of May 2005⁶⁴ Greek Cypriots (and Turkish Cypriots) were asked about various alternatives/amendments to the security provisions of the Annan Plan. The proposal to remove all Turkish and Greek troops from

⁶⁰ Hasikos, footnote 40 and Mitsopoulos, footnote 41 for DISY. Kostas Venizelos, editor of the Greek Cypriot daily newspaper “Phileleftheros”. Interview with the author, Nicosia 1 February 2005

⁶¹ Kleanthou, footnote 39

⁶² Lordos (2004) p. 45f

⁶³ The time frame of the reductions of the Turkish troops did not play a prominent role in the public debate. Nevertheless, with 76 percent of those interviewed indicating a “much sooner” withdrawal as “essential”, there seems to be considerably more support for the demand of “much sooner withdrawal” than for the demand of a “total withdrawal” (58 percent) and the demand to abolish any intervention rights (61 percent). It has to be considered that this was the first security-related question in the questionnaire; that it included the catch phrase “withdrawal of Turkish troops” while the detail of the question – “much sooner” – might have been easily overlooked, and that the respondents who support total withdrawal as well as the ones who support “much sooner withdrawal”, could answer “essential”.

⁶⁴ Alexandros Lordos et. al.: *Options for Peace. Mapping the possibilities for a Comprehensive Settlement in Cyprus*. June 2005, (www.cypruspolls.org/OptionsForPeaceTextAndCharts.pdf)

the island, while limiting the intervention rights of the guarantor power Greece to the Greek Cypriot and of the guarantor power Turkey to the Turkish Cypriot constituent state was rejected by 61 percent of those polled with only 26.6 percent voting in favour⁶⁵.

Another option, called “Cypriot-European security system” by the authors was viewed as acceptable by 47 percent of the Greek Cypriots, while 37.7 percent rejected it⁶⁶. This system envisages a European security force under an European commander with soldiers from various European countries including Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots instead of soldiers from Greece and Turkey. However, according to this system, Turkey would have the right to protect the Turkish Cypriots in case the Cypriot-European Security system failed.

V. The threat perception of the Turkish Cypriots and their attitude toward the Greek Cypriots’ demands

1. The threat perception

The predominant security worries of the Turkish Cypriots are fuelled by their perception of historical events between 1963 and 1974. The big majority is afraid of again being the helpless victims of further atrocities committed by Greek Cypriots. And they are afraid of being dominated or even extinguished by the Greek Cypriots in general⁶⁷.

To safeguard security, the main political demand of the former Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş and the majority of his fellow countrymen for many years had been the recognition of the sovereignty of the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus”. This recognition was seen as a precondition for the search for a solution of the Cyprus conflict through a confederation of two sovereign states. In addition, security should be provided through Turkey’s undiminished role as guarantor power with the right to intervene and the right of stationing Turkish troops permanently on the island. According to a survey carried out by the Eastern Mediterranean University of Famagusta in 1999, 74 percent of the population in the North considered the Treaty of Guarantee

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p. 57

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* p. 58

⁶⁷ See Anastasiou 2002; Faustmann 2004, p. 52f

providing Turkey with the right to intervene to be an absolute necessity for a solution⁶⁸.

With the “quiet revolution” in the North in 2002/2003 the fear of a repetition of atrocities committed by Greek Cypriots against Turkish Cypriots lost ground. After the policy changes in Turkey, the new political majority of the Turkish Cypriots dropped the sovereignty demand completely. The result of the referendum showed, that two-thirds of Turkish Cypriots felt comfortable with the security the Annan Plan provided for in political, economic and military terms. Consequently, the Turkish Cypriots do not ask for any changes in the Annan Plan regarding its security provisions. Still, the threat perceptions among Turkish Cypriots differ widely and influence their opinion on the security-related changes that the Greek Cypriots are demanding.

According to a poll conducted in May 2005, 54.4 percent of the Turkish Cypriots find the specific security provisions of the Annan Plan acceptable, while 41.8 percent reject them⁶⁹. In 2004, 35 percent of the population of North Cyprus voted against the Annan Plan, as their then President Rauf Denktash had asked them to do. One factor that led to their rejection was the perception of a general and a military threat: “Greece and the Greek Cypriots didn’t shy away from attacking in 1974. The Greek Cypriots have not changed. Only the Turkish army provides for security“, states Tahsin Ertugruluglu⁷⁰, former Foreign Minister of the TRNC and leading politician of the UDP nationalist party, which was the biggest governmental party until 2003. The UDP is now the biggest opposition party having received 31.7 percent of the votes in the elections for the parliament in February 2005. In its campaign the party claimed that the provisions of the Annan Plan including the removal of the vast majority of Turkish troops “would have left the Turkish Cypriots totally at the mercy of the Greek Cypriots”⁷¹.

Even pro-solution politicians take the security worries in the Turkish Cypriot community into account, or at least use them as an argument. Mehmet Ali Talat, who was elected President of the TRNC in April 2005, for example says: “I myself am certain that Greek Cypriots won’t plan to attack Turkish Cypriots. But a big part of our community does not think like me”. Talat acknowledges that the 650 Turkish soldiers, who according to the

⁶⁸ quoted in: Fatma Güven-Lisaniler, Leopoldo Rodriguez: The social and economic impact of EU membership on Northern Cyprus; in: Diez 2002, p. 186

⁶⁹ Lordos, June 2005, p. 56

⁷⁰ Tahsin Ertugruluglu, interview with the author, Nicosia . 4 February 2005

⁷¹ Ibid.

Annan Plan would stay in Cyprus in the end, are more a “psychological satisfaction” than a security guaranty⁷². The inter-communal clashes, he notes, were not prevented in 1963–1974 despite the fact that there were some Turkish, and later even UN, troops on the island at that time. To him the guarantor power status of Turkey has a very “sentimental aspect”, something that applies both to the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots – so, as Talat says, it is a “pride” issue for both.

Serdar Denktash, the current Foreign Minister of the TRNC and son of the former President Rauf Denktash, can imagine even less than 650 Turkish troops staying in Cyprus. But he says: “You can’t shatter peoples’ current beliefs”⁷³, referring to the positive perceptions Turkish Cypriots have according to him in regard to Turkish troops and the so-called intervention rights of Turkey.

Mustafa Akinci, the leader of the pro-solution party “Peace and Democracy Movement”, whose party gained 5,8 percent of the votes at the last elections in February of 2005, also acknowledges the fact that there is some “fear” among the Turkish Cypriot community: “For the man in the street the Turkish army means security”⁷⁴. He “personally can’t imagine that the intervention rights of the guarantor powers and the 950 Greek and 650 Turkish soldiers will be necessary in 20 years time. As Turkey gets closer to the EU I can’t think of any scenario that would make a military intervention conceivable”.

The grassroots movement consisting of the business organisations, the unions and the left-wing parties can be seen as pivotal for the “conversion of minds” in Northern Cyprus. However, after the election of former opposition leader Mehmet Ali Talat as Prime Minister in early 2004 and as President in April 2005, the mass movement lost much of its momentum. It is still active as a pressure group – more behind the scenes than on the streets. Many organisations of professionals as well as unions and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce joined forces in the “North Civil Initiative” demanding a more pro active pro-solution policy from the new government⁷⁵ without demanding

⁷² Mehmet Ali Talat, Interview with the author, Nicosia, 4 February 2005

⁷³ Serdar Denktash, Foreign Minister of the TRNC and leader of the Turkish Cypriot “Democratic Party”, interview with the author, Nicosia, 3.2.05. His party did not speak out in favour of the Annan Plan last year and received 13 percent of the votes in February 2005.

⁷⁴ Mustafa Akinci, interview with the author, 3 February 2005. Further quotes of his in this chapter are from this interview.

⁷⁵ See for example “North Civil Initiative”: Letter to the UN General-Secretary, 7 January 2005, in the possession of the author.

further compromises on the issue of guaranteeship and of remaining Turkish soldiers on the island. As Mustafa Damdelen, spokesman of the “North Civil Initiative” and vice-president of the “Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce” pointed out: “There are also security worries among the ‘Yes’ voters at the referendum. The guaranteeship should carry on until there is more trust between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots.”⁷⁶ The 75 percent of Greek Cypriots who voted against the Annan Plan, he believes, have strengthened the chauvinism in the North.

Damdelen and Akinci support the idea of postponing, for a few years, a decision on these two thorny issues. When the time is right, Akinci suggests to let both the Turkish Cypriots decide in a referendum if they think Turkish troops are still necessary, and the Greek Cypriots, if they think Greek troops still to be necessary. At a later date, a referendum could also be held on the topic of the intervention rights.

The idea of having EU-troops instead of Turkish and Greek soldiers on the island is not supported by any leader of the political parties of the Turkish Cypriots. Their arguments are that the EU has no common army anyway, that the EU is not impartial because of the Greek Cypriots’ membership, and that only the Turkish army has the trust of the Turkish Cypriots⁷⁷.

A recent survey among Turkish Cypriots confirms that not just the politicians but the population itself has strong beliefs on the issue of Turkish presence on the island. A total demilitarisation of Cyprus, i.e. a removal of the small force of 650 Turkish and 950 Greek soldiers from the island, when Turkey joins the EU, is “totally unacceptable” to 49 percent of the Turkish Cypriots, “tolerable, if necessary” to a further 14 percent and considered a “helpful” or “essential improvement” to only 28 percent⁷⁸. The Turkish army in Cyprus is not viewed as an “aggressor”, as the Greek Cypriots tend to think, but as “protectors”. More than three in five Turkish Cypriots “totally” (56.7 %) or “partly” (22.4 %) agree with the statement: “The Turkish army is here to protect us”⁷⁹.

⁷⁶ Mustafa Damdelen, Spokesman of the “North Civil Initiative” and vice president of the “Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce”, Interview with the author, Nicosia 3 February 2005

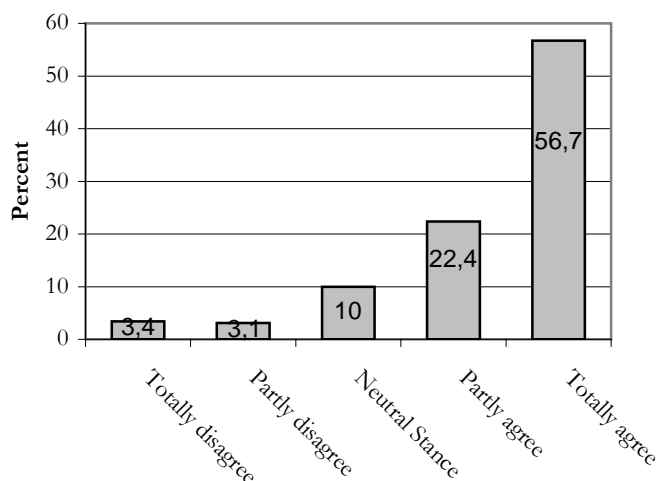
⁷⁷ For example: Serdar Denktash and similarly Mehmet Ali Talat

⁷⁸ Lordos February 2005, p. 18

⁷⁹ *ibid.*, p. 12

Turkish Cypriots view on the presence of the Turkish Army

“The Turkish Army is here to protect us”



Alexandros Lordos: *Civil Society Diplomacy*, 2005, p. 12

No recent survey has been carried out on the Turkish Cypriots' view concerning the status of the guarantor powers and their right to intervene in very specific circumstances. Greek Cypriot political analyst, Alexandros Lordos, assumes – probably rightly: “We know of course that the Turkish Cypriots would never accept that Turkey should not have the right to intervene under any circumstances.”⁸⁰ But only 34 percent oppose the limitation of such a right to the Turkish Cypriot constituent state “totally”, while another 34 percent views such as limitation as an “absolutely essential “ or “helpful improvement” of the Annan Plan⁸¹.

The Turkish Cypriot public seems to have a very favourable view with respect to a “Cypriot-European security system” – contrary to the opinion of their leaders. In a recent poll 56.3 percent accepted a Cypriot-European security force – a force under a European commander with soldiers from various European countries including Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots – instead of soldiers from Greece and Turkey. Turkey’s right to protect Turkish Cypriots should the European Security

⁸⁰ Lordos February 2005, p. 22

⁸¹ *ibid.*

system fail, however, would remain. Only 36.1 percent rejected this form of security⁸².

2. Turkish Cypriots' view on the Greek Cypriots' demands for changes in the security provisions of the Annan Plan

Despite the fact that Turkish Cypriot President Talat has repeatedly stated his desire for a new round of negotiations on the Annan Plan, he has not made any public comment about any further concessions he would be prepared to make that would help to change the majority view of the Greek Cypriots. In his recent talks with the UN Under-Secretary-General Sir Kieran Prendergast he asked for a clear and final list of demands to be put forward by the Greek Cypriot side and, according to Prendergast, called the Greek Cypriots demands “outside of the parameters of the UN plan and unacceptable to the Turkish Cypriot public”⁸³.

What concerns the security-related demands of the Greek Cypriots, Talat had already made his point clear some months ago in a newspaper interview. He called the permanent stationing of 650 Turkish soldiers and the guarantor powers' rights of Turkey issues that “should not be touched, because that would mean to overstep the red line”⁸⁴ of the Turkish Cypriots. Reportedly Turkey expressed the same opinion. All major Turkish Cypriot parties and, according to Talat, “95 percent of the population support the Annan Plan provisions” with respect to the stationing of Turkish soldiers and the guarantor powers' rights of Turkey. However, at the same time, Talat said that it might be possible to find a “golden line” in respect to these security issues, thus signalling his openness for debate.

VI. Assessment of threat perceptions of Greek and Turkish Cypriots and possible compromises

1. Assessment of threat perceptions

According to the politicians of the Greek Cypriot “No” camp at the referendum, Turkey's troops in Cyprus constitute a big threat to the Greek Cypriots. The underlying attitudes of Greek Cypriots show a strong nationalist prejudice. Three in five Greek

⁸² Lordos, June 2005, p. 58

⁸³ *Sir Kieran Prendergast UN USG's Briefing to Security Council*, 22.6.05

⁸⁴ Mehmet Ali Talat, Interview in “*Politis*”, 6 February 2005. Following quotes in this paragraph are also from this source.

Cypriots “totally” or “partly” agree with the sentence: “I could never trust a Turk”⁸⁵. Behind these attitudes lies a perception of history, where most Greek Cypriots see themselves as victims of an outside aggression and tend to forget inter-communal strife that was initiated and fuelled by Greek Cypriots at least from 1963 onwards. They also tend to forget that without the coup against Makarios in Cyprus, orchestrated by the military junta in Athens and executed with the help of Greek Cypriot right-wing extremists fighting for the unification with Greece, the Turkish intervention in 1974 would not have taken place.

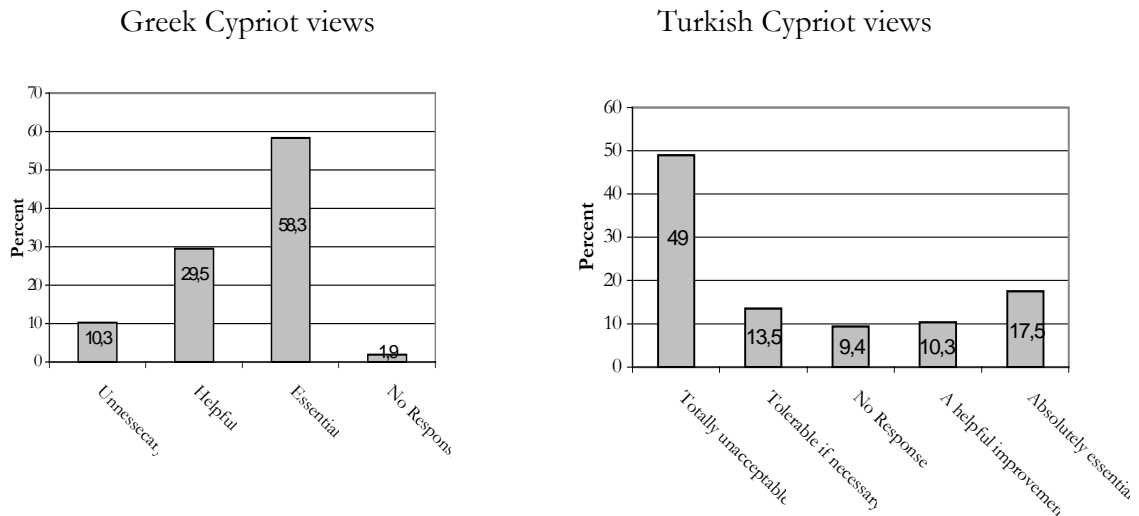
Although it is partly understandable that many Greek Cypriots extrapolate their perceived historical experiences into the future, the conclusions they have drawn are more than questionable.

The 650 Turkish (and 950 Greek) soldiers that will remain on the island after a transitional period of 14 years according to the Annan Plan cannot be seen as a major security threat, especially if one considers that Turkey is only 60 miles away anyway. This remaining symbolic force would not “pose any serious threat to the security of the Greek Cypriots”, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the British Parliament rightly concludes in a report.⁸⁶ In any case, the removal of up to 29 000 Turkish troops within three years, and of a further 3000 within three more years seems to be much more important in enhancing the security of the Greek Cypriots – if one assumes that they pose a threat.

⁸⁵ Lordos February 2005; p. 11. Only 18.8 percent “totally disagree”.

⁸⁶ House of Commons (Great Britain) Foreign Affairs Committee 2005, footnote 16, §189

Total withdrawal of Turkish and Greek troops from Cyprus



Alexandros Lordos: Civil Society Diplomacy, 2005, p. 18

The second main worry of many Greek Cypriots and the “No” camp is the fact that the Treaty of Guarantee and with it the status of the guarantor powers Greece, Turkey and Britain would remain in place. They once again fear a legal base for military intervention by Turkey. But the likelihood of such a scenario to happen is very remote. The political circumstances have changed completely compared to the time between 1963 and 1974. There is no political force among the Greek Cypriots that is still fighting for unification with Greece – neither politically nor by force. Now, Greece has a stable democracy where a military junta used to be in power. So, a coup d’état in Cyprus – the necessary precondition for the Turkish intervention and invasion in 1974 and the only realistically imaginable political condition for any Turkish intervention in the future – is a highly unlikely perspective.⁸⁷

Relations between Greece and Turkey have improved significantly. The Republic of Cyprus is a member of the EU and Turkey is striving for membership. Even if Turkey’s accession course to the EU falters (be it because the EU does not want

⁸⁷ Faustmann 2004, p. 66 comes to the same conclusion: “As long as the Greek Cypriots take no drastic and unconstitutional measures to change the state of affairs established by the Annan Plan, a military intervention by Turkey in an EU member state is such an unrealistic scenario that the Treaty of Guarantee can be considered an acceptable risk”.

Turkey as a member, be it because Turkey does not want to be a member of the EU any more) Turkey will remain very much orientated towards and dependent on the EU in terms of economy and political activity – even in the status of a “privileged partner”. One of the leading Greek experts on international relations, Theodore Couloumbis expects “the most likely scenario to be that Turkey remains a benign state”⁸⁸ Thus the so-called intervention rights seem “in practice ...quite meaningless” as the British House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee concluded.⁸⁹

The remaining 650 Turkish and 950 Greek soldiers and the guarantor powers’ intervention rights are actually “issues of symbolism” (Couloumbis), the threat scenarios assumed by the Greek Cypriot government and a majority of the Greek Cypriot community exaggerated. There is also a lack of knowledge about Turkish Cypriots’ opinions. The Greek Cypriots do not know or the Greek Cypriot governing parties deliberately overlook the fact that, for example, 49 percent of Turkish Cypriots are against a total withdrawal of Turkish troops from the island and are in favour of maintaining the guarantor powers’ rights of Turkey.⁹⁰ Likewise, the 180 degree policy change of the Turkish government in respect to the Cyprus conflict – from demanding the recognition of the sovereignty of the Turkish Cypriot state to supporting a United Cyprus as foreseen in the Annan Plan — is widely denied. AKEL leader Christofias, the main coalition partner of President Papadopoulos, for example, calls the position of Turkey “unchanged”.⁹¹

Before the referendum, Greek Cypriots hotly debated the security provisions of the Annan Plan. The fears voiced by President Papadopoulos and the “No” camp as a whole were openly criticised as “exaggerated” by the “Yes” camp and even by parts of AKEL. Unfortunately, this debate has ceased today, because the opposition parties just like the government are now demanding the total withdrawal of Turkish and Greek troops and the abolition of the guarantor powers’ rights, too. Even the very small part of civil society that usually challenges nationalistic

⁸⁸ Prof. Theodore Couloumbis, member of Greece “National Council for Foreign Affairs”, director general of the “Hellenistic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy”, an Athens-based think tank. Interview with the author, Athens, 7 February 2005.

⁸⁹ House of Commons (Great Britain) Foreign Affairs Committee 2005, footnote 16, §193

⁹⁰ The survey findings of Lordos, February 2005 were not mentioned in the Greek Cypriot press.

⁹¹ Dimitri Christofias, quoted in AKEL’s newspaper “Haravgi”, 3 February 2005, p.11.

views among the Greek Cypriot community, is in favour of a total demilitarisation of the island and the abolishment of the intervention rights of the guarantor powers.⁹²

The effect of this unanimity is that the underlying exaggerated fears and anti-Turkish prejudices are hardly challenged any more in the public discourse. This is worrying, as “security” is a very emotional term, especially after the violence the members of the two communities had to endure by the other community or the Turkish troops in the past. The term “security” is useful in stirring up emotions, but less useful for a rational debate. To achieve mutual understanding and find a solution, the Greek analyst Theodore Coulombis rightly proposes a different approach: “The whole idea should be, not to think in military terms”.⁹³

The perception of the threat posed by the Greek Cypriots has changed dramatically among the Turkish Cypriot community. This is proven by the election results with Talat succeeding Rauf Denktash as President and by the 65 percent “Yes” votes in the referendum. However, security worries and a widespread disapproval of further compromises concerning the stationing of 650 Turkish soldiers and the “intervention rights” of Turkey still remain. In a kind of reciprocity to the exaggerated fears of Greek Cypriots, the value of these military tools in providing security seems to be similarly overestimated. If they are mainly of symbolic value, as for example, the new President Mehmet Ali Talat concedes, then in reality Turkish Cypriots would not be worse off without them. Interestingly enough, Talat and other politicians distinguish between their personal view – that atrocities of Greek Cypriots against Turkish Cypriots as happened in the 1960s would not happen again – and what they see as the prevailing belief of the Turkish Cypriots. At least until now they have not tried to challenge this belief. Talat even overestimates the amount of Turkish Cypriots who are against a total withdrawal of Turkish troops. They are not 95 percent as he assumes⁹⁴, but 49 percent according to a recent study⁹⁵ – although this still is a high percentage.

⁹² See Prof. Maria Chatsipablou, long-time activist in bi-communal peace initiatives, interview with the author Nicosia, 5 February 2005

⁹³ Coloumbis in the interview with the author. See also: Thomas Diez 2002 p. 142: “An agreement has to be ‘secured’ through desecuritisation, i.e. through a major shift in the representations of the conflict from the realm of security to the realm of ‘normal political debate’”.

⁹⁴ Talat, interview with the author 4 February 2005

⁹⁵ Lordos February 2005, p. 18

Nevertheless it is obvious that Greek Cypriots' main demands on the security provisions of the Annan Plan – withdrawal of all Turkish and Greek troops, abolition of the guarantor powers' intervention rights – contradict the perceived interests of the majority of the Turkish Cypriots in a core issue. Surely the position of the Turkish Cypriot parties and civil society representatives in regard to these provisions are not only influenced by the consideration, what they think best for the Turkish Cypriot community. They also take into account what they think is “bearable” for Turkey, i.e. what the perceived balance of power in Turkey allows them to demand.

In Turkey, the fate of the Turkish Cypriots is still seen as a “national cause”. The perception of how to best deal with this cause, however, has changed considerably with Prime Minister Erdogan. He thinks a unification of Cyprus with secured rights for the Turkish Cypriots and their constituent state as envisioned in the Annan Plan to be in the best interest of Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots. He succeeded in overcoming opposing and sceptical views in Turkey and managed to force the still mighty, but no longer almighty military into line. Nevertheless, it seems that further concessions might disturb the delicate balance, especially because the Turkish military is currently reluctant to lose the right to station even a small contingent of troops on Cyprus and to denounce the guarantor powers' right for an intervention to restore the constitutional order.⁹⁶ Even a withdrawal in part of a few thousand Turkish troops as a kind of “gesture of goodwill” is currently ruled out by the chief of the Turkish general staff, General Hilmi Ozkok.⁹⁷

More important, not only by Turkish but also by many Turkish Cypriot politicians, these security issues are seen as bargaining chips in the negotiations with the Greek Cypriots and, possibly, for the accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU. Talat, for example, rules out any further concessions such as the reduction of Turkish troops to the Greek Cypriots as this “would only have a negative effect” in so far as it would strengthen the belief of Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos that the Greek Cypriots can get what they want without giving the Turkish Cypriots anything in exchange.⁹⁸ Although Talat's assumption cannot be neglected out of hand, a reduction of Turkish troops even prior to a settlement could have an opposite effect. As a goodwill gesture it could help to alleviate the fears of

⁹⁶ Several Turkish Cypriot politicians expressed this view in interviews with the author.

⁹⁷ “International Herald Tribune” and “Cyprus Mail”, 21 April 2005

⁹⁸ Mehmet Ali Talat, interview with the author.

Greek Cypriots and strengthen the more reconciliatory part of the Greek Cypriot community. In any case, such a reduction would not harm the security interests of the Turkish Cypriots.

2. Room for compromises in regard to security

There is some room for compromise as interviews and surveys show, if the political will is there.

- A **quicker reduction of Turkish troops** than foreseen in the Annan Plan (time frame of three years to reduce the currently up to 35 000 to 6000 Turkish soldiers, then time frame of seven years to scale them down to 30000 seems to be possible to agree on. Agreement could even be found for a further reduction to less than 3000 or even less than 650 Turkish soldiers after 14 years (or the EU accession of Turkey, whichever happens earlier). 76 percent of Greek Cypriots regard such a quicker withdrawal an “essential” improvement of the Annan Plan.⁹⁹ Although 44 percent of Turkish Cypriots call a quicker withdrawal of Turkish troops “totally unacceptable”, only little less, namely 40 percent, find it “tolerable” or even “an improvement”.¹⁰⁰ As such a quicker and further reduction would not touch the issue of a symbolic troop presence of Turkey on the island, it seems possible that Turkish Cypriots and Turkey agree.
- A solution in the other field of contention might be **to limit the guarantor powers’ rights to the respective constituent state**. This would alleviate the fears of Greek Cypriots that Turkey could intervene in the Greek Cypriot constituent state and the Turkish Cypriot’s fear of being defenceless against a Greek Cypriot “attack” in their constituent state. The Greek Cypriots’ opposition parties would be prepared to accept such a compromise.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, it has to be taken into account that currently, as polls suggest, 61 percent of the Greek Cypriots would not be satisfied with such a limitation of the intervention rights.¹⁰² The Turkish Cypriots are evenly split on this suggestion: 34 percent judge it to be “totally unacceptable”, while another 34 percent think it to be an “absolutely essential” or a “helpful improvement” of the Annan Plan¹⁰³.

⁹⁹ Lordos (2004) p. 45f. Less, 58 percent, see a total demilitarisation as “essential”.

¹⁰⁰ Lordos February 2005, p. 17

¹⁰¹ Hasikos and Vassiliou in interviews with the author.

¹⁰² Lordos, June 2005, p.57

¹⁰³ Lordos February 2005, p. 22

- The idea to **postpone the question of total troop withdrawal and the abolishment of the guarantor** powers' rights to a decision at a later date, possibly by referenda, as proposed by the speaker of the Turkish Cypriot "North Civil Initiative" Mustafa Damdelen, should also be pursued. It would allow both communities to experience living together in a United Cyprus Republic for some time before taking the decision about these "issues of symbolism".
- A kind of **European force** – be it with integrated Turkish and Greek troops, be it with Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot soldiers – seems to be an idea that would have a high level of support from both communities, as polls show¹⁰⁴. At present, however, it seems to be a highly theoretical concept, as the important political parties AKEL and DIKO on the Greek Cypriot side and all Turkish Cypriot parties oppose such an idea. In any case, it has to be borne in mind that, according to the Annan Plan, several thousands of UN soldiers will be stationed in Cyprus to facilitate the implementation of an agreement and to keep the peace. The plan for such a UN force is not well known in Cyprus and it is often overlooked.¹⁰⁵

Whether changes proposed above are enough to mitigate the security worries of the Greek Cypriots or whether the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey are willing to compromise even further, remains to be seen. In any case, as long as both communities have exaggerated threat perceptions of "the others" – although to a different degree, it seems useful and necessary to change these perceptions. Reconciliation, the understanding of "the other" and of the current situation that Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, the EU and the world are faced with, could help to defuse security worries and both parties' reliance on military means for security.

Neither the stationing of 650 Turkish and 950 Greek soldiers at the end of a process during which the up to 35 000 Turkish troops are removed nor the total removal of these troops would make any real difference to the security of the Greek or Turkish Cypriots. Likewise, the so-called intervention rights of the guarantor powers or the abolition of these rights would have no

¹⁰⁴ The survey by Lordos, June 2005 p. 58 shows that 47 percent of the Greek Cypriots and 56 percent of the Turkish Cypriots would accept a "Cypriot-European security system" like the one Lordos has designed in his questionnaire.

¹⁰⁵ Even Lordos did not mention it in his questionnaire, although it is an integrated part of the security provisions of the Annan Plan. See Lordos, June 2005, p. 55f.

effect on the security of the communities: They are mainly matters of symbolism. Unfortunately, symbolism is important for people and politicians. Currently, any of the two sides seems to find it very difficult to abandon their convictions although this would certainly be the easiest way out.

VII. The role of the EU in the Cyprus conflict

1. History of EU involvement until the referenda

It was already in 1973 when Cyprus signed an association agreement with the EU. This was prior to the formal division of Cyprus, but still there were only Greek Cypriots in the administration at that time. Because of the Greek *coup d'état* in Cyprus and the following invasion of Turkey in 1974 the EU accession process of Cyprus stalled. In 1990, the formal application for membership by the Republic of Cyprus – the government of which was and is internationally accepted as the only legal government of the island – was accepted by the EU despite the fact that it does not represent the Turkish Cypriot part of the population.

Yet, Cyprus' accession process did not start, because the majority of the EU member states regarded a reunification of Cyprus a precondition for negotiations to begin. Only five years later did the EU decide that the accession process of Cyprus could begin with or without a prior solution to the Cyprus problem.¹⁰⁶ At that time Greece had already been a member of the European Union for some years, using its role in the 'club' to vigorously promote Greek Cypriot interests. In 1995, Greece agreed to give up its long-running veto against the establishment of an EU customs union with Turkey. As a 'reward', the EU Council decided to begin accession negotiations with Cyprus without prior settlement of the conflict. Nevertheless, in the following years the majority of EU member states including France and Germany still regarded the unification of Cyprus to be a precondition for an actual membership. This conditionality was gradually diluted with time. In December 1999 in Helsinki, the EU Council confirmed that Cyprus' accession could "be made without (a solution) being a precondition". In December 2002,

¹⁰⁶ See for the history of EU-Cyprus relations among others: Natalie Tocci: *EU Accession Dynamics and Conflict Resolution. Catalysing Peace or Consolidating partition in Cyprus? Aldershot 2004, p.97 f.*; *House of Commons 2004-2005, p. 33f.*

the Council finally decided to admit Cyprus to the European Union even in the absence of a settlement.

This policy change was mainly due to the Greek government's threat to veto the entire enlargement process with the eastern European countries, if Cyprus were not admitted irrespective of a settlement. In the eyes of the EU member states the enlargement towards the East was much more important than a settlement in Cyprus. Any derailment of this by Greece had to be avoided. An additional rationale for the EU's policy change was the "widespread assumption"¹⁰⁷ that the accession negotiations with Cyprus would have a catalytic effect on the Cyprus conflict, helping to bring about a settlement before or simultaneously with the EU accession.

The hoped for "catalytic effect" rested on the assumption that the Turkish Cypriots and their leaders' position would change because of the economic incentives a settlement and an EU accession of a joint Cyprus would have for the small poverty-stricken area of Northern Cyprus.¹⁰⁸ A second underlying assumption was that the Greek Cypriots, as often proclaimed by themselves, would be in favour of a settlement anyway, so they did not need any additional "carrots" on top of EU membership nor any "sticks".

The EU accession process certainly offered some hope for the unification of the island, but at the same time it complicated matters. In the beginning it hardened the intransigent position of the Turkish Cypriot elite for many years – including the then opposition to Denktash – and of Turkey¹⁰⁹; reason being that the Turkish Cypriots had no say in the negotiations because only the *de facto* Greek Cypriot Republic of Cyprus was the counterpart of the EU. Turkish Cypriots were only asked to join the discussions as part of the Republic of Cyprus team, not as equal partner. Under this condition, they declined to participate.

Later the EU accession process had mixed results: In the North, the perspective of EU membership as part of a united Cyprus helped to change the mindset of the Turkish Cypriots, to create a grassroots mass movement against the hard-line President Rauf Denktash and to bring the pro-solution politician Mehmet Ali Talat into power at last. The main actors of the grassroots movement, the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce and the Turkish Cypriot Unions had actively participated in EU-sponsored bi-communal projects.

¹⁰⁷ *Thomas Diez* 2002, p.139

¹⁰⁸ *Natalie Tocci* 2004, p.95 f

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.* p. 145-148

At the same time, Turkey's own accession process to the EU became more credible and realistic: Turkey was accepted as a candidate for EU membership at the EU summit in 1999, the decision on the date of the beginning of accession negotiations was scheduled for December 2004. Thus sufficient incentives were generated for Turkey, one of the key players in the Cyprus conflict, to change its policy and strongly support a settlement for Cyprus.¹¹⁰

Yet on the Greek Cypriots' side, the fact that an EU membership of Cyprus was imminent did have negative effects on their preparedness to accept the Annan Plan. If the EU membership had been tied to a prior unification of Cyprus, the referendum result on the Greek Cypriots' side would probably have been different.

With the Greek Cypriots' rejection of the Annan Plan in April 2004, the "catalytic effect" of Cyprus' EU accession process did not work out as hoped for. The EU Commissioner Günter Verheugen commented on the Greek Cypriots' President Papadopoulos' stand that led to the "No" vote: "I feel cheated by the Greek Cypriot government... Under no circumstances was a resolution to the conflict to fall as a result of opposition from the Greek Cypriot authorities".¹¹¹

However, it was not only and not mainly a problem of "cheating". There have been flaws in the EU policy concerning the Cyprus EU accession from the beginning. Firstly, the EU has never been an impartial outside actor. With Greece as EU member supporting the Greek Cypriots, the balance was tilted. And with accepting the Republic of Cyprus as a membership candidate merely represented by the Greek Cypriots, "the Union as a whole has taken sides with a particular party in the conflict".¹¹²

Secondly, the EU policy overlooked that among Greek Cypriots in the 1990s "nationalist positions were on the rise".¹¹³ It also overestimated the Greek Cypriots' willingness to compromise. In 1993, the Greek Cypriots ousted the more conciliatory President Georgos Vassiliou and voted Glafkos Cleridis into office. In 1998, they again voted for Glafkos Cleridis, who at that time, on a nationalistic ticket, was fighting for the stationing of new missiles in the Greek Cypriot South. Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots, but also most EU member states, the UN and the United States perceived this planned military build-

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 172

¹¹¹ Günter Verheugen, EU Parliament, 21 April 2005

¹¹² *Thomas Diez 2002*, p.139

¹¹³ *Natalie Tocci 2004*, p.115

up as provocative and wrong.¹¹⁴ Last but not least, the EU actors consistently overlooked the main cause for Greek Cypriots' commitment to joining the EU: their belief to be able to strengthen their cause against the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey by joining the EU.¹¹⁵

Thirdly, the implementation of the "catalytic effect" strategy turned out to be rather poor.¹¹⁶ Economic "carrots" for the Turkish Cypriots were overestimated, while the political and security gains the Turkish Cypriots would have achieved with a power-sharing agreement with the Greek Cypriots in an EU secured environment were underestimated. In respect to Turkey, there was an "absence of an EU strategy" (Natalie Tocci), with which Turkey could have been convinced that it had a reasonable chance to begin accession negotiations with the EU soon. This hindered an earlier change in Turkey's Cyprus policy.¹¹⁷ What concerns the Greek Cypriots, the EU actors did not even use the limited means left to them after the EU accession of Cyprus was de-linked from a settlement. They did not influence the Greek Cypriot public and leaders by demanding a mood of compromise and warning against a maximalist approach, while at the same time they openly and repeatedly criticised the intransigence of the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, thus successfully tilting the balance among the Turkish Cypriots towards a settlement.

Unlike the UN, the EU has the potential to influence policies of states, especially if they are in an accession process, via political and economic incentives, so-called 'sticks and carrots'. In the case of Cyprus, however, this potential was not adequately tapped and added to the mediation efforts of the UN. There was "no (EU) Commission or indeed no EU strategy to catalyse a settlement in Cyprus".¹¹⁸

To a certain extent, this is due to the decision-making mechanisms of the European Union.¹¹⁹ Foreign policy of the member states remains the deciding force. Common positions in the EU are the result of several factors, mainly the definition of the different national foreign policies, which again are influenced by internal policy considerations, and inter-state bargaining with

¹¹⁴ In the end because of pressure exercised by the USA and the EU, Cleridis retracted and the missiles were not based in Cyprus but in Crete.

¹¹⁵ *Natalie Tocci 2004, p.115*

¹¹⁶ See *ibid.* p. 94–119

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116. Turkey was given the official status as an EU candidate for accession by the EU Council only in December 1999, almost seven years after Cyprus' accession process was launched.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.* p.179.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 174ff

“buy-offs”, which might lead to a “median” rather than to a “lowest common denominator”.

Understandably, Greece had very strong, but one-sided views on the situation of Cyprus, while the other member states were largely disinterested in the issue - with the exception of Great Britain. And all except Greece were satisfied with the exclusive UN role in mediation. Thus a “Common Foreign and Security Policy” of the EU never materialised in Cyprus. As in many other areas, such a common policy was more rhetoric than reality.

2. Excursion: EU financing bi-communal activities in Cyprus

For many years, international bodies have been funding bi-communal collaboration and reconciliation projects in Cyprus. The programmes were mainly channelled through the “United Nations Development Programme – Office for Programme Services” (UNOPS). The US-Government as main contributor spent US \$60.5 million between 1998 and 2004 for the “Bi-Communal Development Program” (BNP) of UNOPS.¹²⁰ The EU contributed parts of the pre-accession aid that the Republic of Cyprus received until 2004 for “bi-communal” activities.¹²¹ From the year 2000 to 2003, the EU funded bi-communal activities with €14.2 million in a programme called “Partnership for the Future”. Nearly two-thirds of this money was allocated to the rehabilitation of the old city of Nicosia in co-operation with the Nicosia Master Plan, a plan for urban renovation and infrastructure modernisation on both sides of the divided capital Nicosia. The EU also paid €5 million for demining operations in the buffer zone in Cyprus.¹²² It has allocated €1 million for road works in the buffer zone, so that more crossing points can be opened.¹²³

¹²⁰ See: “Final Report: CYPRUS BI-COMMUNAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM EVALUATION“, Development Associates, Inc., Arlington USA, 2004; p. IV, http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PDABZ998.pdf (Final Report 2004). Other US sponsored programmes are the “Cyprus America Scholarship Program” implemented by the Cyprus Fulbright Commission and managed by the Department of State; and the “Bi-communal Support Program”, implemented by Amideast and managed by the Department of State (see *ibid.* p. V).

¹²¹ see: EU Delegation for Cyprus Community Aid and Programmes; http://www.delcyp.cec.eu.int/en/eu_and_cyprus/caid_prog_1.htm

¹²² See: www.undp-unops-pff.org/News.asp?CiD=31

¹²³ Cyprus Mail, 1.9.05

On top of this, the EU funded a list of measures for the northern part of Cyprus with €9 million, of which €6 million were allocated for infrastructure and rehabilitation projects and €2 million for “Support to Civil Society” and “Trade Unions” in the North.

A detailed list of the projects supported by EU moneys is not available. An evaluation of these projects has not been made or at least not been made public yet. However, there is a very detailed evaluation of the US-funded bi-communal activities in Cyprus that can be used to draw some conclusions in regard to bi-communal programmes in Cyprus in general.¹²⁴

It would be too easy to conclude from the negative outcome of the unification process in 2004 that bi-communal collaboration and reconciliation efforts failed to achieve their purpose. It is true, however, that the results of the referenda show a mixed picture. The EU programme, either directly or indirectly, brought together people from both sides of the divide that otherwise would not have come together. It supported NGOs, despite the fact that probably, as with the “Bi-Communal Development Program” as a whole¹²⁵, only a small part of the NGO activities sponsored took place in the field of peace or mediation.

Among the Turkish Cypriots the support of bi-communal activities obviously helped to overcome nationalistic and anti-EU attitudes and to open the way for a change of political leaders and mindsets. The main actors of the grassroots movement, the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce and the Turkish Cypriot Unions actively participated in these programmes.

In the North and in the South, EU projects improved living conditions by supporting the restoration of old buildings and by creating pedestrian zones. They spread knowledge for future businesses by establishing teaching Courses for English, German and Greek, by giving information about the EU *acquis communautaire* and even by providing funding for cooking courses for Turkish Cypriot cooks and chefs.¹²⁶ A drawback of a lot of these projects was that they did not really bring Greek and Turkish Cypriots together. Many were targeted at only one

¹²⁴ “Final Report” 2004

¹²⁵ The US evaluation concludes that in 2002/3 only 11 percent of the NGO side of the “Bi-Communal Development Program” was related to peace and mediation efforts, while 30 percent went to health and 19 percent to environmental issues. See: “Final Report” 2004, footnote 65, p. 41. In a whole according to this evaluation 35 to 45 percent of the funded NGO activities “had little or no bi-communal achievement”, *ibid.* p. 42.

¹²⁶ Training course on Culinary Art and Oenology (Dome Hotel, Girne, 27 October–7 November 2003). See a list of some projects funded by the EU: <http://www.undp-unops-pff.org/News.asp?CID=102>

community, even if there were parallel projects in the other community. The pedestrian zones in both sides of the Green Line in Nicosia, for example, were planned and built by the respective communities. Only this May did the two municipalities of Nicosia launch their first jointly-run project: an information centre about the Nicosia Master Plan, 26 years after the dialogue between the mayors of the two parts of Nicosia about this plan had begun.

One of the reasons of this limited success is due to the restrictive political environment that had been very hostile to bi-communal projects for a long time. In late 1997, the Turkish Cypriot President Denktash banned bi-communal meetings and activities making it for Turkish Cypriots very difficult or even impossible to take part. Only in April 2003, when the Green Line was opened by the Turkish Cypriot administration, could bi-communal meetings take place unhindered by formal restrictions.

In the Greek Cypriot community, the willingness to participate in bi-communal programmes was also limited. A few years ago, Greek Cypriots taking part in bi-communal NGO activities were often labelled “traitors”. The Greek Cypriot Government did not promote bi-communal activities. It has opposed and/or boycotted them until today, whenever officials from the Turkish Cypriot administration have been involved. Otherwise, allegedly, the TRNC would be politically upgraded and their unwanted recognition supported.¹²⁷ Thus bi-communal activities that needed Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot officials’ participation to be of use were nearly impossible to organise.

The evaluation of the “Bi-Communal Development Program” by the USA, concluded in the spring of 2004, states: “Promoting bi-communalism in Cyprus is a political minefield on both sides of the Green Line”.¹²⁸ Although this has changed in the Turkish Cypriot North, among the Greek Cypriots the reputation of bi-communal projects suffered badly after the referendum in April 2004. They were portrayed as part of the “interference of foreigners” who “bribed” Greek Cypriots to support the Annan Plan.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, the EU has some

¹²⁷ In October 2004, for example, the Greek Cypriot Government forbid its officials to take part in a seminar of the “Deutsch-Zyprisches Forum” about “Sustainability for Cyprus” because Turkish Cypriot officials were also invited to speak in their private capacity as experts. See “Cyprus Mail”: German group blasts government for blocking bi-communal initiative, 29 October 2005

¹²⁸ CYPRUS BI-COMMUNAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM EVALUATION, 2004, p. 9.

¹²⁹ See: Questions of a Greek Cypriot journalist at an US State Department briefing: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2004/37502.htm>

previous experience in financing bi-communal activities that it can build on.

3. The EU after the rejection of the Annan-Plan

The European Parliament had adopted a resolution calling the Annan Plan a “historic compromise” and asking the citizens of Cyprus “to seize this historic opportunity to reunify their country”.¹³⁰ Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for the “Common Foreign and Security Policy” had called the plan “the fairest possible compromise for all Cypriots”.¹³¹ After the Greek Cypriots’ rejection of the Annan Plan, both the EU Commission, the EU Council of Foreign Ministers as well as the Speaker of the European Parliament expressed their “deep regret” about this outcome.¹³² On 26 April 2004, the EU Council of Foreign Ministers declared its determination “to put an end to the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community and to facilitate the reunification of Cyprus by encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community”.¹³³ The Council also approved a regulation establishing rules for the crossing of EU citizens across the “Green Line”.¹³⁴ All this was decided upon before 1 May 2004, that is before the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the EU – a clever move, since until then the Greek Cypriot government had threatened anybody with prosecution who entered Cyprus via the North and then went to the South, because this allegedly was an “illegal point of entry”.

In legal terms, the whole of Cyprus is considered to be territory belonging to the EU after 1 May 2004, but the EU legislation is suspended in the North. The Greek Cypriots as the internationally recognised representatives of the whole of Cyprus, who as a matter of fact only represent themselves, have a voice and seat in all the EU institutions, while the Turkish Cypriots, who had voted for unification and EU membership, remain outside. In the European Parliament, for example, the Greek Cypriots decided to occupy all six seats meant for Cyprus even though two were actually intended for Turkish Cypriots. But

¹³⁰ <http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade2?PUBREF=//EP//TEXT+TA+P5-TA-2004-0347+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&LEVEL=2&NAV=X>

¹³¹ Javier Solana : “*A European Solution For Cyprus*”, in: Turkish Newspaper “Zaman”, 21 April 2004

¹³² See EU-Commission News, 30.4.04, http://www.euro-info.org.uk/enlargement/home.php?page_id=6&item_id=48

¹³³ 26 April 2004, http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/80142.pdf

¹³⁴ 29 April 2004, http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/80112.pdf

much more important is the seat of the Greek Cypriots' government in the European Council, where Cyprus, as any other member, can influence and even block decisions, if their adoption requires a unanimous vote.

As before the EU accession of Cyprus, the Cyprus conflict is still not very high on the agenda of most EU states. What is different now than before the EU accession is that the Cyprus conflict is no longer only a problem of EU enlargement and foreign policy, but a problem of internal and foreign policy. This adds a new dimension to the problem of EU activities as the EU usually does not get involved in internal matters of member states. Anyway, the EU has hardly no economic leverage, economic 'sticks and/or carrots' in place for dealing with any member state.

The treatment of the Greek Cypriots by the EU institutions and the other member states is embedded in 'business as usual' of the EU's decision-making. For example, to antagonise the Greek Cypriot Government implies the risk of a Greek Cypriot veto concerning the EU accession course of Turkey. Although some governments might want to hide behind the Greek Cypriots, other states did not want Greek Cypriot objections to block the EU course of Turkey, at least until recently. An additional aspect of EU decision-making is that everybody tries to avoid confrontation with another member state in regard to issues very close to the heart of this particular member state. Especially small EU states are afraid of breaking the 'small states solidarity', because they do not want to set any precedence that might work against their own interests in a similar case in the future.

In the EU Council of Ministers, the most important decision-making body in the EU, the Greek Cypriot government's influence is very high because many decisions require unanimity for adoption. The EU Commission is less limited in its activities by institutional règlement. It has remodelled the former Cyprus unit in the Directorate-General for Enlargement to a "Task Force Turkish Cypriot Community". The Enlargement commissioner Olli Rehn appointed a special adviser for the Cyprus conflict, the Finnish diplomat Jaako Bloomberg in early 2005. He had his first exploratory talks in Cyprus in late June 2005.

3.1 Efforts to end the economic isolation of the Turkish Cypriots

Based on the Council's decision of April 2004, the EU Commission and the Council have concentrated on ending the economic isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. While the Green Line

Regulation has been adopted, the regulations about Financial Aid to the Turkish Cypriots and for Direct Trade between the northern part of Cyprus and the EU prepared by the Commission are still in limbo and have not yet been adopted by the Council.

Green Line regulation

The “Green Line” regulation was amended twice. It now allows every EU citizen who crosses the “Green Line”, to take goods worth €135 across the Green Line without having to pay any customs duties. In regard to trade, a limited list of products is allowed to be exported from the North to the South. It only includes products, which originate entirely in Northern Cyprus, such as agricultural products and furniture.

The value of goods traded across the line under this regulation remains disappointingly low – around €100 000 per month¹³⁵, which equals a good day’s sale of a big supermarket. A lot of barriers with respect to the free movement of goods remain. Goods imported from Turkey or other countries to northern Cyprus are still not allowed to cross the Green Line, because of the Greek Cypriot view that they have been imported through an “illegal port”.

The Greek Cypriot administration is also very imaginative in creating hurdles for Turkish Cypriots. It does not allow buses and trucks from the North to circulate freely in the South. Nor does it accept driving licenses of bus and truck drivers from the North. The integration of the mobile telephone communication between the Cypriot communities using a neutral local code was blocked by the Greek Cypriot government¹³⁶. On the other side, to protect their economy, the Turkish Cypriot administration does not allow mass products from the South to be traded freely in the North even though this regulation has recently been relaxed.

EU Financial Aid for Turkish Cypriots

The EU Commission proposed a regulation on **financial aid** to the Turkish Cypriots already in 2004, but this regulation has not yet been adopted by the Council. Its monetary scope of €259

¹³⁵ See: Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Cyprus International Conference Centre, 13 May 2005, Speech: "Cyprus: one year after accession";

<http://www.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/278&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

¹³⁶ Cyprus Mail 1 March 2005. The EU Ambassador to Cyprus tried in vain to facilitate a roaming agreement that would allow Cypriots to communicate across the island without the need to make international-rate calls.

million for the three-year period of 2004–2006 had already been set aside in 2002 as aid to Northern Cyprus on its pre-accession course. According to the draft by the EU Commission, the money is to be spent in the North with “particular emphasis on alignment with EU legislation and policies, reconciliation and confidence-building measures, social and economic development, development of infrastructure and people to people contacts”.¹³⁷ As far as the planning in the EU Commission goes, the bulk of the money will be allocated for a modernisation of the electricity and the water systems in Northern Cyprus. Some is allocated for incentives for small enterprises and for unspecified reconciliation measures.

The Greek Cypriots have agreed to this “aid” regulation. However, they managed to include a provision that “property rights” in northern Cyprus would not be violated, when implementing the regulation. The exact effect of this caveat is not known. Because 80 percent of the land in northern Cyprus belonged to Greek Cypriots in 1974 it might mean that not even a single road could be widened without the consent of the Greek Cypriot land owners. Mehmet Ali Talat is worried that this condition in the aid regulation might make the entire regulation quite useless.¹³⁸

Direct Trade Regulation

The second proposal of the Commission is to facilitate **direct trade** from the northern part of Cyprus to the EU through a preferential customs regime for products originating in the North. This regulation is fiercely opposed by the Greek Cypriots.¹³⁹ While the Commission and the great majority of member states as well as the European Parliament see direct trade as a purely economic measure, necessary for improving the Turkish Cypriots’ economy, the Greek Cypriot government (and society, since there are nearly no objections to this government policy in the South) opposes it because of alleged political implications. Direct trade “would lead to the creeping or overt recognition of the secessionist entity in the North” and thus diminish the interest of

¹³⁷ Proposal for a Council Regulation establishing an instrument of financial support for encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community (COM(2004)465, later amended as COM(2004)696)

¹³⁸ Mehmet Ali Talat, interview with the author.

¹³⁹ All Greek Cypriot political parties oppose direct trade and direct flights to Northern Cyprus. See also Chapter VIII.1 of this paper.

the Turkish Cypriots in a settlement¹⁴⁰, the Greek Cypriot government claims.

Turkish Cypriots are also critical of the Direct Trade Regulation, because – as the Green Line regulation – it is supposed to cover only goods entirely produced in northern Cyprus. According to the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce, the Direct Trade Regulation will only increase exports from US \$61.5 million to US \$71.5 million a year, because northern Cyprus does not have a manufacturing economy of its own.¹⁴¹ Instead of the Direct Trade Regulation the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce demands a totally free trade¹⁴². This would include the probably most important demand of the Turkish Cypriots – in economic terms –: to allow for direct flights to northern Cyprus to attract more tourism.¹⁴³

Because of the Greek Cypriots' "No" to the trade regulation, neither the aid nor the trade regulation have yet been adopted. The Commission and the majority of member states regard them as a package intended to "end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots". After the Greek Cypriot objection, different opinions emerged between the EU member states as to whether this linkage should remain. So far Great Britain in particular insists on this linkage which is also supported by Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat. He believes that the Commission and the Council would lose interest in the Direct Trade Initiative once the Financial Aid Regulation has been adopted separately. Contrary to Talat, the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce demands the

¹⁴⁰ (Greek Cypriot) Ministry of Foreign affairs, quoted in *House of Commons 2004-2005*, p. 41

¹⁴¹ Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce, Press Statement 23 June 2005

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Until now all flights to the Turkish Cypriot part of the island have to originate in Turkey, the only country that recognises the TRNC. Thus the flight time from Central European destinations is more than one hour longer than actually necessary. According to the "Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation", as interpreted by the Greek Cypriot Republic of Cyprus, only the Republic's government has the right to declare airports "legal points of entry". Although the US and the EU member states have stated their intent to "end the isolation" of the Turkish Cypriots, no state has yet issued permits for direct flights to north Cyprus, because of the fear that such decision would contravene the Chicago Convention. And the Greek Cypriot government of the Republic of Cyprus is not in the mood for compromise. See *House of Commons 2004-2005*, p. 38-46.

The Direct Trade regulation of the EU does not touch directly the issue of the "legality" of direct flights to Northern Cyprus. But surely it's adoption would politically open up the way for other measures like direct flights.

de-coupling of the Direct Trade Regulation so that the Financial Aid Regulation can be adopted immediately.¹⁴⁴

More than one year after the EU had pledged to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, this pledge has by no means been fulfilled. While the Turkish Cypriots are disappointed of the EU's inability to overcome Greek Cypriots' objections, this situation has led to "disillusionment" and "frustration" with the Greek Cypriot Government in the EU Commission and the EU Council.¹⁴⁵

3.2 The validity of Greek Cypriots' objections

The EU Commission and the member states, except Greece and Cyprus, have declared that in their view direct trade does not imply political "recognition" of the TRNC. Mehmet Ali Talat has also repeatedly and convincingly declared that he is not seeking "recognition" as a separate state, but the unification of Cyprus.

Nevertheless, one cannot deny some degree of a political risk associated with "direct trade", as the Greek Cypriots assume. There are Turkish Cypriots who will be less inclined to opt for unification, if their economic situation improves and the international isolation is broken. After all, moving more than 50 000 Turkish Cypriots from their homes to another place in the North as required by the Annan Plan is a huge burden for the community.

However, on the other hand the Turkish Cypriots still have a lot to gain by a unified Cyprus and its EU membership. Only then would they be eligible for EU funds and could enjoy the full rights of EU citizens. Currently, for example, Turkish Cypriots can neither participate in EU programmes such as student exchanges nor in the EU parliamentary elections. Through the power-sharing agreements of a united Cyprus, they would also be able to influence the policy of the new state and EU policy as a whole. Last but not least, only a agreed settlement would put an end to the uncertainty that comes along with the current division of the island, such as in regard to property rights, title deeds and inheritance rights. Because of all these advantages, unification

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ The Greek Cypriot Government is blocking other measures as well that would put the Turkish Cypriots on an equal footing with Greek Cypriots. For example, the inclusion of Turkish Cypriots in the EU's educational programmes SOKRATES, LEONARDO and ERASMUS is not possible, because of the Greek Cypriot government's very "legalistic approach". Interview by the author of Georg Ziegler, member of the "Task Force Turkish Cypriot Community" in the Directorate-General "Enlargement" of the EU-Commission, Brussels 15 March 2005.

would probably still be an aim worthwhile to pursue for the majority of Turkish Cypriots.

Additionally, the Greek Cypriot administration should take into account, that the economy in northern Cyprus is prospering, even despite the blockade of the Direct Trade Regulation and of direct flights. According to a study conducted by Greek Cypriot economist Costas Apostolides, the GDP per person in the North more than doubled in the last two years to about US \$10 000.¹⁴⁶ Reasons for this are the money Greek Cypriots spend while visiting the North, the income of about 7000 Turkish Cypriots who work in the South but live in the North, and more tourism. Due to the expected further increase in tourism to Northern Cyprus, this positive economic trend is expected to continue. So the economic interest of Turkish Cypriots in a settlement might be decreasing anyway irrespective of the Direct Trade Regulations and other economic measures the Greek Cypriot government is obstructing.

However, political costs of Greek Cypriots actions must not be overlooked. The Greek Cypriot “No” in the referendum and their negative attitude towards free trade strengthen the feeling among Turkish Cypriots that the Greek Cypriots are not interested in the well-being of the Turkish Cypriots. This in turn could lead to a diminished political inclination among the Turkish Cypriots to unify and to compromise. This danger seems to be greater than the danger perceived by Greek Cypriots that Turkish Cypriots might lose interest in unification because of the expected economic boost after direct trade is allowed.

There are also negative impacts of the fierce opposition by Greek Cypriot leaders to direct trade on their own community. In the case of unification, the costs the Greek Cypriots would have to bear would be higher, if the economic potential of the Turkish Cypriots was not allowed to fully flourish. The negative attitude of the Greek Cypriot government toward ending the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots also strengthens a non-compromising and non-reconciliatory mood among the Greek Cypriot public. This could make it more difficult in the future to get the support of the majority to any further settlement plan.

¹⁴⁶ See Cyprus Mail, 24 May 2005: “Money pouring into the north”. The Government of Turkey published a different figure for the 2004 GDP of the Turkish Cypriots: US \$7350, (“Politis”, 2.6.05). A few years ago, it was about US €3500-4500. In the Greek Cypriot South, the GDP per person is about €15 000.

3.3 May 2005 – Towards a new, more active, role of the EU

After nearly a year of low-key policy towards the Cyprus conflict concentrating on the aid and trade regulations, the EU changed track in May 2005. During his visit to Nicosia, EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn set out a more comprehensive view of the Cyprus conflict and – together with the Luxemburg EU Presidency – tried to mediate in the specific issue of the trade regulation.

Seeking a compromise for the Direct Trade Regulation

In June 2005, for the first time ever, a representative of both the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots came together in Brussels under the aegis of the EU for informal secret talks on the Direct Trade Regulation. Although no agreement was reached, the fact of talks in the framework of the EU in itself is a remarkable development.

The discussions covered the “counter-proposals” concerning the Direct Trade Regulation which the Greek Cypriot government had made already in 2004¹⁴⁷:

- The closed and uninhabited city of Varosha should be returned to their former Greek Cypriot inhabitants. Currently, Varosha belongs to the territory of northern Cyprus. According to the Annan Plan it would fall under the authority of the Greek Cypriot constituent state.
- If it was returned, the Greek Cypriot Government would give the “authorisation of the re-opening and operation of Famagusta Port under an independent Bi-Communal Authority and supervised by the European Union”¹⁴⁸ as stated by President Papadopoulos at a later date. Currently the port belongs to the territory of the Turkish Cypriots and will remain under the authority of the future “Turkish Cypriot State” of the United Cyprus according to the Annan Plan. Today, the port operates under the sole control of the Turkish Cypriots, though it is not authorised as “legal point of entry” by the Greek Cypriot government.
- Additionally, the Greek Cypriot government has recently demanded to stop building sites on Greek Cypriot properties

¹⁴⁷ See Cyprus Mail, 17.6.05 and Politis, 17.and 22.6.05

¹⁴⁸ Tassos Papadopoulos, speaking at the *Presentation of Credentials to British High Commissioner*, Nicosia, 1 July 2005;
www.moi.gov.cy/moi/pio/pio.nsf/All/5606F22582BC8E00C2257031004ED803?OpenDocument

in the North. Last year, after the rejection of the Annan Plan by the Greek Cypriots and with money pouring into northern Cyprus, a building boom started in the North. 70 to 80 percent of the land of the current Turkish Cypriot State belonged to Greek Cypriots before 1974.

In the talks under the aegis of the EU, the Greek Cypriots reiterated their opposition to direct trade as foreseen in the Commission's proposal. The Turkish Cypriots declared their willingness to return Varosha to the Greek Cypriots under the condition that all the economic and cultural embargoes (for instance, Turkish Cypriots are not allowed to participate in any international sport tournaments) would end. This would have included acceptance of free trade of goods and people to all ports and airports in the North by the Greek Cypriots. The Greek Cypriot mediator, however, rejected the Turkish Cypriot proposal out of hand.¹⁴⁹

The Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat had already voiced his opposition to the Greek Cypriots having a say in the running of the port of Famagusta earlier: "We are ready to create a United Cyprus Republic [as envisaged in the Annan plan], but bringing Greek Cypriot authority into the North in this way is not acceptable".¹⁵⁰

The Turkish Cypriots also rejected a moratorium on Greek Cypriot properties in the North, because it would limit any development activities to about one-quarter of the territory of northern Cyprus.¹⁵¹

The stance taken by the EU in the discussions was not made public. While the Greek Cypriot government spokesman Chrysostomides praised the Luxembourg presidency for acting "tirelessly and impartially"¹⁵², the Turkish Cypriot daily newspaper "Kibris" published a quote of the deputy Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, Schmitt, who allegedly said when addressing the Greek Cypriots: "Because you are not willing to discuss anything,

¹⁴⁹ See Cyprus Mail 17 June 2005

¹⁵⁰ Mehmet Ali Talat, 3.3.05, cited in Cyprus Mail, 4 March 2005

¹⁵¹ Talat is quoted in the Turkish Cypriots daily newspaper Kibris, 19 June 2005, with the following: "If we consider that there is a proprietorship proportionate to the population in the northern part of Cyprus, if the 70-80 percent of the properties in the north are Greek Cypriot properties, then we cannot have development with the 20-25 percent. Therefore, the moratorium is out of the question for us. Furthermore, there is a very big exaggeration. ...It is true that there is a developing building sector, but there should be no irrational allegations such as the one that says that no Greek property will be left".

¹⁵² Republic of Cyprus, Press Office, "Government Spokesman –EU Regulations –Talks in Brussels", 22/06/2005

it's not worthwhile continuing the meeting".¹⁵³ After the talks, the Greek Cypriots blamed the Turkish Cypriot authorities for the failure and vice versa. While the EU kept silent about the talks themselves, EU Commissioner Rehn declared the Commissions' preparedness to play a role in the handling of the Famagusta port, if this helped make progress in regard to other areas of contention.¹⁵⁴ There might be some room for manoeuvre concerning this issue as the "Turkish Chamber of Commerce", too, suggests an administration of the northern ports by or under observation of the EU Commission.

Rehn formulates a more comprehensive approach to the Cyprus conflict

While the EU Commission and the EU Council focused, although not very successfully, on economic measures to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, hardly any other political activities towards conflict resolution and reconciliation/confidence-building measures by the EU existed. This ended with Enlargement Commissioner Rehn's visit to Cyprus in May 2005.

There, Rehn asked both sides for "willingness to compromise"¹⁵⁵ and for the resumption of the peace negotiation process "the sooner the better". The Annan Plan was characterised by him as the "framework" for a settlement, not as the "basis", thus extending rather than limiting the scope of possible changes. He also demanded that "the positions of the parties and their wishes for changes to the Annan Plan should be made clear".

Rehn repeated the principal position of the EU, namely that any negotiations should take place under UN auspices. He also expressed the willingness of the EU Commission "to support all serious and well-intended efforts for such a comprehensive settlement" and its willingness "to play a proactive role in future talks".

Furthermore, Rehn used his first visit to Cyprus to openly spell out some political assessments, although they contradict basic positions of the Greek Cypriot government and the prevailing view in the Greek Cypriot community:

- The EU membership of Cyprus itself, the EU Commissioner said, "ensures that neither inter-communal violence nor

¹⁵³ "Kıbrıs", 21 June 2005, cited in: "Politik", 22 June 2005

¹⁵⁴ Politik, 23 June 2005.

¹⁵⁵ Olli Rehn, speech on 13 May 2005. Further quotes of his in this chapter are from this speech, if not mentioned otherwise.

military intervention should occur again". Thus he de-emphasised the issue of security that plays such a prominent role in the Greek Cypriot objections to the Annan Plan.

- He countered the prevailing view among Greek Cypriots that Turkey has not changed its Cyprus policy, saying: "While the then Turkish government was mainly interested in maintaining the status quo in Cyprus, Turkey today accepts the prospect of a negotiated settlement leading to the reunification of the island".
- Rehn emphatically asked the "communities to find a way to engage in a dialogue with each other" in general and even mentioned specifically that not only economic co-operation, but also "co-operation on Justice and Home affairs is needed". By this, he implicitly criticised the unwillingness of Papadopoulos to meet his Turkish Cypriot counterpart Talat. And, as "Justice and Home affairs" are dealt with by administrations, he implicitly asked the Greek Cypriot government to no longer refuse to have any relations with the Turkish Cypriot administration.
- Rehn argued for "confidence building measures to prepare the ground for a comprehensive settlement"¹⁵⁶ in connection with the impasse on the Aid and Trade Regulations, but obviously with a wider perspective.

However, after the EU-sponsored talks about Aid and Trade had led to nothing and after the UN Secretary General had concluded in June that the time was not ripe for new negotiations, EU Commissioner Rehn seems to have backtracked. In August, in a speech mainly about the enlargement perspective of Turkey, the only thing he said in respect to the Cyprus conflict was: "I urge the UN to become active to resume talks for a solution, and all EU member states, especially the permanent members of the Security Council, to contribute to this resumption. Certainly, we expect Turkey to continue to work constructively for a settlement."¹⁵⁷

With this statement, intentionally or not, Rehn laid the responsibility for progress towards a settlement solely at the doorsteps of the UN, without even reiterating his earlier calls and demands for action to the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders and without sketching out any role for the EU. At the same time,

¹⁵⁶ Olli Rehn, press conference in Nicosia on the 12 May 2005, cited in: Cyprus Weekly, 13 May 2005

¹⁵⁷ Olli Rehn "The European Union as Global Actor?", speech to the Bucerius/Die Zeit Summer School, Hamburg, 9 August 2005. In the possession of the author.

Rehn's statement contradicts the sound assessment of the UN Secretary General that before negotiation can be given a new chance, the attitudes in Cyprus must change.¹⁵⁸ If the EU Commissioner really believes that the UN assessment is wrong, he should certainly explain his position. If the remark was made without it being thought through, it indicates the necessity to work out a clearer EU strategy in dealing with the Cyprus conflict.

EU Parliamentarians support a more active role of the EU

A more active role of the EU in the Cyprus conflict is also asked for by members of the European Parliament as interviews with MEPs have shown. More than one year after the rejection of the Annan Plan "it is time for new diplomatic activities", stated, for example, Elmar Brok, (European Peoples Party), the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament.¹⁵⁹ Brok sees the possibility of tailoring special reconciliation measures for Cyprus through existing funds of the EU. A **special fund for reconciliation** is regarded as a possible and helpful instrument by Socialist Hannes Swoboda, Liberal Andrew Duff and European United Left – Nordic Green Left MEP André Brie.¹⁶⁰

In principle the interviewed MEPs agreed that the EU should take a more active role in helping a Cyprus settlement to emerge. Apart from funding activities, proposals mentioned included a **parliamentary report** on the Cyprus question and the appointment of a **Special Envoy** by the Commission/Council. These measures, some parliamentarians argued, would politicise the EU's policy in regard to the Cyprus conflict.

4. Difficulties for an active EU role: *inter alia* the controversy about the EU membership of Turkey

Obstacles to a more active role of the EU parliament and the other EU institutions in respect to the Cyprus conflict should not be underestimated. Institutionally, the European Parliament, for example, can only act as some kind of "moral force", because it

¹⁵⁸ See Chapter III.5 of this paper.

¹⁵⁹ Elmar Brok, (European Peoples Party), chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the EP; interview with the author, Brussels 16 March 2005.

¹⁶⁰ Hannes Swoboda, Socialist Group in the EP, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Andrew Duff, Liberal, Vice-Chairman of the Delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Assembly; André Brie, European United Left – Nordic Green Left, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; interviews with the author Brussels 15.-17 March 2005.

has no jurisdiction in foreign policy matters. In the European Council unanimity is necessary in foreign policy and enlargement issues.

Politically, the Cyprus conflict as such is not high on the agenda, neither in the EU institutions nor in the member states. However, relations between the Greek Cypriot Republic of Cyprus and Turkey – certainly one important aspect of the conflict – are debated in the EU institutions intensively. Especially following the referenda on the European Constitution in France and the Netherlands, the opponents of an EU accession of Turkey are inclined to use the Cyprus-related issues to further their aim and to discredit Turkey. The recent debate about the recognition/non-recognition of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey is just one example.

In December 2004, after intense debate, the European Council decided that Turkey's signature of the "Adaptation Protocol of the Ankara Agreement" (this Protocol extends the customs union of Turkey with the 15 old EU member states also to the 10 new members including the Republic of Cyprus) is one precondition for the start of accession negotiations. The signing of the Protocol was not considered to be an explicit formal recognition of Cyprus. The then President of the EU, Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende, concluded at the press conference following the summit that "... signing the Protocol to the Ankara Agreement is not a formal, legal recognition".¹⁶¹ But it nevertheless is a step towards a normalisation of the relations between Turkey and the Greek Cypriots and, in fact, recognises that the EU has 25 members, the Republic of Cyprus as one of them.

Turkey signed the Protocol on 29 July 2005 and issued a declaration on Cyprus at the same time¹⁶² reiterating its longstanding position. In this declaration, Turkey stated that it "remains committed to finding a political settlement of the Cyprus issue" and expressed "its readiness to establish relations with the new partnership state which will emerge following a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus". Turkey also reiterated that the signature does not amount to any form of recognition of the

¹⁶¹ Cited according to Olli Rehn "The European Union as Global Actor?", speech to the Bucerius/Die Zeit Summer School, Hamburg, 9 August 2005

¹⁶² Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Press Statement No:123 - 29th July 2005: Regarding the Additional Protocol to Extend the Ankara Agreement to All EU Members (Unofficial Translation); the quotes following are from this source. http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/PressInformation/PressReleasesAndStatements/pressReleases2005/July/NO123_29July2005.htm

Republic of Cyprus – internationally recognised as covering the whole of the island – because, according to Turkey, it “is not the original partnership state established in 1960”. So “Turkey will continue to regard the Greek Cypriot authorities as exercising authority, control and jurisdiction only in the territory south of the buffer zone, as is currently the case, and as not representing the Turkish Cypriot people”.¹⁶³

After this declaration the French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin, reportedly supported by President Jack Chirac, commented that it would be “inconceivable” to start accession negotiations with Turkey without a prior formal recognition of the Republic of Cyprus¹⁶⁴, i.e. the Greek Cypriot administration as the sole representatives of the island. This line was supported by Hans Poettering, leader of the Europeans Peoples Party in the European Parliament, and the leader of the German Christian Social Union (CSU) Edmund Stoiber.¹⁶⁵

Nevertheless it is probable that in the end the EU will not be willing to breach the commitments it made in December 2004 by adding new conditions. Even though the Greek Cypriot media and the government are thrilled by the “support” they receive from French, Austrian and German conservatives on the demand for “recognition”, it would not seem to be in the best interest of the Greek Cypriots not to start accession negotiations with Turkey on 3 October 2005. To engage Turkey in the negotiations is likely to be more effective in making Turkey more amenable to concede to Greek Cypriot demands in respect to a settlement. To derail the EU perspectives of Turkey would certainly have the opposite effect: it would be more difficult for the Greek Cypriots to obtain further concessions from Turkey. Knowing this, the Greek Cypriot government is still trying to exploit anti-Turkish sentiments in the EU as widely as possible without in the end wanting to jeopardise the beginning of the accession talks. By putting Turkey in the dock the Greek Cypriot government hopes to increase its standing in the EU and thus avoid being

¹⁶³ Turkey does not want to recognise the Republic of Cyprus as the sole representative of the island especially after the referenda on the Annan Plan have shown that the official government of the Republic of Cyprus only speaks for the Greek Cypriots. Nevertheless Turkey might be well advised to look for possibilities to normalise relations with the “Republic of Cyprus” without acknowledging the Greek Cypriots “Alleinvertretungsanspruch” (claim of being the sole representatives of Cyprus) like the former Soviet Union had recognised the Federal Republic of Germany without curtailing its links to the GDR and without acknowledging the West German “claim for sole representation”.

¹⁶⁴ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 2 August 2005

¹⁶⁵ *Cyprus Mail*, 27 July 2005 and “*Der Standard*”, 7 August 2005.

pressurised by the EU into being more conciliatory in the search for a unification of the island.

It certainly is an abnormality that Turkey does not have full diplomatic relations with a member state of the EU, a union which it wants to join. However, this abnormality would not exist, if the Greek Cypriots had voted for the UN unification plan in April 2004. It would not exist, if the EU itself had not taken the unusual decision to allow Cyprus to join the EU, even without prior unification. Also, even a diplomatic recognition of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey would not help to find a settlement to the Cyprus conflict. A solution can only be found by reaching an agreement between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots.

Another problem is the fact that Turkey does not allow Greek Cypriot ships in its harbours and Greek Cypriot aeroplanes to land on Turkish airports. Contrary to the view of the EU, Turkey does not interpret the Customs Union agreement with the EU as covering such activities. So this dispute will linger on, too. However, Turkey has declared its willingness to lift all barriers to Greek Cypriot ships and aeroplanes, if the Greek Cypriot government ends the economic isolation of the Turkish Cypriots¹⁶⁶. As the EU has expressed its desire to end the economic isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, a compromise on this issue could be found. However, the Greek Cypriots are opposed to such a compromise and hope that they are able to force Turkey with the help of the EU to open its ports and airports without any change of their policy concerning the Turkish Cypriots.

Another example of how the opposition to an EU membership of Turkey influences activities with respect to Cyprus is the European Parliament's inability to accommodate Turkish Cypriot representatives even as observers to the EP. While Turkish Cypriots have been invited to the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, such a move has been blocked in the European Parliament until now because of the opposition of the largest parliamentary group, the European Peoples Party. The Socialists and the Liberals support such a move.

In spite of last year's support of the Annan Plan in general, there are also opposing views inside the European Parliament and between member states concerning major disputed provisions of the Plan. Elmar Brok (EPP), the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the EP for example, supports the Greek Cypriots' demand that in the end all Turkish troops, including the symbolic force of 650 soldiers, should leave the island. The liberal Andrew Duff regards the security provisions of the Annan Plan

¹⁶⁶ Cyprus Mail, 2 September 2005

as “fair” and the worries of the Greek Cypriots about the 650 Turkish soldiers as “completely absurd”.¹⁶⁷

There are similar divisions between the member states. The then British Minister for European Affairs, David MacShane, for instance, stated: “I just do not see that (the 650 Turkish soldiers) as a sticking point”.¹⁶⁸ A high-ranking European diplomat in Nicosia of a different EU member state supported the Greek Cypriot government’s opinion that such a provision of the Annan Plan would not be acceptable to any member state of the EU.¹⁶⁹ In the UN Security Council the views of Britain and France on Cyprus have differed, too.¹⁷⁰

Finally, as explained above, one must not forget the dilemma of the EU wanting to play a semi-impartial role, despite the fact that the Greek Cypriots are members of the Union with the possibility of influencing and blocking EU decisions.

In spite of these difficulties, the recent activities of the EU Commission and the Presidency in regard to the Trade and Aid Regulations and to the general approach of the Cyprus conflict have shown that there is room and, at least some, new willingness for a more active EU policy. In the following, the Cypriot communities’ perception of and the possible role the EU can play will be analysed.

VIII. The perceptions of the EU’s role in solving the conflict in both parts of Cyprus and the opinions concerning a stronger EU involvement

All sides in Cyprus, Greek and Turkish Cypriots as well as governing and opposition parties from both communities consider the United Nations to be the main interlocutor for bringing about a solution of the Cyprus conflict. The UN has a history of forty years of mediation on the Cyprus question and a UN peacekeeping force has been stationed on the island for four decades now. With the Annan Plan, a comprehensive reunification plan has been worked out under the auspices of the UN. Both sides of the conflict agree – at least verbally – that this plan should be the basis for further negotiations. However, opinions differ on the role of the EU.

¹⁶⁷ Interviews with the author.

¹⁶⁸ Cited in *House of Commons 2004-2005*, p. 58

¹⁶⁹ Interview with the author under condition of anonymity, Nicosia, February 2005

¹⁷⁰ “Politis”, 22 June 2005, writes that the USA and Britain asked the Greek Cypriots to prioritise their demands for changes to the Annan Plan, while France, Russia and China did not.

1. Greek Cypriots' general perception of the role of the EU

In February 2003, before the last round of negotiations started, the Greek Cypriots demanded at the talks with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan that the European Union had an “institutional participation in the negotiations”.¹⁷¹ This demand was not supported by the EU Commission and rejected by Turkey and the then Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş.

Nevertheless, EU involvement in the negotiations leading to the Annan Plan did take place through close contacts of the EU Commission with the UN negotiating team. Observers from the EU Commission, including the then EU Enlargement Commissioner Günther Verheugen, were involved in making sure that the Annan Plan was in line with EU laws and EU practise and that it could be accommodated by the EU. In the end, they gave their “OK” to the final Annan Plan.

Today, the Greek Cypriot government still agrees that the solution has to be found under the auspices of the UN. Nevertheless, many Greek Cypriot parties wish for a stronger EU involvement. President Papadopoulos repeatedly declared his aim “that in every new effort for a solution to the Cyprus problem we want a more intense, active involvement of the EU, provided that it is commonly accepted that the Cyprus problem should remain under UN auspices”.¹⁷²

A stronger EU role seems to make sense, since

- the Republic of Cyprus now is a member state of the EU,
- the Turkish Cypriots have demonstrated in the referendum that they want to become members of the EU through unification,
- Turkey is about to start accession negotiations with the EU.

However, one has to bear in mind that demands by the Greek Cypriot government of a stronger EU involvement are not entirely unselfish: As a member, it can influence EU decisions from within, and it continues to believe that the EU - more than the UN – is inclined to support the position of the Greek Cypriots – a belief the Greek Cypriot leadership has had since its application for EU membership.¹⁷³ This belief was also spelled out clearly in the television speech of President Papadopoulos on 7 April 2004, in which he asked the Greek Cypriots to vote “No” at the referendum: “I ask you... to rally together for a new and

¹⁷¹ *Report of the UN Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus*, 28 May 2004 (S/2004/437), Paragraph 14

¹⁷² Cited in „Cyprus Mail“, 15 April 2005

¹⁷³ See Natalie Tocci 2004, p. 99 f.

more hopeful course for the reunification of our country through the European Union.¹⁷⁴

Among the governmental parties, some politicians are calling for a “European solution”. Contrary to the EU assessment they claim that the Annan Plan is both incompatible with fundamental principles of the European Union and with human rights. The honorary president of the governing socialist EDEK, Vassos Lyssiariadis, for example stated: “The (European) Constitution refers to the freedom of movement of persons, services, goods and capital, as well as to the freedom of settlement. Yet both the current situation on the island and the provisions of the Annan Plan amount to a gross violation of these principles.”¹⁷⁵

President Papadopoulos argues in a similar vein: “The EU must make clear that some provisions of the plan are not compatible with the *acquis*, and that would prevent us as a united Cyprus to perform our obligations to the EU.”¹⁷⁶

In general, the current Greek Cypriot administration wants to use the EU to promote its own aims. As Nikos Kleanthou, the acting president of DIKO, Papadopoulos’ party, stressed: “The EU must put pressure on Turkey, for example to reduce its troops, to stop settlers from being moved to Cyprus.”¹⁷⁷ Demands on the EU to put pressure on Turkey are widely supported among Greek Cypriot parties and the public.

A broader view of the possible direction of EU activities was outlined by Andros Kyprianou from the biggest party in government, the communist AKEL: “The EU can help to build confidence between the two sides and send them the message that it is a vital interest of the EU that Cyprus is unified.”¹⁷⁸

Politicians of the opposition parties would like the EU to put pressure on both communities to find a compromise. They explicitly stress their hope that the EU uses its means to influence the Greek Cypriot leader Papadopoulos to be less intransigent and more “active”, as they themselves are demanding. Thus action by the EU as demanded by the opposition parties is not only meant to contribute to finding a solution to the conflict, but also as a way to obtain support from the EU in the internal power struggle with the government.

¹⁷⁴ Declaration by the President of the Republic Mr Tassos Papadopoulos regarding the referendum of 24th April 2004, 07/04/2004; www.moi.gov.cy/moi/pio/pio.nsf/All/B7CC10D781AC186AC2256E7000254D3E?OpenDocument

¹⁷⁵ Cited in „Cyprus Weekly“, 1 April 2005

¹⁷⁶ Cited in „Cyprus Mail“, 19 April 2005

¹⁷⁷ Nikos Kleanthou, interview with the author in Nicosia, 1 February 2005.

¹⁷⁸ Andros Kyprianou, interview with the author.

However, governing and opposition parties unanimously oppose one of the main measures the EU Commission, supported by the majority of the EU parliament and the EU Council has proposed to end the isolation of Turkish Cypriots: to allow direct trade between the EU countries and the Turkish Cypriot North of the island. They are also unanimously opposed to permitting direct flights from other countries to North Cyprus, which would help to increase tourism there. Contrary to the belief of the EU Commission and the other EU states except Greece, all Greek Cypriot parties claim that direct trade and direct flights to the North are tantamount to a recognition of the TRNC and would lead to a diminished desire of Turkish Cypriots for reunification. Like the government, Sokrates Hasikos from the opposition party DISY believes: “If the Turkish Cypriots had direct trade, they would not be interested in a solution any more. This is my fear”.¹⁷⁹ Only very few Greek Cypriots challenge this view. One of these is Professor Maria Chatsipablou who sees two advantages of direct trade: “The economic development of the North would increase the level of trust between the communities and it would make the Greek Cypriots realise that the EU has its own limits of tolerance.”¹⁸⁰

2. Turkish Cypriots’ general perception of the role of the EU

Among the Turkish Cypriot political parties, a role of the EU in resolving the conflict is more disputed than in the South. The UBP, outspoken nationalist and opponent of the Annan Plan, is generally suspicious of the EU, because Greek Cypriots are part of it, while Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots are not.¹⁸¹ The current Foreign Minister Serdar Denktash is also very sceptical: “The EU can not do much, only more catastrophe”¹⁸². He fears that EU laws would undermine the position of the Turkish Cypriots. This negative attitude of a part of the Turkish Cypriot elite has historical reasons as a mirror image of the policy of Greek Cypriots’ governments, which favoured EU membership hoping to thus strengthen their negotiating position.¹⁸³

However, the Turkish Cypriot President Mehmet Ali Talat, a staunch supporter of unification and EU membership, is

¹⁷⁹ Sokrates Hasikos, interview with the author.

¹⁸⁰ Maria Chatsipablou, interview with the author.

¹⁸¹ Tahsin Ertugruluglu, former Foreign Minister of the TRNC in an interview with the author.

¹⁸² Serdar Denktash, interview with the author.

¹⁸³ see Natalie Tocci 2004, p. 182f.

interested in the EU “showing Papadopoulos that he won’t get a better deal (than the Annan Plan) and in convincing him not to oppose the lifting of the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots”¹⁸⁴. Disappointment about the EU is widespread. The credibility of the EU is undermined by its inability to overcome Greek Cypriot objections against ending the economic isolation of the Turkish Cypriots.

To facilitate direct trade and direct flights is also the main demand towards the EU by the civil society organisation “North Civil Initiative”¹⁸⁵. With the exception of the nationalist UBP all parties and civil forces consider these measures important in economic terms to enhance the social situation of Turkish Cypriots. They also hope for a political side effect: “It puts pressure on Papadopoulos to reconsider his position and to be more flexible in negotiations” stated the editor of the leading pro-resolution newspaper “Kibris”, Suleyman Eguclu.¹⁸⁶

3. Cypriots’ opinion about EU efforts for promoting mutual understanding and reconciliation

On both sides of the divided country, many of the politicians and civil society leaders interviewed were interested in specific EU activities promoting understanding and reconciliation. The interviewees were asked to qualify some proposals for such activities as “very important”, “important”, “not important” and “not important at all”.

The following activities were identified by most interviewees, Greek and Turkish Cypriots alike, as: **“important”** or **“very important”**

- Starting a **dialogue about history education** in schools and universities to promote mutual understanding of different perspectives on the past and to jettison one-sided views.
- Starting with the planning to **teach the other official language to all secondary school students** (i.e. Turkish to Greek Cypriot, Greek to Turkish Cypriot students).
- Promoting a **dialogue about the past** between Greek and Turkish Cypriots to have a better understanding of the events and of the feelings of both communities.

¹⁸⁴ Mehmet AliTalat, interview with the author.

¹⁸⁵ Mustafa Damdelen, interview with the author.

¹⁸⁶ Suleyman Erguclu, editor of the Turkish Cypriot “Kibris”; interview with the author, Nicosia, 3 February 2005.

In the Annan Plan, these proposals are mentioned as measures that a special “Reconciliation Commission” in Cyprus should elaborate. In the public discussion these provisions have hardly played any role and are widely unknown to the Cypriots.

Most of the interviewed also considered as **“important” or “very important”**:

- A **youth exchange programme for school students** (visits of each other, weekend programmes, etc.) to promote understanding and reconciliation (using, for example, the experience of the “Franco German Youth Office” (“Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk”))
- **Promotion of a security dialogue** between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots, the EU and Turkey about threat perception and the security situation in and around Cyprus (i.e. workshop, seminar, roundtable discussion).

There was also some, but less, interest in the proposal to provide information about experiences in the EU in the field of **conversion planning** (future work for military personnel and the future use of military bases and land). The dissolution of the Greek Cypriot National Guard (10 000) and the Turkish Cypriot military (5000) and the removal of up to 35 000 Turkish troops from the island according to the Annan Plan would free a lot of military sites and personnel from their current use. However, only about 10 percent of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot soldiers are professional military men while the rest are conscripts. So, the number of people that will have to look for different jobs is rather small and can – as members of both communities assume – be easily absorbed in the economy. Nevertheless, the impact of the demilitarisation on the local economy and the ecological clean-up of the military sites has not yet been evaluated. A possible side effect of early conversion planning was mentioned by DISY politician Sokrates Hasikos and by Kostas Venizelos, editor of the daily newspaper “Phileleftheros”: “It would be “psychologically important to show, what nice things you can build at current military sites”, Venizelos stated.¹⁸⁷

Other proposals for confidence-building mentioned by some of the interviewed were EU financial support of a **joint Cypriot team for the next Olympics** and a **television channel jointly run by Greek and Turkish Cypriots** on a 50/50 base, such as the German-French channel ARTE. DISY spokesman

¹⁸⁷ Interviews with the author.

Mitsopoulos also suggested to set up a general EU programme for Cyprus similar to the one there is for Northern Ireland.¹⁸⁸

Despite the obviously great openness for EU-sponsored reconciliation efforts across the full range of the political spectrum on both sides, there are still some caveats which must not be ignored.

- Firstly: While the Turkish Cypriot President Mehmet Ali Talat is very much in favour of the EU as organiser and facilitator of such activities, the Democratic Party of Serdar Denktash, that is the junior party in the Turkish Cypriot government, strongly favours the provisions of such measures through the UN, traditionally the main facilitator of bi-communal programmes.
- Secondly: Especially the party of Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos DIKO is rather suspicious of any “outside involvement”. DIKO acting president Kleanthou states: “ We have had many bad experiences with for example seminars etc, because they only wanted us to accept the Annan Plan”¹⁸⁹. Generally, among Greek Cypriots there is at present a negative attitude towards bi-communal UN sponsored activities– an attitude that, according to DISY spokesman Tassos Mitsopoulos, might also be projected onto EU projects.¹⁹⁰
- Thirdly: Although politicians of the main Greek Cypriot parties DISY (opposition) and AKEL (governing) are in favour of such EU sponsored activities, they are afraid of confronting the supposedly prevailing mood of the Greek Cypriots. For example, they think it is only possible to have such projects organised by NGOs without any involvement by the authorities of both parts of the island, despite the fact that this could diminish the scope of the projects¹⁹¹. AKEL spokesmen Kyprianou, though favouring youth exchange on a voluntary base, would not support an official partnership programme between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot schools, where visits of a respective partner school would be obligatory for all children: “This would ignite bad feelings on our side, because of security problems and because of recognition”¹⁹² (i.e. the unwanted recognition of the Turkish

¹⁸⁸ Interview with the author. See also Chapter IX of this paper.

¹⁸⁹ Kleanthou, interview with the author.

¹⁹⁰ Tassos Mitsopoulos, DISY spokesman, interview with the author .

¹⁹¹ Hasikos, DISY, interview with the author and Kyprianou, AKEL, interview with the author.

¹⁹² Kyprianou, AKEL, interview with the author.

Cypriot authorities by such measures). Since there have been several million crossings of Greek Cypriots to the Turkish Cypriot part of the island and vice versa in the last two years with hardly any problems occurring, “security” does not seem to be a credible argument against such a youth exchange. But still, about half of the Greek Cypriots have not visited the Turkish Cypriot North, mainly because of political reasons¹⁹³. So, Kyprianou is probably right in expecting opposition by a considerable amount of Greek Cypriots even to such rather simple reconciliation projects like youth exchange programmes.

Nevertheless, the interviews revealed that Turkish and Greek Cypriot leaders seem to be ready to start certain confidence-building measures sponsored by the EU.

IX. Excursion: Northern Ireland – An example for EU involvement in Cyprus?

1. The EU involvement in the Northern Ireland conflict

The European Union has only very limited jurisdiction in matters of internal affairs of member states. Usually the EU organs and the EU member states avoid getting involved in internal matters not only because of juridical problems, but also because of the political cost of being seen to interfere in matters of national sovereignty. One exception is Northern Ireland, where the EU got involved contrary to its non-policy in similar unresolved ethno-political conflicts such as in Spain (Basque and Catalan problem) and in France (Corsican problem).¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Cyprus College of Tourism and Hotel Management, Fall Tourism Survey 2004, 14 December 2004.

¹⁹⁴ Another exception was some kind of political isolation of Austria by the other 14 EU member states in the year 2000 after the conservative People Party had formed a government with the right-wing populist, anti-foreigner Austrian “Freedom Party” (FPÖ) of Jörg Haider. The then President of the EU condemned this coalition. The other 14 EU member states froze bilateral relations with the alpine republic – a rather symbolic move, because co-operation with Austria continued in EU committees, a body through which nearly all international relations are now conducted. The political isolation of Austria was lifted after less than a year, because, in the short term at least, it led to a nationalistic backlash in Austria and thus was seen to be “counterproductive” after a while. The reasons for the “sanctions” were inspired to a great deal by internal political motives of many EU governments, since by bashing Austria’s FPÖ, they wanted to isolate similar parties in their own countries. See:

Almost one decade before the beginning of the peace process the EU parliament established a working group on Northern Ireland which examined modes of conflict resolution in Northern Ireland. In 1984, the “Haagerup Report”¹⁹⁵, named after the chairman of the group, the MEP N.I. Haagerup, was published and a motion passed in the European Parliament. Although it said that it was not the responsibility of the European Community to make proposals for changes of Northern Ireland’s Constitution, on top of condemning terrorist activities it supported a political approach that at the time was radical in some aspects. It advocated for:

- the sharing of power between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, thus recognising explicitly the limitations of a purely intergovernmental agreement between Ireland and Great Britain;
- increased intergovernmental co-operation of the United Kingdom and Ireland;
- a speedy withdrawal of British military forces following paramilitary cease fires, reduction of police forces and the reintroduction of normal judicial procedures;
- an EC involvement in the social and economic development of Northern Ireland.¹⁹⁶

Also, in 1992, the European Parliament launched an investigation into anti-Catholic discrimination in Northern Ireland.

Contrary to the US administration that, under President Bill Clinton, put Northern Ireland quite high on its agenda, the EU did not play any role in the mediation efforts in the 1990s, which led to the republican and loyalist paramilitary cease fires in 1994 and to the “Good Friday Agreement” in 1998.¹⁹⁷ After the cease fires in 1994, however, the EU immediately established a special

news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3543505.stm;

www.wsws.org/articles/2000/sep2000/haid-s15.shtml

¹⁹⁵ Haagerup, N. J. (1984) *Report drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee on the situation in Northern Ireland, European Parliament Working Document 1-1526/83*, 9 March 1984. See for analysis and details: Katy Hayward: *From border conflict to identity conflict: The EU’s approach to conflict resolution in Northern Ireland*, April 2004; <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/jointsessions/paperarchive/uppsala/ws19/Hayward.pdf>

¹⁹⁶ See: Hayward 2004, p. 12 f and 17

¹⁹⁷ Northern Ireland Office (Ed.), 1998. “The Agreement. Agreement Reached in the Multi Party Negotiations”. Belfast/London (<http://www.nio.uk>). See also: Corinna Hauswedell: “Der nordirische Friedensprozess – ein Modell? Lehren für eine internationale Einbeugung innergesellschaftlicher Konflikte”, W&F Dossier Nr. 45, in: W&F 1/2004

fund, the so called PEACE I programme “for Peace and Reconciliation” (1994 – 1999) with the aim to support conflict resolution. A second programme, PEACE II, followed for the years 2000 to 2004 and an extension was decided for the years 2005 to 2006.¹⁹⁸

From the beginning, these programmes were supported by the two member states of the EU involved, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. Through the PEACE programmes that ran over a period of 11 years, about €1,3 billion¹⁹⁹ – with approx. 70 percent coming from the EU – were provided to Northern Ireland and the six border counties of the Republic of Ireland. Funds were provided for about 19 000 projects, a lot of them based and carried out on community grassroots level. All projects were supposed to meet certain “distinctiveness and reconciliation criteria”, i.e. they were supposed to have a linkage to the “Troubles” and their legacy and to actively promote reconciliation.

The money has been distributed through the “Special EU Programmes Body” (SEUPS) set up in 1999. The Operational Programme is decided upon by the European Commission.

PEACE II, for example, had five priority areas: Economic Renewal; Social Integration, Inclusion and Reconciliation; Locally Based Regeneration and Development Strategies; Outward and Forward Looking Region; Cross-border Co-operation²⁰⁰.

Activities under Peace II included:²⁰¹:

- Support of economic activity (€184m), for example research at the “Medical Polymers Research Institute” at Queen’s University;

¹⁹⁸ More information on the programmes at <http://www.seupb.org>

¹⁹⁹ Peace I had funds totalling €503m. Peace II is worth approximately €741m with the EU contributing €531m, national contributions amounting to €177m and private contributions totalling €33m. (See: Cathal McCall and Liam O’Dowd: *The Third sector and cross-border co-operation supported by the EU Peace programme*, DRAFT/16 AUGUST2004, p. 1; paper presented to the EU Border Conference, Queen’s University, Belfast, 24-25 September 2004.). Additional EU funding in the value of €66m was decided for 2005-2006.

²⁰⁰ A detailed analysis of the PEACE programme is not possible in this study. Instead, several evaluation studies provide further insight: Brian Harvey, B (2003) *Review of the Peace II Programme*, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (2003); *Taking “Calculated” Risks for Peace*. PSC Consultants (2003) *Building Peace and Reconciliation Post 2006*.

²⁰¹ Following examples and figures, if not mentioned otherwise, from “The Many Places of Peace”, SEUPS Calendar 2005

- Training projects (€168m) for disaffected communities, i.e. young people, unemployed;
- Social inclusion projects (€93m), for example assisting victims of conflict as the group Families Acting for Innocent Relatives in Armagh; The Pathway to Employment for Victims Project, County Tyrone²⁰²; reintegration of former paramilitary prisoners;
- Community regeneration projects (€75m); for example renovating historic Salley Garden, new buses for Translink, a public transport company²⁰³;
- Cross-border partnership Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland (€58m), for example craftsmen cross-border co-operation;
- Agricultural sector (€40m), for example cheese-making in Causeway Cheese Company;
- Children-related projects (€20m), for example Irish language pre-schools in Derry;
- support of the very few independent, not church-related schools;
- Environmental projects (€14m).

Obviously, these projects are related to a broad range of activities, many of them being quite similar to mainstream EU-funded projects. The application of the “distinctiveness and reconciliation” criteria was a constant concern of the EU Commission. Its application has been criticised in most evaluations of the programme. The applications often created the “suspicion that the programme was manipulated to fill national funding gaps”²⁰⁴, as for example the evaluation by Brian Harvey concluded. Sometimes even declaring to have a non-discriminatory employment policy or locating an economic project anywhere near west Belfast or Derry seems to have been enough to get the money.

No doubt, the impact these projects have had on “reconciliation” is extremely difficult to assess. Looking at the political developments of the peace process in Northern Ireland the limitation of any institutional initiative aiming at the changing of mindsets seem apparent. The implementation of many of the provisions of the “Good Friday Agreement” has been slow and

²⁰² County Tyrone project see: SEUPS Peace II Annual Implementation Report 2003, p. 34

²⁰³ Brian Harvey, (2003), p. 109

²⁰⁴ Harvey 2003, p. 102, see also: p. 8 and p. 95ff

frustrating. Difficulties in decommissioning paramilitary arms, reducing state security provisions and reforming the police negatively influenced progress in setting up democratic institutions. The Northern Ireland assembly and government and its power-sharing arrangements have remained suspended since autumn 2002. In spite of considerable progress in many matters of normal day-to-day life, tension and mistrust between the two communities persist. In some areas, the divide has even deepened, and paramilitary activities, in the attempt to sustain territorial influence, are turning into Mafia-type structures. However, one should not underestimate the fact that the cease-fire still holds (and it seems unlikely that this will change) thus stabilising the search for a solution with political means.

Even if sceptical voices describe the impact of the PEACE programmes on reconciliation rather as a “drop into the ocean” (EU official)²⁰⁵, positive results should not be underestimated:

At first, the PEACE programmes improved the infrastructure, economic and social well being in Northern Ireland. As the EU Commission stated, in more than 10 years PEACE has resulted in “the creation of more than 7 000 jobs and has provided support to 2 000 business organisations. Both Programmes have also provided significant training opportunities...”²⁰⁶ This had an indirect impact, especially on the republican community. Their living areas were among the first targeted, because an over-proportionally high percentage of them belonged to the most affected areas of the Troubles, suffering from severe poverty and social disadvantage. The diminution of economic problems in areas of former republican militancy is regarded as helpful for keeping the Catholic community attached to the peace process.

Secondly, the PEACE programme was one, if not the main source for explicit reconciliation projects, which otherwise would not have had any chance of funding. It helped to support the voluntary sector in its focus on peace and reconciliation. One of the core peace-building measures, titled “Reconciliation for a sustainable peace”, has had an especially good result, even though it only received three percent of the total PEACE II money. With this money, amongst other activities, mediation projects in cross-community centres were funded.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ High-ranking official in the EU Commission’s Department for Regions, interview with the author in Brussels on 17 March 2005

²⁰⁶ EU Commission “*INFORMATION NOTE: EXTENDING THE EU PEACE II PROGRAMME: ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS*”, undated (2004), p. 4

²⁰⁷ Harvey 2003, p. 79; see also p. 112

Thirdly, PEACE stimulated a “bottom-up” approach to peace and reconciliation, adding value to the prevalent top-down agenda of many other players. It encouraged citizens, enterprises, organisations and state bodies on a decentralised regional and community level to more carefully channel their work to address community division. Even if critical voices describe the rise of a “peace industry” as a problematic effect of PEACE and observe that there is a “tendency within Northern Ireland towards the recognition of the EU as a cash cow”²⁰⁸ many useful initiatives would not have taken place without the EU money.

2. PEACE programmes – an option for Cyprus?

The peace process in Northern Ireland shows that there are limits to the role external actors can play. Internal actors must be strong enough and willing to make a deal and make the deal work. Nevertheless, the role of the USA in mediating and helping to negotiate peace was pivotal in Northern Ireland, while the EU as a semi-external player was not engaged in mediation at all. It did, however, play a political role through low key activities of the European Parliament and funding measures via the PEACE programmes, thus facilitating especially bottom-up peace-building with political and financial incentives.

Two conditions made the EU involvement via the PEACE programmes viable:

- the whole region (Northern Ireland and the neighbouring counties of the Republic of Ireland) is part of the EU, and the *acquis communautaire* (the common laws and regulations of the EU) applies to the whole region;
- the two involved governments of the EU member states (Great Britain/UK and Republic of Ireland) were in favour of the programmes and actively promoted them.

With Cyprus, things are different in several respects. The UN, which plays a traditionally crucial role as a mediator in Cyprus, was never considered as mediator in Northern Ireland. The *acquis* of the EU is not implemented in the North of Cyprus. The government of the Republic of Cyprus, although *de facto* only representing the Greek Cypriots, is internationally recognised as the representative of the whole island, while the Turkish Cypriots have no say in the EU. This means that any funding activities for reconciliation (in the broadest possible meaning of the word) in

²⁰⁸ Jonathan Tongue: The EU and the Irish Border: Shaping Aid and Attitudes? p. 11; paper presented to the EU Borders Conference, Queen’s University, Belfast, 24-25 September 2004

Cyprus by the EU depend to a high degree on the political will of the Greek Cypriot government to accommodate them. Therefore, a somewhat impartial approach, which is crucial for any external involvement in conflict resolution situations, is more difficult to achieve and to be accepted in Cyprus.

This is not to say that a meaningful tailoring of EU reconciliation activities is impossible. However, the ongoing debate about the “Aid and Trade” directives of the EU has shown that they would be more difficult to achieve than in Northern Ireland. The EU would have to take up a more proactive role in initiating reconciliation activities and in arranging compromises.

Nevertheless, when comparing Cyprus with Northern Ireland, there is one condition that seems to be more favourable of EU involvement in finding a solution to the conflict. In Cyprus, much more than in Northern Ireland, a majority on both sides, the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots, consider the EU to be an important player and would like to enhance its role in conflict resolution besides the UN. What is also true, though, is that the leaderships of both communities try to use the EU for their specific goals.

In regard to social and economic activities that can help reconciliation, there also seem to be some similarities between the situation in Northern Ireland and Cyprus:

- Social and economic development of the poorer Turkish Cypriots could help to stabilise their desire and willingness to remain in favour of reunification, as it helped to prevent parts of the Catholic community in Northern Ireland from abandoning the cease-fire agreements.
- Economic co-operation between Greek and Turkish Cypriots could lead to a win-win situation. This would be especially important for Greek Cypriots, who are generally more worried to lose out economically to the competition of the North.
- With regard to more explicit reconciliation work the same effect as in Northern Ireland could be expected in Cyprus: the small voluntary sector, which deals with these issues, can be strengthened.

Because of the specific conditions in Cyprus, where the communities do not speak the same language and do not live in the same towns or villages, one should look for ways of how to facilitate contacts and a better understanding of each other on a broader scale. Reconciliation is not a niche project for NGOs, but a necessity for the entity of both communities. Ideally, this would

imply adding to the “bottom-up” approach followed in Northern Ireland²⁰⁹ a specific “top-down” approach through co-operation of institutions and authorities on both sides or through creating new bi-communal organisations (as for example a bi-communal radio station). The EU could play an important role in this.

X. The way forward

1. Short summary of the current situation of Cyprus: stalemate

One-and-a-half years after the rejection of the Annan Plan by the Greek Cypriots, the situation in Cyprus is basically unchanged, even deteriorating. While some positive steps have been taken (for example: ongoing roundtable discussion between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots parties; opening of further crossing points between the North and the South; demining of the UN buffer zone), the general political climate between the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot leadership remains hostile. The Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos has not even been willing to meet his Turkish Cypriot counterpart, although Mehmet Ali Talat is a staunch supporter of the island’s reunification.

The EU has to deal with the unusual situation of having a member state (the Republic of Cyprus), which is divided: While its territory formally covers the whole of the island, the EU practically ends at the Green Line between the Turkish Cypriot North and the Greek Cypriot South. The internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus only represents the Greek Cypriots, while the Turkish Cypriots, who voted for the unification and the EU membership, are neither represented in the EU nor can they enjoy the democratic rights and social benefits of EU citizens. On top of this, the EU’s pledge to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots has not yet been fulfilled because of the objections of the Greek Cypriot government. And, as recent debate has shown, the Cyprus issue will appear on the agenda constantly even after Turkey commences accession negotiations with the EU, as long as the division of Cyprus has not ended.

As the Annan Plan has been rejected by the Greek Cypriots, new negotiations will have to start up again, and changes to the current plan will have to be agreed on by the conflicting parties,

²⁰⁹ The problem encountered in Northern Ireland was for example the reluctance of Protestant schools to become involved in some cross-border projects. See: Tongue 2004, p.15

the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. The Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders agree that these negotiations will have to be based on the Annan Plan. However, it is the Greek Cypriots who have not yet drawn up “a list of focused, finite, manageable, prioritised proposals” (UN Under Secretary General, Sir Kieran Prendergast)²¹⁰ concerning the changes to the Annan Plan they envision. Even then, the difficult task will be to get the majority of Greek Cypriots on board without losing the support of the majority of Turkish Cypriots.

Currently, the gap between the stated positions of the parties is wide and the confidence between them is low. Therefore, a new round of negotiations is not in the docks. This conclusion was rightly made by the UN Secretary General and was not disputed in the UN Security Council.²¹¹ As one way of braking this stalemate, the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots have to search for unilateral or agreed measures to build confidence, as the UN Secretary General and the EU Commission have recommended. Only such confidence-building measures can bring about the mood of mutual understanding, reconciliation, rapprochement and realism that is necessary so that new negotiations under the auspices of the UN can be given a chance. The EU can and should assist such endeavours.

However, in principle for the future of Cyprus there are also other scenarios.

2. Possible scenarios for the future of Cyprus

In principle, there are six scenarios for the future of Cyprus.

- 1. Unification:** The settlement must be agreeable to the Turkish and the Greek Cypriots alike and supported by Turkey and Greece. Negotiations for a settlement would most likely be on the basis of the current Annan Plan. With an agreed settlement, the Cypriots would overcome their division and the EU would no longer have to deal with the problems of a divided member state. The final settlement would lead to a bi-zonal, bi-communal federal state of Cyprus which would become a normal member state of the EU with rights and benefits of the EU for all Cypriots. There would be an agreed mechanism to solve the legacy of the division (property exchange, compensation, etc.).

²¹⁰ See: Sir Kieran Prendergast UN USG’s Briefing to Security Council 22 June 2005, (footnote 40)

²¹¹ See: Sir Kieran Prendergast UN USG’s Briefing to Security Council 22 June 2005, (footnote 40)

2. **Two separate independent, internationally recognised, Cypriot states.** Theoretically, a mutual recognition of former foes could pave the way to good neighbourly relations. However, it is highly unlikely that an agreed separation would get the approval of a Greek Cypriot majority in the near future. Good neighbourly relations would be difficult to develop, because of the lack of any mechanism for land and property exchange and compensation. Neither would such a solution satisfy the wish of the majority of the Turkish Cypriots to become EU citizens. The EU has clearly expressed its disapproval of the creation and membership of mini-states. Therefore it is unlikely that the Turkish Cypriot state (with about 200 000 citizens) would have any chance of joining, while the Greek Cypriots' state (with about 800 000 citizens) would remain a member of the EU.
3. **“Accession” of the current Turkish Cypriot state to the current Greek Cypriot “Republic of Cyprus”.** Although this scenario would make all Cypriots EU citizens and avoid the creation of a mini-state, the Turkish Cypriots would not agree to it, because it would leave them without sufficient rights as an ethnic community.
4. **Turkish Cypriot North becoming an EU protectorate.** Similarly to one of the options discussed for the future status of the Kosovo, the EU would get in charge in the North until a agreed solution is found between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. With this scenario, the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots would end, although new problems with their interest to govern themselves might arise. However, because neither land nor property issues would be solved, it does not seem likely that the Greek Cypriots would agree to this scenario, which they could easily block with their veto powers in the EU. Additionally, the concept of EU protectorates is as such disputed inside the EU at least up to now.
5. **‘Taiwanisation’ of the status of the Turkish Cypriot state.** While the TRNC would not be internationally recognised as a separate state, the international economic, political and cultural isolation of the Turkish Cypriot would end. This would benefit the Turkish Cypriots but not satisfy their wishes to be EU citizens and to participate as equal partners in the ruling of a

united internationally recognised Cyprus. Because the Greek Cypriots would oppose such a ‘Taiwanisation’, and because neither property nor security (Turkish troops) issues would be solved, the ongoing division of Cyprus would remain a constant annoyance in the EU’s dealing with Cyprus and in the EU’s accession negotiations with Turkey.

- 6. Continuation of the status quo.** This would be highly unsatisfactory for the Turkish Cypriots, because of their continuing international isolation. The credibility of the EU and its member states would suffer, too, because the pledge to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots has not been fulfilled. The fact that Cyprus is still divided would be a constant annoyance in the EU’s dealing with Cyprus and in the EU’s accession negotiations with Turkey. Like with the ‘Taiwanisation’ scenario, Greek Cypriot interests in regard to the solution of the property issue and the removal of Turkish troops from Cyprus would stay unheeded. With time passing a resolution of the property issue through a settlement would become more difficult to achieve, or the result would be less favourable to the Greek Cypriots. Nonetheless the Greek Cypriots’ majority seems least worried about this scenario because of their hope to be able to extract more concessions from the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey by way of the EU-Turkey accession negotiations.

The sixth scenario, a continuation of the status quo, looks to be the most likely one to come about if one looks at the different and differing interests of local, regional, EU and international players at stake. Maybe an implementation of some elements of the ‘Taiwanisation’ scenario can be expected, for example by easing the Turkish Cypriot isolation. However, it would neither solve the problems for the Cypriots nor for the EU. This can only be done by a unification of the island – the scenario that would be best for Cyprus and the EU alike.

The EU and its member states have declared their support for a unification of Cyprus. Even if they stick to this declared aim, they have different options at hand to act in this direction.

3. Options for the EU and the EU member states

In principle, there are two options for the EU institutions and the EU member states:

- To continue to do the “bare minimum” to find a solution to the Cyprus conflict
- To implement an active mediation and arbitration policy.

To continue to do the **“bare minimum”** would mean:

- To merely make some, possibly only token, gestures to overcome Greek Cypriots’ objections to end the economic isolation of the Turkish Cypriots without pressurising the Greek Cypriot government too hard.
- To leave the continuation of the cold war-like relations or any rapprochement initiatives totally up to the Greek and Turkish Cypriots.
- To leave the whole political process of restarting negotiations on a comprehensive settlement up to the UN.

The **advantages** of this approach for EU institutions and the member states would be:

- They would not have to agree on a common policy.
- They would hardly get involved in inter-communal feuds between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot side neither with respect to concrete policy steps nor with respect to the political design of a comprehensive settlement.

Some EU politicians and member states might hope, by keeping such a low profile, to avoid confrontation with the Greek Cypriot leaders and public with their differing views. In return for not ‘provoking’ the Greek Cypriots, they would expect them not to obstruct the accession talks with Turkey.

Other EU politicians and member states might hope to take advantage of the stalemate in Cyprus by using Cyprus-related arguments to derail Turkey’s EU perspectives.

For the EU and its member states, **an active mediation and arbitration policy** would imply instead:

- Working out a comprehensive and coherent EU policy on Cyprus and implement it through the EU institutions and the majority of EU member states.
- Putting political weight on overcoming Greek Cypriots’ objections against the end of the Turkish Cypriots’ isolation.
- Initiating, supporting and financing confidence-building and reconciliation measures in the spheres of political, economic, social, cultural and sportive co-operation between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots.

- Promoting and propagating general principles in regard to a new round of negotiations for a settlement under the auspices of the UN.
- Appointing a high profile Special EU Envoy for Cyprus (by the EU Commission and the EU Council) for the mediation and arbitration of confidence-building and reconciliation measures. This Special Envoy should also work on the preparation of future negotiations on a comprehensive settlement under the auspices of the UN.

The **advantages** of this approach would be:

- The EU can use all its 'soft power' to achieve an early unification of Cyprus.
- The international credibility of the EU and its common foreign and security policy would be enhanced.
- The Cyprus conflict and the EU–Turkey accession negotiations would be 'de-linked', thus facilitating a more open and honest debate in the EU about the pros and cons of an accession of Turkey.

Surely, an active mediation and arbitration policy of the EU in regard to Cyprus is the far more challenging and more difficult of the two approaches. Other problems of the EU are currently higher up on the agenda than the Cyprus division, and understandably so. However, it would be the best for Cyprus and for the EU, if the EU institutions and the majority of member states chose this active approach, because it would enhance the chances of a Cyprus solution in a few years time. To leave a settlement for a later date – maybe connecting it to the 10–15 years time schedule for the accession negotiations with Turkey – might endanger the unification option as such. In Cyprus, the interest in unification might wane, especially on the side of the Turkish Cypriots. In Turkey, the support of which is certainly needed for a settlement in Cyprus, a change in governmental policies as a reaction to a growing unfavourable climate in the EU concerning its accession cannot be excluded.

It is up to the EU institutions and to its member states to decide which option they want to choose. Recently, the EU has started to be somewhat more pro-active in its efforts in settling the Cyprus conflict, especially when one looks at the statements of EU enlargement Commissioner Ollie Rehn in Cyprus in May, the appointment of Ambassador Jaako Bloomberg as a Special Adviser to Rehn and the talks under an EU umbrella between

representatives of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots about the Trade and Aid Regulations concerning the Turkish Cypriots²¹².

However, the ongoing dispute in the EU about the relations between the Greek Cypriot Republic of Cyprus and Turkey takes place without even touching the underlying issue: the division of Cyprus. This shows that the EU is still lacking a coherent policy on Cyprus. If the EU and its member states want to use their moral, political and financial potential in bringing about a unification of Cyprus, they will have to work out such a policy and pursue an active mediation and arbitration policy.

It is far from certain that an active EU policy towards the Cyprus conflict will lead to the desired aim of achieving a comprehensive settlement or even less far-reaching confidence-building measures in the near future: In the end the preparedness and willingness of the Turkish and the Greek Cypriots to find compromises will be decisive. But the EU can and should influence the developments.

4. What an active mediation and arbitration policy of the EU could look like

4.1 The approach in general

The EU institutions have to keep a certain distance to the position of the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots to be able to take up a mediating role. However, their Cyprus policy should comply with the basic policy-decisions the EU has made with regard to the Cyprus conflict: calling the Annan Plan a “historic compromise”²¹³ (European Parliament), calling for an end “to the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community” and to facilitate “the reunification of Cyprus by encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community”²¹⁴ (European Council).

The EU will have to strike a delicate balance between encouraging, convincing and pressing Greek and Turkish Cypriots, both leadership and citizens, to adopt a reconciliatory approach on the one hand and criticising and even politically isolating the respective administrations whenever their positions contravene above-mentioned EU positions.

²¹² See above, Chapter VII.3.

²¹³ See above, Chapter VII.3.

²¹⁴ 26 April 2004,

http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/80142.pdf

The EU institutions should use their moral-political and financial weight to change the current stalemate in Cyprus

- by promoting confidence-building measures (unilateral, reciprocal unilateral or agreed) of the two sides in Cyprus, supported by the EU, and
- by promoting European base lines in regard to a new round of negotiations for a comprehensive settlement on the basis of the Annan Plan

Each of the players have distinct instruments at their disposal to use. Certainly a co-ordinated approach would be best.

The EU Parliament

- The EU Parliament should adopt a **comprehensive report** concerning the Cyprus conflict with recommendations for the future EU policy.
- A **special “Cyprus Reconciliation Fund” for a support of reconciliation measures** in the spheres of political, economic, social, cultural and sportive co-operation between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots should be set up.
- The EU Parliament should invite two **Turkish Cypriot representatives, at least as observers**, to the European Parliament. (The Parliamentary Assembly of the Strasbourg-based Council of Europe has already acted in a similar way.)

The EU Commission and the EU Council

- They should work out a **comprehensive policy** concerning the Cyprus conflict and ways to solve it.
- They should actively engage in the **promotion of confidence-building** and reconciliation measures in Cyprus both in terms of political and financial assistance, for example via a special **“Cyprus Reconciliation Fund”**.
- They should appoint a high-profile **Special EU Envoy for Cyprus**, as for example the former Finnish president Martti Ahtisaari. The Special Envoy should act in co-operation with Javier Solana, the High Representative for the “Common Foreign and Security Policy”. (This would be a political post carrying much more weight than the current post of Jaako Bloomberg as “adviser” to enlargement Commissioner Rehn.)

- Turkish Cypriot representatives should be invited to take part in other bodies of the EU, for example the “Committee of the Regions”, at least as observers.
- Turkish, as one of the official languages of the Republic of Cyprus, should be acknowledged as an official language of the EU.

4.2. Specific proposals for EU rapprochement activities in the field of security

This study has shown that the security threats as perceived by the Greek Cypriots are exaggerated. Nationalistic prejudices are widespread. The Turkish Cypriots also overvalue military means of security. There is the danger that the security issues will be blown out of proportion in future negotiations again – and that the different views on this issue will be difficult to bridge.

To change security perceptions and the underlying attitudes is a daunting task. To achieve this, confidence-building through measures in a wide range of areas will be needed. Nevertheless, some specific measures tackling the security perceptions head on should be taken with the help of the EU.

- The EU should keep on promoting the argument that the EU-membership of Cyprus itself “ensures that neither inter-communal violence nor military intervention should occur again” (EU Commissioner Olli Rehn). Both sides should be **encouraged to de-emphasise the role of military contingencies and the intervention rights** of the guarantee powers, to try to understand the fears of the other and to look for compromises.
- To this end, the EU should help to **initiate a specific dialogue on security** between both Cypriot communities.
- The EU should try to find out, if any kind of a **“European Force”** (maybe even under the auspices of the UN) would be acceptable especially to the Turkish Cypriots as a substitute for the rest of a small symbolic Turkish force.
- The EU should **encourage steps of demilitarisation** as confidence-building measures, prior to an agreement by suggesting
 - that a certain amount of Turkish troops be removed from Cyprus
 - weapons and ammunitions from the homes of the Greek Cypriot reservists be removed

- the yearly big military exercises on both parts of the island be abolished for good (they have been cancelled for several years now).
- The EU should facilitate **conversion planning** in Cyprus, because any future agreement will include the near to total demilitarisation of the island and the abolition of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot forces. Conversion planning can alleviate fears of unemployment, prepares to confront possible difficulties of the demilitarisation process and enhances the inclination for a unification agreement in the population by planning for positive alternatives. The EU has a wide range of knowledge in conversion planning, since many member states have downsized or are downsizing their forces considerably.

Apart from these specific measures related to security issues, a pro-active policy of the EU institutions could include the following:

4.3 Proposals for other EU-sponsored confidence-building measures

The EU should actively promote the **dialogue** between the communities and the political leaders of the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. Tassos Papadopoulos should be asked to meet Mehmet Ali Talat as soon as possible. A meeting under the auspices of the EU can also be envisaged. Both sides should be asked to treat the other not as adversary, but as a partner of a future common United Republic of Cyprus.

What concerns the **economy of the Turkish Cypriots**, the Greek Cypriots have to be asked to drop their opposition to direct trade and direct flights to the North. The Turkish Cypriots should be asked to remove all trade barriers. The EU should keep on trying to facilitate an agreement on direct trade and flights that might include the return of the nowadays uninhabited city of Varosha to the Greek Cypriots, and that could also include the opening of Turkish ports and airports to Greek Cypriot ships and planes. The EU should look into ways and means of taking Turkish Cypriot harbours and airports under some kind of EU administration, thus alleviating Greek Cypriot fears of a political 'upgrading' of the TRNC.

The EU should look for ways of giving some financial **support to joint economic activities** between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, undertaken by individuals, companies and local authorities, possibly moving along the lines of the previous

experiences with the EU PEACE programmes for Northern Ireland.

Both sides should be asked by the EU to take **steps to build confidence and mutual understanding** (be it unilateral, reciprocal unilateral or mutually agreed steps). The EU should make use of the interest expressed by leading Greek and Turkish Cypriot politicians in such EU-sponsored reconciliation measures and actively seek to implement them. The EU should facilitate them through a **special “Cyprus Reconciliation Fund”**, which should also be eligible to finance bi-communal grassroots activities.

Some of these measures could be planned according to the provisions of the **Reconciliation Chapter of the Annan Plan**.²¹⁵

- A **Reconciliation Commission** ought to be set up or at least **“Reconciliationtzars”** on each side ought to be appointed to promote understanding, tolerance and mutual respect.
- Forms of **dialogue about the past** ought to be worked out.
- **Guidelines for new school textbooks** need to be established to rid them of offending language and to promote mutual understanding of different perspectives of the history.
- **Both the official languages** ought to be **taught to all secondary school students** (i. e. Greek to the Turkish, Turkish to the Greek school students), so as to increase the verbal understanding and the feeling of being citizens of a common bilingual state.

Further steps encouraged and financed by the EU could be:

- Organisation of **youth exchange and /or partnerships** between Greek and Turkish Cypriot schools/students.
- Initiation of **sport contacts** between Greek and Turkish Cypriot sports clubs and plans for a **common Cypriot Olympic team** for the next Olympic Games in 2008.
- Encouraging both sides to **take down propaganda symbols** (as the Turkish flag painted on the hills behind Nicosia and the propaganda paintings and posters on the Greek Cypriot side of the Green Line in Nicosia).

Furthermore, the EU should **normalise its political relations with the Turkish Cypriot authorities**, which were elected in a democratic procedure, without legally recognising them as a separate state. Northern Cyprus is now a distinct separate entity inside the European Union. It seems a viable option to regard the

²¹⁵ UN-Plan Annex VIII

Turkish Cypriot authorities **as the representatives of the future Turkish Cypriot constituent state** of the United Cyprus Republic.

The Greek Cypriots should be encouraged to normalise relations with the Turkish Cypriot authorities as well.

4.4 EU base line for new negotiations on the basis of the Annan Plan

Confidence-building measures are necessary to prepare the ground for new negotiations on a comprehensive settlement. It is only a comprehensive settlement, however, that can solve the Cyprus conflict. The EU should actively **promote some general lines in regard to a new round of negotiations:**

- The Annan Plan and its philosophy must be the principal base of any future negotiations.
- The Annan Plan as it is, is fully consistent with EU laws and EU norms. (Thus the EU can counter the widespread belief among Greek Cypriots that the Annan Plan contradicts EU laws and human rights.)
- The Greek Cypriot Government should be asked to spell out clearly its demands for changes to the Annan Plan. It should be asked to prioritise the demands as the UN Under Secretary- General has stressed.
- The EU should argue in favour of some kind of a 'give and take' approach even in the new round of negotiations. The belief of leading Greek Cypriot politicians that only the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey will have to give²¹⁶ endangers the support of the majority of the Turkish Cypriots whose support for a solution must not be lost.

To **alleviate some Greek Cypriot fears**, the EU should state, possibly by a Council decision, that it is willing to assist the Cypriots to shoulder **the costs of reunification**, and that it will actively seek **the full implementation** of an agreed plan. If one of the parties does not abide by its obligations under an agreed plan, the EU should openly threaten to take severe measures. For Turkey, this could, for example, entail the immediate halt of accession negotiations with the EU.

5. Concluding remark: Will the EU take up the challenge?

Surely, it is not an easy task for the EU to act in a mediating and arbitrating role in the Cyprus conflict. Any fundamental decisions

²¹⁶ See Chapter III.5 of this paper.

in the European Council concerning Cyprus would need the approval of the Greek Cypriot government. On the other hand, the EU institutions and the member states do have room to manoeuvre that they can use if they want to. The EU is not “condemned to acting as (Greek) Cyprus’ hostage”²¹⁷, as some political scientists are claiming.

The EU Parliament and the EU Commission are not restricted by any necessity for unanimous decisions. And, even without the Greek Cypriots the EU member states could work out a co-ordinated policy on how to use their moral, political and financial weight and pursue this policy as national states. Thus a “European spirit” for the Cyprus case could be defined, the limits of tolerance of the EU majority could be shown and the perceptions of the two communities in Cyprus could be influenced.. Such a co-ordinated policy would be certain to influence the Greek Cypriot administration, too. Seen as the Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos has declared his interest in a deeper EU involvement already, even unanimous decisions in the European Council are possible, for example on the establishment of a “Special Envoy” and on the setting-up of a “Cyprus Reconciliation Fund”. The question is: Are the member states willing to take up the challenge and seek for an active EU role in the solution of the Cyprus conflict?

²¹⁷ Heinz Cramer/Kirsten Hein: *A New President in Northern Cyprus*, SWP (German Institute for International and Security Affairs) Comments 18, Berlin, May 2005, p. 6

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List of People Interviewed

Greek Cypriots

Maria Chatsipablou, University of Cyprus, political scientist, long-time activist in bi-communal peace initiatives

Sokrates Hasikos, vice-president of DISY, Former Defence Minister of the Republic of Cyprus

Bambis Kiritsis, general secretary of the Pan-Cyprian Federation of Labour PEO

Nikos Kleanthou, vice president of DIKO

Andros Kyprianou, member of the AKEL politburo and spokesman of AKEL

Panajotis Loizidis, general secretary of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Kyriakos Mavronikolas, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus and vice-president of the Social Democratic Party EDEK

Tasos Mitsopoulos, DISY, Director of the DISY President's Office and party spokesman

Christakis Pashalis, vice president of the "Refugee's Association"

George Vassiliou, president of the liberal "United Democrats" and president of the Republic of Cyprus 1987-1992

Kostas Venizelos, editor of the daily newspaper "Phileleftheros"

Turkish Cypriots

Mustafa Akinci, president of the "Peace and Democracy Movement"

Mustafa Damdelen, spokesman of the "North Civil Initiative" and vice president of the "Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce"

Serdar Denktash, Foreign Minister of the TRNC and president of the Turkish Cypriot Democratic Party

Suleyman Erguclu, editor-in-chief of the Turkish Cypriot daily newspaper “Kibris”

Tahsin Ertugruluglu, UDP, former Foreign Minister of the TRNC

Özdil Talat Nami, coordinator of the movement “This country is ours”

Mehmet Ali Talat, CTP (Republican Party) president of the TRNC

Athens

Prof. Theodore Couloumbis, director general of the “Hellenistic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy” and member of Greece “National Council for Foreign Affairs”

Brussels

Elmar Brok, MEP, European Peoples Party, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament

André Brie, MEP, European United Left – Nordic Green Left, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Andrew Duff, MEP, Liberal Democrat, vice-chairman of the Delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Assembly

Renate Sommer, MEP, European Peoples Party, vice-chairwoman of the Delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee

Hannes Swoboda, MEP, Socialist Group, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Georg Ziegler, EU Commission, Enlargement Directorate-General, Task Force Turkish Cypriot Community

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