



4th Session of Human Rights Council

Statement by

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on

The Human Rights Situation in Cyprus:

Report of the Secretary-General

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Mr. President, Mrs High Commissioner

I would like to refer to the report of the United Nations' Secretary General on the question of Human Rights in Cyprus.

It is indeed regrettable that the situation of Human Rights in Cyprus is indeed still a matter of grave concern. Numerous judgments, resolutions and Decisions have been adopted by the Security Council, the United Nations General Assembly, the European Court of Human Rights as well as other international Organizations and bodies. They clearly condemn the military occupation of almost 37% of the territory of the Cyprus Republic, the gross and systematic violation of Human Rights and of the humanitarian law which resulted from the invasion and occupation.

The Secretary General's actual report is unfortunately and sadly not nearly as balanced as the previous ones. It omits substantial elements of the situation. It reminds us nonetheless that the Republic remains divided and that from this fact, result grave consequences for human rights of its citizens, sometimes regardless of their ethnic belonging.

It is the sad reality that, despite the opening of several crossing points in the green line dividing the island, parts of the occupied territories of Cyprus still remain inaccessible to all Cypriots.

Property rights continue to be ignored and violated. They clearly remain a sensitive issue and a reason for regret and indignation. Many

cases for property losses in the north of the country have not been resolved yet, though won at the European Court of Human Rights.

I take the opportunity to recall the European Court of Human Rights' judgment of May 10th, 2001, in the case of *Cyprus v. Turkey*. The court mentions that there were massive and grave violations of 14 articles of the European convention of Human Rights, regarding, among other things, missing persons and property rights of displaced people from the Karpas peninsula in the north of the island.

I also must stress that in the case of *Loizidou v. Turkey* no concrete measures have been taken regarding Mrs Loizidou's and other refugees' right to return to their former properties though the case was won at the European Court of Human Rights.

The issue of missing persons remains of primary importance for their relatives as well as for the respect of the Human Rights principles itself. Though positive steps towards settling the issue have been taken, we consider it unacceptable that in cases like the one of minor Christakis no concrete traces of individuals can be found.

I would, on this occasion gladly commend the Government of the Republic of Cyprus for taking practical initiatives to facilitate free movement within the republic, such as the very recent demolition of the Ledra street wall.

Mr. President, Mrs. High Commissioner,

33 years after the most flagrant violation of Human Rights, the military occupation of 37% of Cyprus by a foreign country, and despite

serious efforts by the International Community for the reunification of the island, no substantial progress has been achieved. Despite measures to allow exchange of visits and other, limited, confidence building measures, the sad reality remains that the territory of a member of the United Nations remains divided and more than 40.000 foreign troops remain illegally stationed in its territory, impeding prospects for a negotiated settlement of the problem, while the influx of settlers from mainland Turkey has altered the demographic composition of the north.

Mr. President, Mrs. High Commissioner,

We don't belong to those who lose faith, neither to those who don't have confidence in the international institutions, even though they are not faultless. We welcome, in this spirit, the continuing interest of the Secretary General and of our Council for the situation in the Republic of Cyprus. We are also deeply convinced that the efforts of the international community will have at the end as a final result the reunification of Cyprus and safeguarding of peace and security for all its citizens.