# UKRAINE-CYPRUS: HYPOCRISY OF DOUBLE STANDARDS

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Interests and power are the core of politics. The cases of the Ukrainian and the Cypriot crises are indicative of this timeless axiom. Ukraine is the latest manifestation of an ongoing Cold War, which belies the end of history and rekindles dangerous confrontation of the West (USA and EU) with Russia. It constitutes both the new field collision between two worlds and two philosophies: USA and EU seek that Western principles and values support a new world order. Putin's Russia aims to reconstruct the erstwhile Russian empire. On the other hand, Cyprus has always been a bone of contention of many invaders, conquerors, great powers and empires, because of its strategic position between three continents and major sea routes, making it valuable in many ways.

Ukraine and Cyprus are victims of foreign invasion and occupation, violation of sovereignty and territorial integrity, freedom and fundamental human rights by powerful neighbors. Russia and Turkey claim almost the same arguments: Alleged endangered minorities, alleged violation of their rights and the alleged risk of genocide. Russia claimed also historical reasons to snatch Crimea. And Turkey exploiting the Zurich and London Agreements and as its Guarantor Power status invaded to rescue, supposedly, the Turkish Cypriots from Greeks and restore constitutional rule following the coup against President Makarios. The constitutional order was restored but Turkey has remained on the island since 1974. Systematically it colonizes the occupied territories seeking demographic change, along the lines of erstwhile Syrian Alexandretta, which in the end it swallowed.

An invasion is an invasion, and one can not make any kind of excuses for this war crime. Russia relied on historical, religious, racial and cultural reasons to invade Crimea, ostensibly to protect the Russian-speaking community. Turkey claimed, among other things, the preservation of T/Cypriots supposedly slaughtered by the Greeks. Russia and Turkey, though, essentially acted on the basis of geopolitical, strategic and energy interests. Moscow will not have ever wanted, outside her front door a Ukraine potentially joining NATO. As rightly pointed out by the prime exponent of Realpolitik, Henry Kissinger, Ukraine should not join NATO, if the West really cares to maintain bridges with Russia and if it is sincere in its intentions that it doesn't wish to encircle it.

Moreover, the current Prime Minister of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoglu, in his book "Strategic Depth - The international position of Turkey "(translated only in Greek) is quite clear. First, "a country that ignores Cyprus can not be active in global and regional policies." Second, "even if there were no Muslim Turks in Cyprus, Turkey is obliged to maintain a Cyprus question.

No country can remain indifferent to such an island, located in the heart of its own vital space". In the light, therefore, of the Ukrainian and Cypriot crisis, we are seeing an unacceptable level of hypocrisy by the West, a manifestation of its well-known policy of double standards.

At the NATO Summit in Newport, Wales, last month, NATO countries - including Turkey - condemned Russia for its "continuing flagrant violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and agreed on the need for Russia to address increased consequences for its actions". Particularly the United States and Britain, and hence the American and British press are very tough in their attacks and even insulting in their criticism against Russia and especially President Putin. The "Economist", for example, wrote: "Putin is a bandit rather than a leader, an enemy rather than a partner". On the other side, Turkey occupies since 1974, 37% of the Republic of Cyprus, an EU member, maintains 43,000 troops, colonizing occupied land by tens of thousands of settlers, destroyed the cultural heritage and 550 Orthodox churches, but ...

A West sensitive towards Ukraine does not react nor condemns, with the same severity, the continued occupation of Cyprus by a member state of NATO, Turkey, which aspires to join the EU. The US, as the American Vice President, Joe Biden, confirmed, considers Cyprus as "the new, strong strategic partner in the East Mediterranean". But they never condemned the invasion and occupation of territory of this "strong strategic partner" of theirs. Neither did NATO say anything, although three member countries, Britain, Greece and Turkey, are guarantors of the Republic. The politics of double standards are enacted in the case of Ukraine and Cyprus at its most classic, cynical and brutal sense.