

EXTERNAL ASPECT OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM

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In the "Special Issue: The Cyprus Problem" of the "In Depth" bimonthly Electronic Newsletter, published in February 2017, I dealt with the internal aspect of the Cyprus problem under the title "Uncertainties at the Cyprus negotiations." In this issue, I shall point out the uncertainties about the external aspect, mainly the security and the guarantee issues in a possible agreement.

Internal Security

According to the new guarantee formula that the Greek Cypriot side has brought to the table, first 75% of Turkish troops will be withdrawn and the remaining 25% will be withdrawn within a predetermined time (e.g. 18 months) under UNFICYP supervision. (The Turkish Cypriot side did not accept this. They insist that the Turkish Cypriot constituent state, whenever it is needed, should have always the unilateral right of calling Turkey for intervention.)

Internal security was organized in three stages: First, there will be a police force at the constituent state level, comprising 60% Greek Cypriot and 40% Turkish Cypriot policemen, who will serve at their desks, i.e. 5,000 in the south and 3,100 in the north.

The second phase is at the federal level, with 500 police officers at a proportion of 50: 50%, units with the authority of using weapons would serve in emergency response and in federal criminal investigation bureau. The local police of the Turkish Cypriot state will ask for help from the federal government if it is difficult.

In the third stage, the UN Security Council will have an international police force of 2,500 people. This police force will provide personnel from the EU countries outside Greece and the UK and from third countries outside Turkey. This multinational police force to be formed immediately after the settlement will not interfere in any way with the internal arrangement of the United Cyprus and it will function for five years and will be placed on the border between the two constituent states, after the Turkish troops have withdrawn completely from the island. According to Article 6 of the UN Constitution, there will be only light weapons and no authority to interfere with conflicts.

The international police force will only be activated if there is a threat and international peace is in danger. This is a comment by the Security Council based on political criteria and interests and it requires a number of other measures, such as implementing the 7th Article, the economic embargo before the military measures and/or the sea and air bombings.

External Security and Guarantees

Great Britain and Greece, three of the NATO countries that guaranteed the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, seem eager to give up their rights in the new era.

Greek Foreign Minister Kotsias made a proposal to sign a Treaty of Friendship and Stabilization between Greece, Cyprus and Turkey. Through this treaty, it was announced that safety valves could be added to various subjects.

Turkey, on the other hand, requires a structure, as in 1960, not only for the United Cyprus Republic, but also for the constituent states, in which the territorial integrity, security and constitutional order are guaranteed. Three Turkish formulas have been put forward regarding the guarantees:

1. A formula, in which NATO is involved,
2. The guarantee of a Turkish base within the Turkish Cypriot province and commanded by the Turkish commander,
3. The Turkish guarantor will remain for only the Turkish Cypriots after the settlement. In this regard, no agreement has yet been reached.

Sovereign Military Base

It is understood that Turkey's proposal is not to assure the physical security of the Turkish Cypriots or the implementation of the resolution, but rather to raise the geo-strategic demands of her own country. Although Turkey had leaked to the press that she wanted to limit her right to interfere with island's internal affairs, only to the Turkish Cypriot province, but later Turkey wanted to keep a sovereign military base within the Turkish state to be formed in the northern part of the island. This would be commanded by a Turkish commander and its duration would not be fixed.

Turkish President Erdogan wanted to give the message that Turkey will always stay in Cyprus with guarantees and her troops, in a statement he gave immediately after the end of the five-party conference in Geneva in the middle of January 2017. Erdogan demanded that the closed territory of Famagusta be given to the Greek Cypriot side, while the territory of Kokkina and Morphou would be combined and given to the Turkish Cypriot side. "Do not wait for Karpasia and the shoreline" he added. This meant that the Pirgo-Dilliria regions would be given to the control of the constituent Turkish Cypriot state.

According to the Greek Cypriot press, the occupation army has recently developed facilities in the Kokkina region and the Republic of Cyprus also was asked for some facilities, but these requests were rejected. After this rejection, 250 concrete and other materials were transported by sea to this region. According to the evaluations made, this development of the region is related to the military base the Turkish side wants to establish in

Cyprus in case of a solution. According to the Turkish proposal, this base will be sovereign and 2,500 troops will settle here.

Recognizing the Right of Four Freedoms to the Citizens of Turkey, the Citizens of a Non-EU Member

It was described as "very serious", when Turkey demanded, especially during the discussions on the Cyprus issue, that the EU's 4 freedoms (free movement of people, goods, services and capital) should be granted to Turkish citizens and the Greek Cypriot side stated that it did not consider this demand to deal with Cyprus negotiations.

President Nicos Anastasiades sent a letter to the European Commission on January 30, 2017, saying that "Ankara made a blackmail with her demand for 4 freedoms" and, if recognized, "this will have very serious and unprecedented effects not only on Cyprus, but also on the EU and its member states".

The newspaper wrote that Anastasiades received positive responses from the European countries, saying that so far some EU member states were against to the granting of 4 freedoms to Turkish citizens and Bulgaria responded in the same way the day before.

The Fileleftheros newspaper, dated 4 April 2017, informed that a joint procedure of Washington, London, Brussels and the UN Secretary General's Special Adviser on Cyprus Espen Barth Eide was being followed that the demand for the recognition of 4 freedoms would be recognized for the Turkish citizens after the settlement of the Cyprus problem.

Under the title of "The US has 4 freedoms in the background", the Fileleftheros newspaper, based on the information it received, reported that the United States was included in the "game" of support for the request of the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, through Jonathan Cohen, Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The newspaper claims that Cohen gave the EU the opinion that the Turkish request should be fulfilled and that Brussels does not oppose this view and that, based on the same information, he also claimed that the issue of equal treatment for the Turkish citizens was also on the agenda, whereas they are not aware of the rights the Greek citizens in Cyprus have acquired from the EU membership.

The newspaper also said that in case the EU demands, Cohen would be able to provide equal treatment for Turkish and Greek Citizens in Cyprus by "simulating exercises" through the combination of previously applied models, including "Kaliningrad" or "Portugal". He was also informed that preparations could be made for that. It has also been suggested that Brussels will act in a way that Cyprus will have a special status in the EU, in accordance with "previous models".

Regarding the free movement of goods, the newspaper claimed that Turkey is working on the combination of "Customs Union with the EU" and "Providing mutual facilities" between the Federal Republic of Cyprus and Ankara.

In its news comment on 5 March 2017, the Fileleftheros newspaper wrote under the title "EU: Four Freedom with the Portuguese-Brazilian Model" that there are hopes for the creation of a perspective for the resumption of the negotiations on the Cyprus issue, if the influential circles in Brussels examine the "similar examples" for the realization of the Turkish demands for 4 freedoms for her citizens in Cyprus.

The newspaper wrote that the influential circles worked on the example of Portugal, which provided the privileged treatment of the EU, before allowing it to join the EU, by granting work permits to workers from Brazil depending on the special relationship between the two countries.

The newspaper reported that there is a significant difference between the Portuguese example and the situation in Cyprus and that Portugal was not an EU member, when it demanded this privilege, whereas Cyprus has been an EU member state since 13 years.

After a blockage of the inter-communal negotiations, the Greek Cypriot press wrote that the UN has prepared some important bridging proposals between the external security aspect of the Cyprus problem and the internal constitutional aspect, like the rotating presidency. We shall be seeing the results, when the two leaders meet in New York.