



ATAMODELUN

United Nations Peacekeeping Force In Cyprus STUDY GUIDE

Table of Contents

1. Letter from the Secretariat	3
2. Letter from the Co-Under Secretary Generals	4
3. Introduction to the Committee	5
5. Introduction to the Agenda Item and the Historical Background	9
5.1. Cyprus Under Ottoman Rule	9
5.2. British Administration and Invasion of Cyprus	11
5.3. Rise of Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot Nationalism / Taksim & Enosis	12
5.4. Eoka Campaign	15
5.5. London and Zurich Agreements & Independence of Republic of Cyprus	17
6. Growing Tensions Leading to War	19
6.1. The Green Line Division of Nicosia	19
6.2. Bloody Christmas	19
6.3. Establishment of UNFICYP	19
6.4. The Crisis of 1967	19
6.5. Political Developments from 1968 to 1974	19
7. The Cyprus War of 1974	20
7.1. The Greek Junta's Coup Against President Makarios	20
7.2. Türkiye's Decision to Intervene	21
7.3. Operation Attila I (20-22 July 1974) & Operation Attila II (14-16 August 1974)	21
7.4. The Ceasefire	22
7.5. Establishment of the Buffer Zone	23
8. The Situation After 1974	24
8.1. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	24
8.2. Buffer Zone and Current Situation	25
8.3. The Cyprus Issue Today	25
9. Helpful Resources	26
10. Bibliography	27

1. Letter from the Secretariat

Dear Delegates,

It is our distinct honor and privilege to welcome you all to ATAMUN '2026. On behalf of the Secretariat and the Executive Board, we extend our warmest greetings as we prepare to embark on an exceptional journey defined by constructive debate, diplomatic negotiation, and global problem-solving.

This year marks a monumental step forward for our conference. We are exceptionally proud to announce our affiliations with Yale Model United Nations (YMUN LIII) and Oxford Global. These partnerships underscore our unwavering commitment to maintaining world-class academic standards, fostering international educational exchange, and offering our delegates a diplomatic experience rooted in the highest global benchmark of MUN excellence.

This Study Guide has been meticulously drafted by the Academic Team of UNFICYP to provide you with a comprehensive, nuanced foundation for your committee deliberations. It outlines the core historical context, key political dynamics, and central questions facing your respective committees. We strongly encourage you to immerse yourselves in your delegation's foreign policy, push the boundaries of innovative policymaking, and engage with the debate in a spirit of true diplomatic leadership.

We wish you a fruitful and rewarding preparation process, and we eagerly look forward to seeing the impactful debates you will lead at ATAMUN '2026.

Warmest regards,

Kerem Veysel Düzgün & Hasan Arif Ege Başkurt
Co-Secretaries-General, ATAMUN '2026

2. Letter from the Co-Under Secretary Generals

Hello everybody my name is Doruk Sapmaz and I will be serving you guys as your Co-Under Secretary General next to my lovely friend Aslı Ela Kemaloğlu for this conference. I'm currently a student at the University of Pamukkale and studying English Language and Literature.

We know this guide is long but this guide really has it all for you to study and debate about. Do not worry about that part. This committee is really intriguing for the people that are akin to history wouldn't have been possible without my Co-Under-Secretary General Aslı Ela. Before I finish the letter I would like to thank the executive team Kerem Veysel Duzgun, Hasan Arif Ege Baskurt and Ezel Alem for believing in us and the directoriat for making this conference happen. I can't wait for the opportunity to meet all of you in person and I will be leaving my contact information below so feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely, Doruk Sapmaz

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dorukdoam@gmail.com

Esteemed Delegates,

It is an honor and utmost pleasure to welcome you all to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus committee. I am Aslı Ela Kemaloğlu, I am a 2nd year Communication Sciences student at Hacettepe University and I will serve as the Co-Under Secretary General in this committee. Firstly I would like to extend my most heartfelt thanks to my brilliant Co-Under Secretary General Doruk Sapmaz for his efforts. Without him this study guide could not happen and I am so grateful to him for being with me on this journey. I would also like to use this opportunity to thank all of the Executive Team of ATMUN'26. They are truly brilliant in all ways and I want to thank the Secretariat for inviting me to this prestigious conference and giving me this chance to make this committee finally happen.

Our committee focuses on the important topic of Independence of Cyprus. So, in this study guide you will learn about different problems caused by the tension that started after the end of the British Invasion of Cyprus. You will come up with solutions to eliminate this problem for today and next generations. For that it is really important for you to examine this study guide carefully and research upon your countries' stances and policies. Your participation in this committee will not only enhance your knowledge of this issue but will also develop your critical thinking and diplomatic skills. As you engage in constructive debate and negotiations you have to keep in mind that having multilateral cooperation while addressing these complex matters is the key. By working together you will have the opportunity to explore innovative and effective solutions that will improve the world for the better.

I wish you all the best luck in your preparations. I am looking forward to seeing your contributions to the committee. If you have any questions about the committee or the conference please do not hesitate to contact me via email or WhatsApp.

Best Regards,

Aslı Ela Kemaloğlu

Under Secretary-General of United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

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3. Introduction to the Committee

The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, UNFICYP, is one of the longest-running UN Peacekeeping missions. Established by the Security Council, through resolution 186 (1964), the mission was mandated to prevent the recurrence of fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities on the island, contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return to normal conditions.

The mission's responsibilities expanded in 1974, following a coup d'état by elements favouring union with Greece and a subsequent military intervention by Türkiye, whose troops established control over the northern part of the island. Since a de facto ceasefire in August 1974, UNFICYP maintained a buffer zone between the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot forces in the north and the Greek and Greek Cypriot forces in the south. The ceasefire lines extend over 180 kilometers across the island. In the absence of a formal ceasefire agreement, UNFICYP's 850-plus troops and 60-plus police officers deal with hundreds of incidents each year.

UNFICYP through its mandate on humanitarian assistance, delivers humanitarian aid to Greek Cypriots and a small Maronite community living in the northern part of the island and it assists Turkish Cypriots living in the southern part of the island. UNFICYP manages civilian activity in the buffer zone. To this end, it facilitates farming and bicomunal activities where safe, and assists both communities on matters related to the supply of electricity and water across the lines.

UNFICYP's work is based on four components that work together closely: the military, UN Police (UNPOL), the Civil Affairs Section, and Mission support, which supports all activities. The Mission has almost 1100 personnel. Since 1964, 187 United Nations personnel have lost their lives while serving in UNFICYP.

Attempts to solve the Cyprus conflict and reunify the island have so far been unsuccessful. Among other things, this led to the opening of several crossing points across the buffer zone, including across Ledra Street in old Nicosia on 3 April 2008. UNFICYP works closely with the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General in Cyprus, towards a

common objective of supporting a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue. UNFICYP's mandate is renewed by the Security Council on a yearly basis.¹

(Note to delegates: If you see any words underlined that means that it might be an unknown word or term to you so we highly suggest you to click on those words to get information for what they are.)

¹ United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. (2025). *Fact sheet*
https://unficyp.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/fact_sheet_revised_2025_1.pdf

4. Procedure

The procedure that this committee will follow is Semi-Crisis. Which means that this committee will both have a little General Assembly and a little bit of Crisis.

The General Assembly part has to do with the debate side of the committee, the caucuses that will be used will be Unmoderated and Semi-Moderated. And the crisis part will be the main stand point of the committee. The committee's final update and your overall course will be determined with directives.

Semi Moderated: A semi-moderated caucus can be thinked as a moderated caucus but you don't have to wait for the board to choose you to start talking. In other words, once the semi-moderated caucus has started all of the delegates in the committee can talk without cutting the person's speech. So be really careful while talking so you don't cut someone off.

Unmoderated Caucus: After you have debated about what to do in you semi-moderated caucus you can open a Unmoderated caucus to start writing your directives.

While in an Unmoderated caucus delegates aren't obliged to sit at their seats and not cross-talk; on the contrary, everyone can stand up and talk about what to do and also write directives.

Note: You can't send your directives nor can you write your directives while an Unmoderated caucus isn't open.

Directives: Directives are the main materials of Crisis Committees; they are what distinguish a Crisis from the General Assembly. As the name implies, the term "directive" refers to an order or instruction. On the committee, any realistic and feasible action can be taken by writing directives. Consequently, it is guaranteed that the majority of the time spent on the committee will be devoted to writing directives. (Triumphs are attained through concrete actions, rather than mere speeches or campaigns.) Unlike the GA procedure, it is unnecessary to encourage, suggest, or demonstrate any ideas to make it happen; only a decent directive is required. There are several types of directives depending

on what one wants to do, and they will be discussed in the latter section. To summarise, directives are written when one wishes to accomplish or do something. Writing a directive allows one to take any realistic action; therefore, instead of long discussions and talking sessions to execute your ideas and progress in the committee, directives will be written.

Directive Types

Personal Directives: Personal Directives are written when an action is within your character's authority or is possible due to their abilities. Now take a look at how to write a personal directive: Firstly, there is a format for writing directives; thus, one has to write who is sending the directive and to whom (from, to). After that, the cabinet sends the directive, the real-world time and the current date of the committee. Lastly, the type of your directive and the headline of it. And that's it; this is all the format one needs to know to write a directive. The only thing left is the content of the directive, and the method by which one writes it is fairly straightforward; it is written by addressing the WH questions, which are what, why, when, who, where, and, most importantly, how. Write down the action you want to take by answering the WH questions, (how, when, what, why, who) then detailing and explaining it as much as possible to ensure that your plan is as comprehensive as possible. Also, the use of the future tense is critical; try to use it whenever possible.

Joint Directive: Directives written by more than one individual are considered joint directives. Joint directives are written when one can only achieve the purpose of the directive by utilising the authority of other cabinet members. Consider the scenario where one is a commander responsible for capturing Warsaw. Recognising the insurmountable challenge of achieving this objective without air superiority, a collaborative effort can be initiated by writing a joint directive with the Air Force general. In this case, the "from" field of the directive would include the commander's name alongside the name of the air force general, and instead of a personal directive, you write "Joint Directive" at the top of the directive. Everything else is the same.

Committee Directive: A committee directive is written when one wishes to use

everyone's authority or when one is about to deliver their final directive (in most cases). Delegates frequently ask, "How are we meant to write a committee directive with the other cabinet?" However, this concern stems from a widespread misunderstanding. The committee directive is essentially formulated collaboratively within the confines of your cabinet, with the members of your cabinet. Although it is formally referred to as a "committee directive", its essence remains akin to that of a cabinet directive. So, simply writing "Committee Directive" in the "from:" part will do.

Intelligence Directive Intelligence directives are written when one wants to acquire the necessary information about their country/cabinet/character. The format is exactly the same, except for the "WH Questions" part. For example:

From: Winston Churchill

Date: 1942 May 3

To: Crisis Team

Time: 16.21

Intelligence Directive

Our Troop Counts (The Great Britain Cabinet)

How many troops does our country have? Do we possess any nuclear weapons? How many of our military factories are assigned to manufacture infantry weapons, and what kind of weapons are they producing?

When one wants to acquire a piece of information, one must write "To: Crisis Team", but when one wants to take action, one must write "To: Related Authorities". The reason behind this is that the crisis team are not the people who will cause the action to happen; hence, "Related Authorities" must be written.

Top Secret: Top secret directives are those that your chair is not allowed to read. Top secret directives are directly handed to the admin. They are written precisely the same, but one must fold the paper and write "TOP SECRET" on the backside of it. The major reason for writing a Top Secret Directive is treason, a diabolical strategy to crash one's own cabinet or switch sides. For instance, if a person secretly kills his cabinet members and becomes dictator, the winning condition changes and only that person wins, whereas the cabinet loses. But I do not recommend writing top secret directives unless you're planning on writing a brilliant 10-page directive, because failing to do so will backfire much worse.

If one fails to accomplish their nefarious plan and gets busted, one will earn their cabinet's distrust and may die and be given an insignificant character. Additionally, updates to the Top Secret Directives are only sent to the person who sent them unless they directly affect other cabinet members.

Press Release (Declamation): Press releases are written when one wants to make a declaration, a speech, or a notice. When one writes a press release, depending on the era of the committee, the other cabinet members may hear it or not. In our case, there are no printers, social media, or newspapers, so it is very unlikely to hear other cabinets' press releases. The format is once again exactly the same, except for the "WH Questions" part.

5. Introduction to the Agenda Item and the Historical Background

5.1. Cyprus Under Ottoman Rule

Before Ottoman rule, Cyprus was governed by the Republic of Venice from 1489 to 1571. Between 1570 and 1571, the Ottoman Empire launched a military campaign against the island, eventually capturing Famagusta and bringing Cyprus under Ottoman control. The conquest marked a major political transformation for the island and established Ottoman rule that would last for approximately three centuries, until 1878. Under the Ottoman administration, Cyprus was added into the empire and governed by the Ottoman authorities, although the island retained some of its existing social and social and religious structures.

The Ottoman Empire rule period was especially important for the later development of Cyprus because it contributed to the emergence of Muslim and Christian communities of the island. The majority of the existing population was Greek speaking and Christian Orthodox. Following the Ottoman Empire's conquest, Muslim settlers such as soldiers, administrators and their families established their lives in Cyprus. Over time a permanent Muslim population developed alongside the existing Christian Orthodox population. These two communities lived alongside one another for centuries with people often sharing economic and social spaces.² However, religious identity remained an important

² Çetiner, N. (2024). Who are the people of Cyprus? The national identity building process in Cyprus from the late 19th to the early 20th century. *Nationalities Papers*.

distinction for the island people. The Orthodox Church held an important position within the Christian community, while the Muslims were connected to the Ottoman administration and religious system. These religious distinctions later contributed to the development of separate communal identities; it is important not to portray the Ottoman period as a continuous period of conflict between Greeks and Turks.³

The Ottoman Empire governed its diverse population partly through the millet system, which organized religious communities according to their faith. The Orthodox Christian community was represented by the Greek Orthodox Church, which was given considerable authority over religious and certain communal matters. The Archbishop of Cyprus became an important intermediary between the Christian population and Ottoman authorities. This arrangement allowed the Orthodox Church to maintain significant influence over education, religious affairs and aspects of community organization. Consequently, religion became closely connected to communal identity. However, the identities of the island's inhabitants during this period should not be understood as identical to the modern concepts of "Greek Cypriot" and "Turkish Cypriot". Modern national identities developed much later, particularly during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴

During the three centuries of Ottoman administration, Cyprus developed a population composed primarily of Orthodox Christians and Muslims, alongside smaller communities. The Muslim population became a well established part of Cypriot society rather than simply representing Ottoman officials or soldiers. Agriculture was the foundation of the island's economy while trade and local crafts also played really important roles. Relations between the communities varied according to location and historical circumstances. There were periods of cooperation and economic interaction, as well as tensions resulting from taxation, political authority, economic inequality and religious differences. These

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/nationalities-papers/article/who-are-the-people-of-cyprus-the-national-identity-building-process-in-cyprus-from-the-late-19th-to-the-early-20th-century/EA9AAF06237E1E1323FF05BE4F8145CF>

³ Constantinou, C. M. (2022). Hyphenated identities: Voices from the watchtower during the Cypriot civil war. *Nationalities Papers*, 50(4), 640–660.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/nationalities-papers/article/hyphenated-identities-voices-from-the-watchtower-during-the-cypriot-civil-war/6F97633E2976BC1D5BC800677E7C3496>

⁴ Ueno, M. (2026). Millet in Ottoman documents: Religious, confessional, or ethnic/national collectives of non-Muslims? *Nationalities Papers*.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/nationalities-papers/article/millet-in-ottoman-documents-religious-confessional-or-ethniconnational-collectives-of-nonmuslims/0D85ED642595B3726C1883E37A613220>

relationships were complex and cannot simply be described as a permanent conflict between two ethnic groups. By the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was experiencing increasing political, military and economic difficulties. At the same time, European nationalism was becoming increasingly influential throughout the Ottoman territories. The Greek War of Independence beginning in 1821 and the creation of the independent Greek state in 1830 had an important ideological impact on Greek speaking Orthodox populations across the eastern Mediterranean.

In Cyprus, some members of the Greek Orthodox community increasingly developed political and cultural connections with Greece. Over time, the idea of Enosis, meaning the union of Cyprus with Greece, became increasingly influential among sections of the Greek Cypriot population. This concept would become extremely important in the twentieth-century Cyprus conflict.

The Ottoman period ended following the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, resulting in diplomatic negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and Britain about transferring the administration of the island to Britain under the conditions of exchanging support against Russian expansion. Under the Cyprus Convention 1878, the Ottoman Empire retained formal sovereignty over Cyprus while Britain assumed control and administration of the island. In 1914, following the Ottoman Empire's entry into World War I against Britain and its allies, Britain formally annexed Cyprus. The transition from Ottoman to British administration fundamentally changed the political environment of Cyprus. After these developments the island's future was shaped by British colonial policies, Greek Cypriot demands for Enosis and the political organization of the Turkish Cypriot community. These developments eventually contributed to the disputes surrounding independence in 1960 and decades later the conflict of 1974.⁵

⁵ Sant Cassia, P. (1986). Religion, politics and ethnicity in Cyprus during the Turkokratia (1571–1878). *European Journal of Sociology*, 27(1), 3–28.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/231919934_Religion_politics_and_ethnicity_in_Cyprus_during_the_Turkocratia_1571-1878

5.2. British Administration and Invasion of Cyprus

From 1878 to 1920, British authorities who only had the control and the administration rights of the island largely tolerated Greek Cypriot nationalists in favor of Enosis (the term Enosis will be further explained in the section 4.4) and even senior British politicians including William Ewart Gladstone and Winston Churchill were sympathetic to the idea. Britain offered to cede Cyprus to Greece in 1915 in an unsuccessful attempt to draw Greece into World War I on the Allied side.

The period between 1920 to 1945, has held many major developments for the fate of the island. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne formally settled Cyprus' international status, after which Türkiye encouraged, with limited success, the emigration of Turkish Cypriots to Anatolia. Britain annexed Cyprus outright in 1914 after the Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of the Central Powers, and in 1925 the island was formally declared as a Crown colony. British attempts to suppress Greek nationalist agitation contributed to the 1931 uprising, which colonial authorities have put down quickly. During World War II, thousands of Cypriots fought alongside the British forces against fascism.⁶

Between 1956 and 1960, post-war constitutional proposals for limited self-government which was offered by Britain in 1948 were rejected by the Cypriot leaders who continued to press for Enosis and continued British refusal to encourage the unification of the island with Greece contributed to the outbreak of an armed independence campaign led by EOKA (the term EOKA will be further explained in section 4.5) in 1945. In response to this insurgency, Britain increasingly drew Türkiye and the Turkish Cypriot community into the political disputes and deepened the intercommunal divisions. Over this time period, the British administration nonetheless left a lasting institution by introducing an English style legal system, modern roads, postal infrastructure and a western style education system.

By 1959, Greek Cypriot leaders had accepted a compromise settlement short of Enosis. The London and Zurich agreements signed in February 1959 established the framework

⁶ Archaeology Wiki. (2012, August 6). *Historic Nicosia*.
<https://www.archaeology.wiki/blog/2012/10/29/d-michaelides-ed-historic-nicosia/>

for an independent Republic of Cyprus, and Britain formally granted independence for the island on 16 August 1960 with the Treaty of Guarantee and with this development, Archbishop Makarios III became the country's first President and Dr. Fazıl Küçük became the Vice President of Cyprus. One of the most crucial parts of this treaty was it formally granted Britain the sovereignty two military bases (Akrotiri & Dhekelia) on the island and to Britain to become one of the three guarantor powers responsible under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee upholding Cyprus' independence and constitutional order alongside Türkiye and Greece.

5.3. Rise of Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot Nationalism / Taksim & Enosis

The roots of Cyprus' modern ethnic division lies in the Ottoman conquest of the island from Venice 1570-1571, which introduced a substantial Turkish Muslim population alongside the Greek Orthodox Christian majority. This development has caused a religion based dual identity that would eventually become into two rival ethnic nationalism ideas. For roughly three centuries under the Ottoman administration, communal identity in Cyprus has remained organized around the Ottoman millet system, which had religious affiliation rather than ethnicity or language.

Greek Cypriot nationalism did not emerge in isolation; it developed as a regional expression of a wider Greek nationalist ideology known as the Megali Idea ("Great Idea"), first formally articulated by the Greek politician Ioannis Kolettis in a speech to the Greek National Assembly in January 1844. Kolettis argued that the newly independent Kingdom of Greece, established after the Greek War of Independence of 1821–1829, represented only "the smallest and poorest parts" of the Greek nation, and that all territories historically or culturally connected to ethnic Greeks - including Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia, Crete, the Aegean islands, Constantinople, and especially Cyprus - needed to be incorporated into a restored Greek state modeled on the Byzantine Empire. This irredentist framework provided the ideological architecture for what would become the Enosis movement: the aspiration to unite Cyprus with the Greek motherland.

Once British administration began in 1878, Greek Cypriots - who by most estimates comprised roughly 70–80% of the island's population - found themselves better positioned than Greek populations elsewhere in the former Ottoman world to pursue this goal, since British rule initially tolerated, and in some periods even sympathized with, Greek Cypriot nationalist aspirations. The two principal institutional carriers of Greek Cypriot nationalism throughout the British period were the Church of Cyprus, which had functioned as the ethnic leadership (ethnarchy) of the Greek Orthodox community since Ottoman times, and an emerging Greek Cypriot commercial and professional bourgeoisie, which together formed what one scholarly account describes as the "historic bloc" of the Greek Cypriot ruling class. From the earliest years of British rule, Greek Cypriot leaders resisted extending equal political standing to the Muslim community, regarding their presence on the island as an unfortunate historical circumstance that should be politically neutralized rather than accommodated.

On the other hand, the Turkish Cypriot nationalist consciousness developed considerably later and slower than the Greek Cypriots. Greek Cypriots could draw on an existing Greek nation state that existed since 1830 along with well established religious, educational and cultural links to Athens. The Muslim population of the island had no equivalent national "homeland" to orient itself toward until Turkish nationalism itself began to mature following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 after the Turkish War of Independence. In the early twentieth century, loyalties among the Turkish Cypriots remained largely local and centered on their families, villages and Islam rather than any political conception of Turkish or Turkish Cypriot nationalism.

Therefore, Turkish Cypriot nationalism developed essentially as a reactive phenomenon. Its growth and ultimate ideological form stemmed from an independent intellectual tradition but rather from the need to respond to the Great Cypriot Enosis campaign. Eventually, this reactive posture inclined many Turkish Cypriots to favor the continuation of the British colonial rule, which they saw as a safeguard against incorporation and assimilation into a Greek state over any independence settlement that might empower the Greek Cypriot majority.

The first clearest expression of the Greek Cypriot nationalist militancy came in October of 1931. The tensions between the Greek Cypriots and the British administrators of the Crown Colony over the British financial policies. In September 1931, Governor Sir Ronald Storrs blocked a Legislative Council attempt to halt tax increases needed to cover a colonial budget deficit prompting Greek Cypriot legislators to resign their seats in protest.

On October 18, Bishop Nicodemos of Kition called on Greek Cypriots to engage in acts of civil disobedience until their demands for Enosis were met, and on October 21, approximately 5,000 Greek Cypriots, mostly students, priests, and local notables, gathered in Nicosia chanting pro-Enosis slogans. The crowd surrounded the Government House; after hours of stone-throwing, a young Greek Cypriot student climbed the flagpole, tore down the British flag, and raised the Greek flag; the building was then set ablaze and completely destroyed. Riots characterized by arson and vandalism spread to the villages of the island in the following days; the residence of the District Commissioner in Limassol was also burned, and incidents were reported in 209 villages. British authorities responded by sending Royal Navy ships and troop reinforcements from Egypt, and by early November, order had been fully restored. Seven protesters were killed, thirty were injured, ten participants were sent into exile for life, and more than 2,600 were sentenced to prison or fined.

The British response to the events known in Greek as the "Oktovriana" was harsh: the Legislative Council was suspended, political organizations were banned, the press was censored, the ringing of church bells for non-religious purposes was prohibited, and the flying of the Greek flag was declared illegal. However, these measures, instead of suppressing Cypriot Greek nationalist sentiment, deepened the hostility of Cypriot Greeks towards colonial rule and strengthened, rather than weakened, the cause of Enosis. The 1931 uprising is considered by historians to be a decisive turning point in British-Cypriot Greek relations, marking the point at which cautious compromise gave way to persistent mutual distrust between colonial rule and the Cypriot Greek population.

As Greek Cypriot nationalism intensified throughout the 1940s and 1950s, culminating in the EOKA insurgency, Turkish Cypriot leaders and the Turkish government proposed an opposing political solution: partition, the division of Cyprus into separate Greek and

Turkish regions or states. The anxieties of Turkish Cypriots regarding Enosis were further sharpened by a specific historical precedent: the mass emigration of the island's Muslim Cretan Turkish population following the unification of Crete with Greece, and Turkish Cypriots were determined to avoid this outcome for themselves. By 1957, partition had crystallized as the organized political and paramilitary counterpart to Enosis. The slogan "Ya Taksim Ya Ölüm" became the motto of Turkish Cypriot nationalism, directly mirroring EOKA's uncompromising "Enosis or Death" slogan.

Organized Turkish Cypriot self-defense began modestly as early as 1957 with temporary local groups established under the leadership of figures such as Rauf Denktaş, Burhan Nalbantoğlu, and Kemal Tanrısevdi. One of these early groups, the "Black Gang," based in Tahtakale, was formed in 1957 to patrol the Turkish Cypriot settlement area in Nicosia against EOKA activities, but it failed to develop into a significant island-wide movement. These fragmented efforts were unified under the umbrella of the Turkish Resistance Organization (TMT), founded on November 1, 1958, by Denktaş together with Turkish officer Rıza Vuruşkan, under the guidance of the Turkish General Staff. The TMT adopted the grey wolf, a symbol taken from Turkish mythology and a significant symbol of Turkish nationalism, as its emblem and announced its existence to the public on November 29, 1957, through brochures distributed in major Cypriot cities. The organization established an underground structure focused on smuggling weapons, training camps in Türkiye for Cypriot militants, and intelligence networks, and remained active from 1958 to 1974, primarily promoting separatism.

By the late 1950s, the political landscape was sharply polarized: the Greek Cypriots and the Greek government were pushing for Enosis, while the Turkish Cypriots and the Turkish government were demanding Taksim, and Britain, determined to retain sovereignty over the island for strategic reasons linked to its military commitments in the Middle East and the Mediterranean at the time, was caught between two mutually exclusive nationalist projects. A shift in the British position in late 1957, moving away from the insistence on continued British sovereignty and towards seeking compromise finally opened the way for negotiations. This compromise, reached between Greece and Turkey and later extended to representatives from Britain and Cyprus, became the London and Zurich Agreements of February 1959, discussed in Chapter 4 below. It should be noted, however, that the underlying Enosis-Taksim conflict was suppressed rather than

resolved by this agreement, and would re-emerge with increasing intensity throughout the 1960s and until the Turkish invasion in 1974.

5.4. Eoka Campaign

Frustrated by Britain's repeated refusal to negotiate a path to Enosis, including the rejection of proposals for limited autonomy in 1948, which Greek Cypriot leaders deemed insufficient, the Church of Cyprus, under the leadership of Archbishop Makarios III (elected in 1950), united Greek Cypriot nationalist organizations under the auspices of the Ethnoarchy Council after World War II and, with the support of the Greek government, waged a diplomatic campaign for autonomy. When this diplomatic strategy failed to convince the British government, the Ethnoarchy moved to planning an armed uprising and appointed Georgios Grivas, a Cypriot-born, retired Greek Army colonel and veteran of the Greek resistance during World War II, as its military commander. Grivas established the Ethniki Organosis Kypriou Agoniston (EOKA, National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters), forming a core of approximately 300 trained fighters divided into two groups: mobile "mountain gangs" that ambushed security forces in rural areas, and "urban groups" that attacked soldiers, police, government officials, and government informants in city centers. A broader support network of approximately 750 rural supporters provided food, housing, labor, and intelligence.

The EOKA operation began on April 1, 1955, with a coordinated wave of sabotage: eighteen bombs exploded across the island, and a man using the alias "Digenes" claimed responsibility for the attacks; this person was soon revealed to be Grivas. The coordinated attacks targeted police, military, and government targets in Nicosia, Famagusta, Larnaca, and Limassol; these included the destruction of a radio station in Nicosia. In his memoirs, Grivas divides the campaign into eight distinct phases; these phases encompass a period beginning with sabotage, strikes, and demonstrations, lasting until the arrival of the new governor, Field Marshal Sir John Harding, on October 3, 1955. During Harding's term, there was a marked escalation of conflict on both sides: EOKA ambushed British soldiers, formed a youth wing (ANE), and fought in the Battle of Spilia in December 1955; In this battle, twelve EOKA fighters clashed with approximately 700 British soldiers, including Royal Marine commandos, resulting in about fifty British soldiers being wounded, while EOKA suffered no casualties.

On November 26, 1955, Governor Harding declared a state of emergency, granting colonial authorities extensive powers of detention, censorship, and collective punishment. The British garrison steadily expanded with reinforcements from Egypt, eventually reaching over 30,000 troops. The British response included harsh interrogation methods, considered by historians in many instances to be tantamount to torture, as well as the establishment of counter-terrorism units, the demolition of suspected insurgents' homes, mass raids, and the use of "rapid intervention teams" to detain and interrogate suspects. During the state of emergency, nine convicted EOKA members were executed on May 10, 1956, including 23-year-old Michalakis Karaolis and 22-year-old Andreas Dimitriou. The executions took place in Nicosia Central Prison despite mass demonstrations in Cyprus and Greece, and led to a brutal crackdown on EOKA protests in Athens, resulting in the deaths of four people and injuries to 265.

Archbishop Makarios himself was arrested by British authorities on March 9, 1956, on suspicion of links to EOKA and exiled to the Seychelles. This move drew international criticism and temporarily removed the most prominent Greek Cypriot political leader from power. The violence of the insurgency peaked during this period, coinciding with the temporary reduction of British military forces in Cyprus due to the 1956 Suez Crisis. However, by early 1957, the strengthening British security apparatus had significantly reduced EOKA's operational capabilities in its mountain strongholds in the Troodos Mountains, and Grivas was forced to declare a unilateral ceasefire in March 1957, primarily to prevent the complete military annihilation of his organization. Following Makarios's release from exile in March 1957, the intensity of the violence temporarily decreased, but occasional attacks and British counter-operations continued.

The conflict was never limited to clashes between EOKA and British troops. From 1957 onwards, Turkish Cypriot paramilitary groups and, after November 1958, the TMT, increasingly engaged in direct conflict with EOKA, and throughout 1958, violence between Greek and Turkish Cypriot civilians escalated, transforming the anti-colonial uprising into an increasingly intercommunal conflict. British authorities also actively involved members of the Turkish Cypriot community in auxiliary police forces; some estimates suggest around 4,000 Turkish Cypriots served in this capacity. This policy was later cited by Greek Cypriot nationalists as evidence that Britain deliberately incited the

two communities against each other. In late 1957, Sir Hugh Foot, the British Governor who succeeded Harding, proposed a plan for multi-year autonomy until a final constitutional solution, explicitly rejecting both Enosis and partition. The plan, which excluded the partition of Cyprus, was met with anti-British demonstrations by Turkish Cypriots in Nicosia on 27-28 January 1958, and Britain subsequently withdrew the plan.

By 1958, facing a war he could not win directly, increasing resistance from Turkish Cypriots and the Turkish government, and growing international pressure, Makarios announced that he would accept an independent Cyprus rather than insist on Enosis; this was a decisive turning point that paved the way for a negotiated solution. EOKA's armed struggle was officially suspended on 9 March 1959, following the signing of the London and Zurich Agreements on 19 February 1959. During the nearly four-year state of emergency in Cyprus, all sides suffered significant losses: British sources reported 371–405 security force members killed (371 military personnel and 21 British police officers according to a death list database) and 601 wounded, while EOKA itself lost approximately 102–112 fighters; nine of whom were executed by British authorities. Other estimates of British military and police casualties range from 104 to 156, depending on the source and personnel category.

5.5. London and Zurich Agreements & Independence of Republic of Cyprus

With both Enosis and partition options becoming unrealistic—the former blocked by Turkish and Turkish Cypriot opposition and Britain's strategic interests on the island, while the latter was unacceptable to Greece and the Greek Cypriot majority—the Greek and Turkish governments reached a conciliatory constitutional agreement at a conference in Zurich, finalized on 11 February 1959. This Greek-Turkish agreement was subsequently incorporated into a broader quadripartite agreement signed on 19 February 1959 at Lancaster House in London by representatives from Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, as well as the leaders of the two communities of Cyprus: Archbishop Makarios III on behalf of the Greek Cypriots and Dr. Fazıl Küçük on behalf of the Turkish Cypriots.

The London and Zurich Agreements laid the constitutional foundation for the independent Republic of Cyprus, based on the principles of consociative power-sharing aimed at

reconciling the two communities within a single state. The 1960 Constitution established a presidential system consisting of a Greek Cypriot president and a Turkish Cypriot vice-president, each directly elected by their respective communities and possessing independent veto power in certain categories of legislation, including foreign policy, defence, and security matters. The House of Representatives was to be elected by the communities in a fixed ratio of approximately 70% Greek Cypriot and 30% Turkish Cypriot seats, regardless of the exact proportions of the two communities in the total population (approximately 77% Greek Cypriot and 18% Turkish Cypriot according to the 1960 census). Separate public councils were established within each community to address religious, educational, and cultural matters. Public service and security forces were to be staffed according to a fixed 70:30 ratio, and the judicial system was similarly organized along bi-communal lines. Most importantly, the House of Representatives did not have the power to amend the "fundamental articles" of the Constitution, and other constitutional changes required a qualified majority in each community separately, making future revisions to the agreement extremely difficult.

Alongside the constitutional settlement, three interlocking international treaties were concluded to underpin the new state's security architecture. The Treaty of Establishment granted the United Kingdom continuing sovereignty over two Sovereign Base Areas at Akrotiri and Dhekelia, covering roughly ninety-nine square miles of Cypriot territory, which Britain retained even after relinquishing its wider colonial authority over the island. The Treaty of Guarantee committed Britain, Greece, and Turkey jointly to safeguard the independence, territorial integrity, and constitutional order of the Republic of Cyprus, explicitly prohibiting both Enosis and Taksim, and granted each guarantor power the right -in the first instance through consultation, and failing that, unilaterally -to take action to restore the state of affairs established by the treaty. This provision would later become the legal basis Turkey invoked to justify its 1974 invasion. Finally, the Treaty of Alliance, signed by Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus in August 1960, permitted Greece and Turkey to station limited contingents of troops on the island -950 Greek and 650 Turkish soldiers, respectively -ostensibly to help train and support a future Cypriot army.

According to many, the agreement was imposed on the Cypriot representatives rather than freely negotiated: Greek Cypriot critics later claimed that Makarios and other Cypriot signatories only accepted it because the alternatives were the continued denial of

independence, further bloodshed, or the complete partition of Cyprus. Galo Plaza, the UN mediator for Cyprus, in his 1965 report to the UN Secretary-General, described the resulting 1960 Constitution as a "constitutional anomaly," noting that serious difficulties arose in implementing the agreement immediately following independence. Neither Enosis nor Taksim could be achieved by either community, and the complex community veto mechanisms and fixed ethnic ratios enshrined in the Constitution, aimed at preventing the dominance of any single party, became a source of chronic legislative paralysis after the establishment of the new Republic.

Based on the London and Zurich Agreements, a formal draft constitution was prepared in the following months, and on 16 August 1960, the Republic of Cyprus was proclaimed as an independent sovereign state; this marked the end of 82 years of British rule that began with the 1878 Cyprus Convention. Archbishop Makarios III, elected president by the Greek Cypriot community in December 1959, became the first president of the Republic, and Dr. Fazıl Küçük, elected by the Turkish Cypriot community, served as vice-president. The new Republic joined the United Nations the following month and became a republic within the Commonwealth in March 1961, formalizing its institutional ties with Britain even after the end of colonial rule.

Independence did not resolve the fundamental conflict between Enosis (union with Greece) and Taksim (partition); it merely transferred this conflict to the constitutional structure of the new state. The complex conciliatory mechanisms of the 1960 Constitution—fixed ethnic quotas in parliament, public service, and security forces; the dual veto power of the president and vice-president, and the supermajority requirement for constitutional amendments, were introduced to appease both communities, but instead created a highly deadlocked system. Just three years after independence, this fragility became apparent: in 1963, when financial legislation was repealed under Article 78 of the Constitution, the House of Representatives was divided along rigid community lines and failed to renew the income tax on which public finances were tied, leading to a wider constitutional crisis. In November 1963, President Makarios proposed thirteen amendments to resolve the resulting deadlock, restricting some of the veto powers of the Turkish Cypriot vice-president and altering the fixed community ratios; Turkish Cypriot leaders categorically rejected these proposals, and opposition quickly escalated into intercommunal violence, the resignation of Turkish Cypriot representatives from the

central government, and a de facto division of state power along community lines, a situation that persisted until the end of the decade.

This collapse, occurring just three years after carefully crafted agreements in London and Zurich were assumed to have resolved the Cyprus problem, laid the groundwork for the protracted intercommunal conflict of the 1960s, the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces (UNFICYP) from 1964 onwards, and ultimately the Greek junta-backed coup and Turkish invasion of 1974, which led to the permanent division of the island into Greek and Turkish Cypriot areas.

6. Growing Tensions Leading to War

6.1. The Green Line Division of Nicosia

The "Green Line" takes its name from an improvised crisis management operation carried out in late December 1963, immediately following intercommunal clashes that erupted in Nicosia earlier that month. As fighting spread across the capital and casualties mounted on both sides, British troops, still on the island under the Union Treaty and acting as a precursor to a future United Nations peacekeeping force, were tasked with separating the warring parties and stabilizing a ceasefire line between areas controlled by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot forces.

On the night of December 30, 1963, following a lengthy meeting – reportedly lasting up to twelve hours – between representatives of the two communities and the British command, the British "peacekeeping force" commander, Major General Peter Young, sat down with a map of Nicosia. Intelligence officer Major Michael Perrett-Young produced a set of colored pencils to mark the ceasefire positions. Green was chosen as a neutral color, as the Greek flag was predominantly blue and the Turkish flag predominantly red; Furthermore, according to long-standing military tradition, it was the color traditionally used to mark artificial obstacles or impassable areas, such as minefields. Young drew a green pencil line from one end of Nicosia's Venetian-era city walls to the other on the map, marking where the ceasefire line between the two settlements would pass. This improvised marker, designed as a purely temporary emergency measure, gave the resulting division its permanent name.

Originally conceived as a narrow, temporary buffer zone, barely ten meters wide in places, the line was intended to last only long enough for tensions to ease and a political settlement to be reached. Instead, it remained in place. In March 1964, the newly formed UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) took over patrolling the line from British troops, and the Green Line became an integral part of the Nicosia landscape; as one contemporary British military report noted, it became a "permanent obstacle" to normalizing relations between the two communities, and even years later, neither side dared to cross it voluntarily. Following the Turkish invasion of 1974, the line's scope and significance increased dramatically: it essentially became a Nicosia-specific phenomenon, and following the establishment of ceasefire lines at the Geneva Conference in August 1974, it evolved into a border stretching approximately 180 kilometers, extending from Kato Pyrgos in the west to Paralimni in the east. This United Nations-controlled buffer zone currently covers an area of approximately 346 square kilometers, or approximately 3.7% of Cyprus's total area, and ranges in width from 3.3 meters in the historic center of Nicosia to 7.4 kilometers in the island's rural areas.

The most visible and enduring legacy of the Green Line is the division of Nicosia, one of the last significant examples of divided capitals in the world, along with the Korean Demilitarized Zone. Within the walled old city, narrow medieval streets abruptly end with sandbag-reinforced checkpoints, barricades made of oil barrels, and derelict areas containing buildings abandoned and crumbling since the 1960s and 1970s; shop windows are still filled with original goods, and the hotel and shopping district once known as "Knightsbridge" stands frozen in time. Border crossings along the line were completely closed for decades; however, on 3 January 1994, one of the crossings reopened for the first time in almost twenty years, allowing limited movement between the Greek Cypriot south and the Turkish Cypriot north of the city. The Ledra Street pedestrian crossing, located in the heart of the old city and one of Nicosia's busiest shopping streets before it was closed due to the railway line, was only reopened to pedestrians in 2008.

6.2. Bloody Christmas

By late 1963, the carefully crafted power-sharing arrangements enshrined in the 1960 Constitution began to crumble. In November of that year, President Makarios III proposed thirteen constitutional amendments, ostensibly intended to resolve recurring administrative

and financial impasses between the two communities. Some of the proposed amendments were primarily technical in nature, and while some controversial ones provided advantages to the Turkish Cypriot community, others were viewed by Turkish Cypriot leaders as a direct undermining of constitutional guarantees designed to protect their community from dominance by the Greek Cypriot majority, including the vice-presidential veto and the fixed 70:30 ratio in the civil service and security forces. The Turkish government officially rejected the proposals, viewing the attempt to amend the "fundamental articles" of the constitution as a dangerous precedent. In fact, both communities had quietly accumulated weapons shortly after the Zurich Accords, and observers on the ground believed violent conflict was only a matter of time.

The spark ignited early in the morning of December 21, 1963. A Greek Cypriot police patrol operating within the old Venetian walls of Nicosia stopped a taxi carrying Turkish Cypriots returning from dinner on or near Hermes Street, on the outskirts of the Turkish quarter, ostensibly to check their documents. While the Greek and Turkish Cypriot versions of events differ in their precise descriptions of what happened next, the outcome is undeniable: a shootout erupted in the ensuing conflict, and two Turkish Cypriots, identified in the Turkish Cypriot versions as taxi driver Zeki Halil and his passenger, Cemaliye Emirali, were shot dead, while many others, both Greek and Turkish Cypriot, were wounded. News of the killings spread throughout the city within hours and, as a later report puts it, became the "trigger" for the ensuing violence.

Within hours, clashes erupted throughout Nicosia and quickly spread to other mixed towns and villages on the island. In Omorphita, Agios Kassianos, Koutsoventis, Kokkinias, and other areas around the capital, clashes occurred between Turkish Cypriot paramilitary forces, including members of the newly formed TMT, and armed Greek Cypriots loyal to figures such as Interior Minister Polykarpos Yiorkadzis. Between December 22 and 25, the city, according to various sources, effectively became a war zone. On December 23, an extremely violent incident occurred in the village of Ayvasil near Nicosia (Turkish Cypriot sources say 21 people were killed); a group of Turkish Cypriot prisoners were reportedly killed, executed with their hands bound, and buried in a mass grave; the exact circumstances and casualty figures of this and other events remain a subject of debate among Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot historians. The violence spread beyond Nicosia to Larnaca, Famagusta, Limassol, Paphos, and Kyrenia.

According to widely cited estimates, 31 Turkish Cypriots and five Greek Cypriots were killed on the island on December 24 alone. North of Nicosia, Turkish Cypriot forces occupied a strong defensive position at St. Hilarion Castle, controlling the road to the northern coastal town of Kyrenia, which later became the main fighting corridor in the subsequent conflict. Casualty figures for this event are disputed and vary significantly depending on the source. Turkish Cypriot and Turkish government accounts widely claim that around 364 Turkish Cypriots died in the initial period of "Bloody Christmas," and that over a hundred Turkish villages were evacuated or destroyed; Data covering the wider 1963-64 crisis put the Turkish Cypriot death toll at over 370, while tens of thousands were displaced to settlements that made up only a small fraction of the island's total area. Regardless of the exact figures, the scale of population displacement was significant: numerous Turkish Cypriots fled mixed villages and towns, seeking refuge in protected areas and living for years in tents and confiscated buildings. The Turkish Red Crescent began delivering humanitarian aid to the island within days of the outbreak of violence, and wounded Turkish Cypriots were airlifted to Ankara for treatment.

On 23-24 December 1963, the Turkish government began urgent negotiations with Great Britain and Greece, demanding joint action under the Guarantee Treaty to end the violence. On 24 December, a joint declaration was issued in Nicosia with the participation of all three guarantor powers. British troops, still stationed at their sovereign bases, were deployed as an immediate peacekeeping force, becoming the vanguard of the UN force planned to arrive the following spring. In the days that followed, Turkish warplanes flew over the island in a show of force, and the Turkish government came under internal pressure for military intervention; this pressure was repeated even more intensely during the 1967 crisis four years later.

Bloody Christmas effectively destroyed the bi-communal governance structure established in 1960. Ministers, judges, and civil servants of the Turkish Cypriot community withdrew from the central government institutions where they had served since independence, and Turkish Cypriots retreated to sheltered zones spread across approximately 3% of the island's territory; this model of separate and unequal existence continued for the next decade. The crisis also directly led to the drawing of the Green Line described above and accelerated the establishment of a UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus by a UN Security

Council resolution in March 1964; this force has maintained a presence on the island in some form ever since.

6.3. Establishment of UNFICYP

On 15 February 1964 the representatives of the United Kingdom and of Cyprus requested urgent action by the Security Council. On the same day, the Secretary-General appealed to all concerned for restraint. He was already engaged in intensive consultations with all the parties about the functions and organization of a United Nations force, and, on 4 March, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 186 (1964), by which it noted that the situation in Cyprus was likely to threaten international peace and security, and recommended the creation of a United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), with the consent of the government of Cyprus.

The Council also called on all member states to refrain from any action or threat of action likely to worsen the situation in the sovereign Republic of Cyprus or to endanger international peace, asked the government of Cyprus, which had the responsibility for the maintenance and restoration of law and order, to take all additional measures necessary to stop violence and bloodshed in Cyprus, and called upon the communities in Cyprus and their leaders to act with the utmost restraint. As for the force, the Council said its composition and size were to be established by the Secretary-General, in consultation with the governments of Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The Commander of the Force was to be appointed by the Secretary-General and report to him. The Secretary-General, who was to keep the governments providing the force fully informed, was to report periodically to the Security Council on its operation.

The force's function should be, in the interest of preserving international peace and security, to use its best efforts to prevent a recurrence of fighting and, as necessary, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return to normal conditions. The Council recommended that the stationing of the force should be for a period of three months, all costs pertaining to it being met, in a manner to be agreed upon by them, by the governments providing the contingents and by the government of Cyprus. The Secretary-General was also authorized to accept voluntary contributions for that purpose. By the resolution, the Council also recommended the designation of a mediator to

promote a peaceful solution and an agreed settlement of the Cyprus problem. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cyprus promptly informed the Secretary-General that his government consented to the establishment of the force.

6.4. The Crisis of 1967

The political situation changed dramatically on April 21, 1967, when a group of army colonels seized power in Athens, establishing a military dictatorship that ruled Greece until 1974 and is often referred to as the "Greek junta" or "regime of colonels." The junta pursued an aggressive nationalist policy in Cyprus; this included a "double enosis" plan that envisioned the unification of a large part of Cyprus with Greece, the allocation of a smaller part to Türkiye, and special protection for Turkish Cypriots remaining in the Greek-administered area. General Georgios Grivas, commander of the Cyprus National Guard, reportedly sympathized with this approach; Makarios himself had previously rejected a similar proposal ("Acheson Plan") developed by the Americans in 1964.

In November 1967, Cypriot police intended to resume regular patrols in the Turkish Cypriot settlement of Ayios Theodoros in Larnaca, and police commanders, with the National Guard as necessary, reported to the United Nations Mission for Cyprus Peacekeepers (UNFICYP). On November 14, Cypriot police took steps to establish full control of the village. The following day, November 15, as police and National Guard units continued to remove checkpoints, they came under fire from Turkish Cypriot positions on a high hill overlooking the village. Grivas responded by sending additional patrols to Ayios Theodoros; the outbreak of the third revolution dramatically escalated the situation, involving well-armed and combat-ready National Guard units, which took control not only of Ayios Theodoros but also of the neighboring village of Kofinou. According to contemporary accounts, Kofinou's crime was attempting to change the village's name to a Turkish one. The three-hour clash resulted in heavy casualties for Turkish Cypriots: although figures vary depending on sources, press reports at the time indicate 24 Turkish Cypriots killed and nine wounded, while other sources put the figure at 26 or 27. The Greek Cypriot National Guard suffered relatively few casualties.

The scale of the massacre in Kopinou and Ayios Theodoros—described by some outside sources at the time as a massacre—provoked an immediate and harsh reaction in Ankara. On November 16, the Turkish government formally protested to the UN Secretary-General, demanding an end to attacks by Greek Cypriot forces; the following day, Turkey issued a formal ultimatum to the Greek Cypriots. Its conditions included the withdrawal of approximately 10,000–12,000 Greek regular soldiers who had illegally entered the island, exceeding the number permitted by the 1960 Treaty of Alliance; compensation for repelling National Guard attacks; and a cessation of Turkish actions. To emphasize the seriousness of its demands, Turkey, along with Greece, mobilized forces in the Thrace region and launched a demonstration of amphibious forces; Turkish warplanes conducted a series of demonstration flights over Cyprus on November 18 and 19. Amid the general escalation, they also briefly struck the Kokkina and Kyrenia regions. For several tense days in late November 1967, Greece and Turkey, both NATO members, teetered on the brink of open war over Cyprus.

The crisis prompted urgent international intervention. On 22 and 24 November 1967, UN Secretary-General U Thant took steps to de-escalate the conflict by directly addressing the Greek and Turkish authorities and sending personal representatives to all three capitals. American officials played a particularly important role: on 22 November, President Lyndon Johnson asked former Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus Vance to serve as a special presidential envoy, and Vance arrived in Ankara the following day. A round of intense shuttle diplomacy began between the Turkish, Greek, and Cypriot governments; during this process, Washington's fears about the possibility of war between the two allied member states were supported by NATO countries. Under this combined pressure, the Greek junta eventually succumbed to much of Turkey's manipulation. On 20 November 1967, General Grivas resigned as commander of the Greek Cypriot forces and left the island; Over 10,000 Greek regular troops, estimated to have been secretly stationed in Cyprus outside the agreed borders, withdrew in the following weeks, and the fragile peace was once again shattered.

The 1967 crisis marked a turning point in the overall course of the Cyprus problem. Immediately after the crisis, intercommunal tensions eased significantly, and the crisis itself erupted when Makarios and Glafkos Clerides, along with other Greek Cypriots, realized that two attempts at forced enosis risked escalating into a Turkish military

intervention similar to the one that had nearly led to it. From this point on, the main source of friction shifted from direct intercommunal violence to a conflict that increasingly became internal, within the Greek Cypriot part of Cyprus itself, between Makarios's pragmatic acceptance of an "achievable solution" other than enosis and the subsequent assertion by his nationalist supporters, including Grivas, that enosis was the only legitimate solution.

6.5. Political Developments from 1968 to 1974

Concluding that unification with Greece was impossible under the existing conditions and that a certain degree of political autonomy for the Turkish Cypriots had to be accepted, Makarios authorized Glafcos Clerides, the Speaker of the Cypriot House of Representatives, to begin direct negotiations with the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş. These intercommunal talks began in mid-1968 as part of the UN Secretary-General's "mediation" mission and were conducted, in particular, not directly between the President and Vice-President, but through Clerides and Denktaş, as representatives of their respective community assemblies. From 1972 onwards, the talks expanded to include constitutional law experts appointed by Greece and Turkey; Michael Dekleris for Greece and Orhan Aldikachta for Turkey, reflecting the continued involvement of the two guarantor states in shaping a possible solution. The negotiations continued from 1968 until their final conclusion in April 1974, just months before the coup and invasion; periods of real progress were intertwined with long delays. The main point of disagreement during this period was the insistence of Turkish Cypriots on a two-zone federal structure with a weak central government; Greek Cypriot negotiators consistently rejected this, preferring a more unitary state that provided greater protection for minorities.

Makarios was elected President of Cyprus by an overwhelming majority in both 1968 and February 1973, reflecting widespread support among Greek Cypriots for his cautious, pragmatic approach, but this increasingly brought him into conflict with both the hardline enosisist views in his own country and the military junta ruling Greece. Makarios's policy of "unlimited independence"—treating Cyprus not as a satellite of Athens but as an independent state with its own foreign policy—made him increasingly hostile to the junta from the 1970s onwards.

With the covert support of the Greek junta, Georgios Grivas secretly returned to Cyprus in 1971 after being effectively exiled from the island during the 1967 crisis. Condemning what Makarios called "betrayal of enosis," Grivas founded EOKA-B (also spelled EOKA-B), a militant right-wing paramilitary organization that revived the name and rhetoric of the original rebellion of the 1950s but directed its violence primarily against the Cypriot government rather than the British colonial administration. EOKA-B operated from 1971 until its de facto disbandment in 1978. Unlike its predecessor, it targeted not only Greek Cypriots who supported Makarios but also Turkish Cypriots at various times, and received consistent support from the Greek military junta.

The deepening rift between Makarios and the junta led to numerous assassination attempts against the archbishop. In March 1970, militants suspected of being linked to the far-right terrorist organization National Front opened fire on Makarios's helicopter as it took off from the archbishopric in Nicosia, riddling the helicopter with bullets. Makarios escaped the crash almost unharmed; according to a contemporary eyewitness, this was nearly miraculous. A second assassination attempt occurred in 1973. That same year, Makarios faced a separate religious challenge when three bishops loyal to him in the Church of Cyprus attempted to remove him from his position as archbishop on the grounds that his political role was incompatible with his religious duties; this attempt ultimately failed, but underscored the extent of the pressure exerted on him from multiple directions simultaneously.

Following the internal unrest in November 1973, the stance of the Greek junta hardened further; student demonstrations at the Athens Polytechnic Institute embarrassed the ruling colonels and led to the removal of the existing junta leadership by another hardline figure, Brigadier General Dimitrios Ioannidis. Ioannides viewed Makarios as dangerously independent of Athenian influence, excessively tolerant of the Cypriot Communist Party (AKEL), and an obstacle to progress on the Cyprus issue under favorable conditions for Greece. Following Grivas' death of natural causes in January 1974, Ioannides sought to establish direct EOKA-B control over the regime by using Greek officers from the Cypriot National Guard as a tool; Makarios, who had long viewed the National Guard as subversive and full of pro-Athens sympathies, increasingly relied on his loyal palace guard, a tactical reserve force he had created for his own protection.

By the spring of 1974, intercommunal talks between Clerides and Denktaş had completely stalled, formally ending in April. Following Grivas' death, tensions between pro-Makarios and pro-enosis Greek Cypriot groups escalated sharply, with reports of renewed clashes between Makarios supporters and followers of the late general. By July 1974, the Ioannides junta, determined to forcibly overthrow Makarios and establish a compliant, pro-enosis government in Nicosia, had set the stage for the coup of July 15, 1974. In this coup, with the support of the Greek Cypriot junta, National Guard forces overthrew Makarios and appointed EOKA-B member Nikos Sampson as interim president. Just five days later, the Turkish military invasion took place. These events brought the eleven-year cycle of crisis described in this article to a final and catastrophic end.

7. The Cyprus War of 1974

The **Turkish invasion of Cyprus** (Turkish: Operation Peace), launched on July 20, 1974, was the Turkish military response against a coup that had been staged by the Cypriot National Guard against President Makarios III with the intention of annexing the island to Greece. The invasion came after more than a decade of sporadic inter-communal violence between the island's Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots resulting from the constitutional breakdown of 1963. Turkey invoked its role as a guarantor under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee in justification for occupying Northern Cyprus. Turkish forces invaded the island in two waves, occupying 37 percent of the island's territory in the north-east. The operation led to the widespread displacement of Cyprus's ethnic communities, dividing the island between a Turkish Cypriot north and Greek Cypriot south. In the aftermath of the invasion, Turkish Cypriots declared a separate political entity in the form of the Turkish Federative State of Cyprus and, by 1983, made a unilateral declaration of independence as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which was recognized only by Turkey. The United Nations recognizes the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus according to the terms of its independence in 1960. UN peacekeepers maintain a buffer zone between the two entities. The conflict overshadows Turkish relations with Greece and with the European Union. Unwillingness by the two sides to negotiate a just settlement hampers international intervention. Lack of contact between the two communities fuels suspicion, while civil society is too weak to be able to exert bottom-up pressure on the decision-makers to resolve the dispute. Unless partition is to become permanent, a power-sharing arrangement that addresses issues of justice is the most likely option to

restore national unity. This will only develop when trust and understanding between the two communities has been nurtured. Only a desire for peace and reconciliation that begins at the bottom and permeates up to the decision-making level has a realistic chance of success. Without the contributions of peace-activists at the local level, whose labor often goes unrecognized, elite peace-making lacks a solid foundation. From a values-based perspective, no peace effort that does not begin with individuals can be sustainable, since true peace begins with "me and you."

7.1. The Greek Junta's Coup Against President Makarios

A coup d'état in Athens in November 1973 had made Brigadier General Dimitrios Ioannides leader of the junta. Rigidly anticommunist, Ioannides had served on Cyprus in the 1960s with the National Guard. His experiences convinced him that Makarios should be removed from office because of domestic leftist support and his visits to communist capitals. During the spring of 1974, Cypriot intelligence found evidence that EOKA B was planning a coup and was being supplied, controlled, and funded by the military government in Athens. EOKA B was banned, but its operations continued underground. Early in July, Makarios wrote to the president of Greece demanding that the remaining 650 Greek officers assigned to the National Guard be withdrawn. He also accused the junta of plotting against his life and against the government of Cyprus. Makarios sent his letter (which was released to the public) to the Greek president on July 2, 1974; the reply came thirteen days later, not in the form of a letter but in an order from Athens to the Cypriot National Guard to overthrow its commander in chief and take control of the island.

Makarios narrowly escaped death in the attack by the Greek-led National Guard. He fled the presidential palace and went to Paphos. A British helicopter took him to the Sovereign Base Area at Akrotiri, from where he went to London. Several days later, Makarios addressed a meeting of the UN Security Council, where he was accepted as the legal president of the Republic of Cyprus.

In the meantime, the notorious EOKA terrorist Nicos Sampson was declared provisional president of the new government. It was obvious to Ankara that Athens was behind the coup, and major elements of the Turkish armed forces went on alert. Turkey had made similar moves in 1964 and 1967, but had not invaded. At the same time, Turkish prime minister Bülent Ecevit flew to London to elicit British aid in a joint effort in Cyprus, as called for in the 1959 Treaty of Guarantee, but the British were either unwilling or

unprepared and declined to take action as a guarantor power. The United States took no action to bolster the Makarios government, but Joseph J. Sisco, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, went to London and the eastern Mediterranean to stave off the impending Turkish invasion and the war between Greece and Turkey that might follow. The Turks demanded removal of Nicos Sampson and the Greek officers from the National Guard and a binding guarantee of Cypriot independence. Sampson, of course, was expendable to the Athens regime, but Sisco could get an agreement only to reassign the 650 Greek officers.

7.2. Türkiye's Decision to Intervene

When news of the National Guard's attempted coup against Makarios reached Ankara on July 15, 1974, the Turkish parliament was in recess and Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit was traveling; he cut short his trip and returned to the capital that same day. That evening, the Turkish National Security Council and the Council of Ministers held an emergency meeting, and the leaders of the political parties in Türkiye supported the reconvening of parliament to allow for possible intervention.

The fundamental legal basis for Türkiye's concerns was Article IV of the 1960 Guarantee Treaty; however, this article granted Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom the right to review the situation as defined in the Cyprus Constitution, or, in its absence, to take unilateral action. In keeping with this framework, and in line with the example of Türkiye's previous actions in 1964 and 1967, Ecevit initially preferred to act in concert with the United Kingdom rather than alone. The Turkish delegation, in two days of talks with Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Foreign Minister James Callaghan, argued that Britain's sovereign bases at Akrotiri and Dhekelia should provide Britain with opportunities for both joint action and reparations for damages. However, Callaghan argued that the British government continued to use Makarios's legacy as a pretext and that the participation of British troops in military operations was limited by a statute of limitations, demonstrating its hostility to political restrictions and parliamentary authorisation of the use of force.

Finding this unproductive, London attempted to block Türkiye's unilateral landing operation. On July 18, US Under Secretary of State Joseph Sisco organized a diplomatic

mission shuttling between London, Ankara, and Athens to explore alternative political options, holding separate meetings with Callaghan and Ecevit. The negotiators proposed replacing Makarios and Nikos Sampson with Glafcos Clerides as interim president.¹⁴ Sisco continued these discussions for the next two days, but found the command structure in Athens almost unreliable after the coup, while the Turkish leadership in Ankara was increasingly confident that a stronger Turkish military presence would consolidate Sampson's dominance on the island and allow them to bypass the Turkish Cypriots. The deployment of Turkish troops had essentially been planned for years as a state of emergency in Cyprus: the 39th Infantry Regiment, registered in Mersin since 1967, had been designated as a permanent unit for a possible intervention on the island.

On the morning of July 20, Sisco met again with Ecevit in Ankara, and the decision to intervene... had already been made; Ecevit refused to reconsider Sisco's decision to intervene in response to Washington's warning that Türkiye should launch its own landing. Later that same day, a Turkish Cabinet decree came into effect, and Ecevit announced that Turkish troops were participating in an air and sea landing in Cyprus; he stated that they had received instructions not to fire unless fired upon, describing this action as a last resort following the failure of Türkiye's diplomatic efforts. The first phase could have been carried out during the later Operation Attila, but in that case the actions would have been futile.

7.3. Operation Attila I (20-22 July 1974) & Operation Attila II (14-16 August 1974)

The Turkish invasion of Cyprus, codenamed 'Attila', began at dawn on July 20, 1974. A day that changed Cyprus forever and will be ingrained in the brain of every Cypriot for hundreds of years. Approximately 4,000 people were killed during the invasion and 1,619 were reported missing. As many as 200,000 Cypriots were forcefully driven away from their homes and became refugees in their own homeland. A total of about 40,000 men took part under the command of Lieutenant General Nurettin Ersin. With the Greek side caught asleep, their reaction was delayed, resulting in what Turkey labelled as a "peaceful intervention," aimed at restoring constitutional order in Cyprus. The battle lasted for two days. On the dawn of July 20, Turkish landing craft reached the Pente Mili area, followed by swarms of attacks by Turkish planes. With Greek forces left outnumbered and

unprepared, Cypriot inhabitants were at the mercy of the invaders. Unarmed civilians were killed, women were raped, and captured soldiers were executed. The units of the National Guard and the ELDYK, when mobilized, began to fight with heroic self-sacrifice. They utilized around 12,000 men (Greek Cypriots and Greeks), under the command of Brigadier General Michael Georgitsis, who was the general in command in the coup against Makarios. Late at night on July 20, the UN Security Council issued Resolution 353, calling for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of 'foreign troops' from Cyprus. Despite its unanimous approval, it was completely ignored by Turkey. The next day, July 21, the fighting in Cyprus continued with great intensity.

7.4. The Ceasefire

The first ceasefire of the Cyprus crisis took effect at 4 pm on July 22, 1974, but getting there was a chaotic, multi-day process. After the initial Turkish landings under Operation Attila I on July 20, the UN Security Council moved quickly, passing Resolution 353 late that same evening, unanimously calling for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of foreign military forces from the island. Turkey simply ignored it: with a bridgehead already established between Kyrenia and Nicosia, Turkish forces had every incentive to keep advancing, and fighting continued unabated through July 21 as National Guard and Greek forces (ELDYK) fought desperately, in some cases with civilians firing from rooftops, to slow the Turkish advance. Diplomatically, the situation in Athens was almost farcical: US envoy Joseph Sisco, shuttling between Ankara and Athens to broker a truce, found that the junta's chain of command in Greece had effectively disintegrated, with senior officials unreachable or unwilling to take responsibility for a decision as consequential as a ceasefire. It ultimately fell to Admiral Petros Arapakis, commander of the Greek Navy, to step into that vacuum. In a direct telephone call with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Arapakis agreed to a truce set to begin at 4 pm on July 22, a decision Kissinger later described, in conversations with his own staff, as coming only after both Turkish and Greek sides had to be walked into acceptance almost side by side, since neither trusted the other enough to announce a ceasefire first. Even once nominally in force, this first ceasefire proved fragile and was violated repeatedly in the days that followed, as Turkish troops continued to press forward and consolidate the corridor linking their beachhead to the Turkish Cypriot quarter of Nicosia, expanding their zone of

control from roughly 3-4% of the island at the ceasefire's outset to a considerably larger area by the time the Geneva talks began on July 25. This unstable truce would hold only in a limited sense before eventually giving way to the second, much larger Turkish offensive in mid-August.

7.5. Establishment of the Buffer Zone

The buffer zone in Cyprus, also known as the “Green Line,” first came up in the year 1963 when British Major-General Peter Young depicted a ceasefire line through Nicosia by way of a green pencil to divide the Greek and Turkish Cypriot neighborhoods after intercommunal violence. The line at first was monitored by British forces and the newly instituted Cyprus (UNFICYP) from 1964; it took its current, island-wide form in 1974, after a Greek-nationalist coup against President Makarios in July prompted a Turkish military invasion that, following a first phase of fighting and a second offensive in mid-August, left roughly the northern third of the island under Turkish control, at which point a roughly 180 km ceasefire line was fixed from Kokkina in the west to Famagusta in the east, with UNFICYP extending its mandate to patrol the entire length—a zone that varies from a few meters wide in old Nicosia to several kilometers in rural areas, cuts through farmland, villages, and the abandoned district of Varosha, and remains in place today as the island stays divided between the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. When the fighting stopped, a new ceasefire line was fixed along the point where the two sides' forces had halted, stretching roughly 180 kilometers across the entire length of the island from Kokkina in the west to Famagusta in the east, and UNFICYP's mandate was expanded from Nicosia alone to cover this full island-wide line, which it has continued to monitor ever since. This buffer zone is highly irregular in width, narrowing to just a few meters in parts of old Nicosia—where UN observation posts on either side sit almost close enough to touch—while widening to several kilometers in rural and agricultural areas; it cuts across farmland, villages, and even part of the capital itself, and famously encloses the abandoned seaside district of Varosha near Famagusta, once a thriving resort area that has stood empty and fenced off since 1974. More than fifty years after the conflict that created it, the buffer zone remains in place and continues to be patrolled by UNFICYP, standing as the physical dividing line between the internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus in the south and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in the north, a self-declared state that is recognized only by Turkey, with repeated rounds

of reunification talks over the decades having so far failed to resolve the island's division. Divided between the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

8. The Situation After 1974

The moment the second offensive halted in the middle of August 1974, the ceasefire line that emerged became fixed as the de facto boundary between the sides, and the obligation for policing it came to UNFICYP. Initially deployed in 1964 to supervise the narrower Green Line running through Nicosia, UNFICYP's role was expanded to mask the entire 180 km buffer zone stretching from Kokkina in the west to Famagusta in the east. The force took up positions on each side of the line, established a network of observation posts and patrol bases, and began the mission of preserving the ceasefire between Greek Cypriot forces to the south and Turkish and Turkish Cypriot forces to the north, a mission complicated from the fact that, unlike a negotiated border, the August 1974 line simply marked wherever the fighting had stopped with no prior agreement on its exact cause.

In the years after 1974, UNFICYP's role expanded well beyond simple ceasefire monitoring to include broad humanitarian and administrative functions. The displacement triggered by the conflict was gigantic; approximately 160,000 Greek Cypriots escaped from the north, while around 45,000 Turkish Cypriots migrated to the north and UNFICYP became acutely involved in managing the human consequences of this population movement.

8.1. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus traces its roots to the collapse of the fragile power-sharing arrangement that had governed Cyprus since its 1960 independence from Britain, under which Greek Cypriots (about 80% of the population) and Turkish Cypriots (about 18%) were meant to share governance according to a constitution guaranteed by Britain, Greece, and Turkey. This arrangement broke down within three years: intercommunal fighting erupted in December 1963 after President Makarios proposed constitutional amendments seen as disadvantaging Turkish Cypriots, and violence over the following years pushed much of the Turkish Cypriot population into defended enclaves scattered across the island, effectively segregating the two communities well before 1974.

The decisive break came in July 1974, when the military junta then ruling Greece sponsored a coup against Makarios, installing pro Enosis figure Nikos Sampson with the explicit aim of uniting Cyprus with Greece. Turkey, invoking its status as a guarantor power under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, launched a military intervention on July 20, 1974, initially securing a corridor around Kyrenia, and after peace talks in Geneva failed, expanded its control in a second offensive in August 1974 to occupy roughly 37% of the island. The ceasefire line established at that point, the "Green Line," has divided Cyprus ever since and is today patrolled by UN peacekeepers. In the operation's aftermath, an estimated 150,000-200,000 Greek Cypriots fled or were expelled from the north, while tens of thousands of Turkish Cypriots relocated from the south, producing the ethnically segregated geography that persists today.

8.2. Buffer Zone and Current Situation

The UN Buffer Zone commonly called the Green Line, stretches about 180 kilometers across the island, from Kokkina in the west to Famagusta in the east, varying in width from a few meters in parts of old Nicosia (the last divided capital in Europe) to several kilometers in rural areas, and has been patrolled by the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) since 1974. Within this zone lies the abandoned, fenced-off suburb of Varosha, once a thriving resort district of Famagusta, which has stood largely frozen in time since its Greek Cypriot residents fled in 1974, though Turkey and Turkish Cypriot authorities have controversially reopened portions of it for visits and, more recently, redevelopment, drawing condemnation from the UN and Republic of Cyprus. Since 2003, checkpoints have allowed civilians to cross between the two sides with far greater ease than during the Cold War-style standoff of earlier decades, enabling some everyday interaction, trade, and even reunification of families, though the island remains politically and administratively split. In the current situation, the Republic of Cyprus functions as an EU member state exercising internationally recognized sovereignty over the entire island (with EU law technically suspended in the north), while the TRNC operates its own parliament, president, and institutions but remains recognized only by Turkey, relies heavily on Turkish subsidies and its currency (the Turkish lira), and faces restrictions on direct trade, flights, and international engagement. Reunification talks have repeatedly failed—most notably the 2004 Annan Plan, rejected by Greek Cypriot voters in a

referendum, and the 2017 Crans-Montana conference under UN auspices, which collapsed without agreement—and in recent years Turkish Cypriot leadership, backed by Ankara, has increasingly pushed for a "two-state solution" rather than the bizonal, bicomunal federation long favored by the UN and the Republic of Cyprus, a shift that has further complicated prospects for resolving what remains one of the world's longest-running frozen conflicts.

8.3. The Cyprus Issue Today

The Cyprus issue remains one of the world's longest-running unresolved conflicts, but 2026 has brought a notable, if still uncertain, revival of momentum. Since 2023, Turkish Cypriots have been led by Tufan Erhürman, whose more conciliation-minded stance contrasts with his predecessor Ersin Tatar's push for a "two-state solution," reopening the door to talks based on the long-standing UN framework of a bizonal, bicomunal federation. UN Secretary-General António Guterres traveled to Cyprus in late July 2026 his first visit to the island and the first by a UN chief since Ban Ki-moon in 2010 holding separate meetings with President Nikos Christodoulides and Erhürman, part of a broader push described as coming after reunification talks that had been on hold since 2017. Christodoulides has spoken of a new opportunity to resume talks, and Guterres described a "new moment of opportunity" to solve the Cyprus problem, calling 2026 a potentially critical year, especially since Cyprus assumed the EU's rotating presidency in January 2026, though Turkish Cypriots pointedly did not attend the opening ceremony.

The European Union has taken on a more prominent role than in past rounds of negotiation: Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has made resolving the conflict an EU priority, emphasizing that any solution must be compatible with EU law, and Commission Executive Vice President Raffaele Fitto has been serving as the EU's envoy on the issue, meeting with both Christodoulides and Erhürman in early August 2026. However, progress remains fragile. Turkey has pushed back against the process, notably rejecting a proposal for an expanded five-party meeting, and on the ground, sentiment is mixed, with some welcoming renewed diplomacy after years of stalemate while others remain skeptical after eight frozen years of failed talks. The core sticking points that doomed the 2017 negotiations security guarantees, the continued presence of Turkish troops, property restitution, and power-sharing arrangements remain unresolved, and

Guterres is due to leave office at the end of 2026, adding urgency but also uncertainty about whether this diplomatic window can produce a lasting settlement before leadership changes at the UN. Overall, 2026 represents the most active diplomatic push on Cyprus in nearly a decade, but as with previous rounds, cautious optimism is tempered by the deep structural disagreements that have prevented a resolution for over 50 years.

9. Helpful Resources

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHIHnCwFp5c>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8F2UgG9bqz4>

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