**Cyprus Conflict: The two sides of the story**

Students names and numbers

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**1. Introduction**

The Cyprus Conflict is a problem that has existed for many years now. Since 1975, the United Nations have been engaging in negotiations in order to find a solution for the Cyprus issue, based on related Security Council resolutions and two High-Level Agreements. It is hard to find a solution that pleases both sides, as it has to be democratic, practical, equitable and viable. Besides, it must comply with the laws and rules of the European Union and also with the UN resolutions and the Convention on Human Rights (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus <https://mfa.gov.cy/>). This paper aims to look at the historical background of the situation, the positions of the Greek-Cypriots and the Turkish-Cypriots and finally examine the alternatives and state our opinion.

**2. Methodology**

The topic is investigated through a literature review of a number of relevant sources.

**3. Results**

Cyprus has suffered a long history of conflict and violence. Ever since it had been under the Ottoman rule in the 16th century and later on to the British colonial domination in the 19th century, the country’s two main communities, Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, have been constantly in dispute (Lindsay, 2011). In 1963, three years after the country’s declaration of a sovereign and independent state, an intercommunal violence exploded. It was an impact of president Makarios’ proposals for constitutional changes due to governmental dysfunction, which would remove many of the rights of the Turkish minority. In the meantime, the Greek-Cypriots had to deal with a military junta, which established a dictatorship in Greece, which staged a coup d’etat in Cyprus and affected the negotiations considerably (Kyriakou et al, 2011). Finally, in 1974 Turkey invaded the Republic of Cyprus, with an excuse of a “restoration of the Constitution” (Kyriakou et al, 2011). To this day, the Northern side of the island still remains under Turkish control. Negotiations for a settlement continue to the present day.

To begin with, the Greek-Cypriot’s side relies on its arguments on Geneva’s Convention articles, on the United Nations General Assembly’s Resolutions and on the European Convention of Human Rights to prove that Turkey’s actions are war crimes and crimes against humanity. More specifically, the invention of the Turkish military in 1974 and the continuing encouragement from the Turkish government for Turkish people to settle in Northern Cyprus is a breach of the International Law and a war crime (Scharff, 2009, 130). That is because they are occupying Greek-Cypriots’ property. Greek-Cypriots want a deportation of the Turkish settlers from Cyprus to Turkey, which they state that complies with norms and the International Law (Scharff, 2009); because the allowance of letting them stay would mean justification of Turkey’s misconduct.

On the other hand, the Turkish-Cypriots’ arguments are particularly based on statistical perspective and on the invocation of condemning injustices and violations of specific treaties by the Greek-Cypriots in the past. They claim that the Turkish minorities on the island have lived there for a very long time, making their presence significantly noticeable and inalienable (Brewer et al, 2009). They strongly argue that the invasion by the Turkish military at Northern Cyprus in 1974 was due to the infringements by the Greek-Cypriots on the 1960 Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, making this action necessary for the Turkish-Cypriots’ security and protection of their rights (Kyriakou et al, 2011). Nevertheless, because of their intention to join the European Union, they seem to be willing to take certain steps, but with reservation in case there will be attempts for unification of Cyprus with Greek-Cypriots majority, to find a settlement in this conflict (Brewer et al, 2009).

**4. Personal stance**

It appears from the above analysis that neither of the two sides are willing to back down from their claims. However, a solution must be found not only for legitimate and procedural reasons, but also for the prosperity of the island’s citizens. The Turkish side's main goal is the international recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the division into a two-states island, so they suggest a settlement built on this idea. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus suggests the “transformation of the unitary State into a bicommunal, bizonal federation with a single sovereignty, single citizenship and single international personality, with political equality as set out in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus. <https://mfa.gov.cy/> ). We therefore believe that this proposal by the Republic of Cyprus is the rightful and the most peaceful solution, as its suggestions are based on International Law and are the closest to a moderate settlement.

**5. References**

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus.<https://mfa.gov.cy/>