
The Europeanisation of the Cyprus Question. A Model for Conflict Resolution?

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Summary

The author analyses the dynamics of European integration of Cyprus and the impact of this process on the long lasting ethnic conflict between Cypriot Greeks and Turks and in particular inquires whether it can serve as a model for the resolution of similar ethnic conflicts. He first describes the historical roots of the unresolved Cyprus question and the unsuccessful political-diplomatic approaches under UN mediation. The historical analysis of why all international arbitration attempts have failed to resolve the Cyprus problem provides a basis for the discussion of new conflict resolution methods. Furthermore, the author explores the role of the EU concerning the more recent attempts at conflict management and resolution. Finally, the question is addressed as to what kind of potential exists for the solution of the Cyprus question under the common umbrella of the EU given the recent easing of tensions between both ethnic groups.

Key words: Cyprus, ethnic conflict, conflict resolution, United Nations, Greece, Turkey, European Union, European integration



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1. The Cyprus Question as a Challenge to the European Peace and Security Community

At the time of the Treaties of Rome in 1957, creating the European Economic Community (EEC), and the Agreements of Zürich and London in 1959 founding the Republic of Cyprus, both of these entities emerged without historical precedent. Because they were not typical international political actors, they did not fit into the political landscape

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of the era. Given the institutional arrangements and powers of the EEC and the Republic of Cyprus, these resembled neither international organizations such as the UN, nor classical sovereign nation-states. The creation of supranational organs with legal competencies in particular policy areas (internal market), the directly permeating quality of European (economic) law in the member-states, and the introduction of direct elections to the European Parliament since 1979 as well as the single currency in 1999/2002 all belong to the distinctiveness of the European Community (EC), “un objet politique non-identifié” (Sbragia, 1992: 257; Chryssoshoou, 2001:24).

The distinguishing characteristics of the “incomplete statehood of Cyprus” (Brewin, 2000: 1-3) include firstly the limit of sovereign rights for the Republic of Cyprus, based on the required consent of the guarantee powers (United Kingdom, Greece, Turkey) to any domestic constitutional changes. Secondly, these powers had the right to intervene, either commonly or singularly for the restoration of state unity. Furthermore, sovereign English military bases (almost three percent of the island surface of Cyprus) provided an anachronistic feature comparable only to the four-power status of Berlin, and the power-sharing between the two contrasting ethnic groups became institutionalized at the cost of the majority principle (Zervakis, 2002: 847).

From the beginning both constructs were missing the unifying concept of nation-state. Therefore, in the founding documents of the EEC and the Cypriot “ethnic communities state” (Rumpf, 1998: 158ff.) the objective is guaranteed to secure peace and to keep the balance between the divergent national interests through permanent negotiations (Bahcheli, 1998: 98.; Lundestad, 1998).

As the economies of Germany and France integrated step for step, the iniquitous nationalism that had led to two world wars, began to dissolve. Following the Franco-German Partnership, the pledged parity between Bonn and Paris became the motor of further integration in Western Europe (Guérin-Sendelbach, 1999). From 1954-1959 on Cyprus on the other hand, the Greek Cypriots fought a bloody war for independence from the British, after which a complicated constitutional order with mutual checks and balances was forced upon the Cypriots. This sought to prevent long-term the outbreak of conflict between not only the Greek and Turkish Cypriots but also their respective mother countries, both of which were NATO members. However, the political goal failed largely due to the Greek majority’s disinterest in mutual cooperation with the Turkish minority based on equal rights. Indeed, three inner-Cyprus’s civil wars followed in 1963-64, 1967 and 1974 under the direct intervention of Greece and Turkey (Zervakis, 1999: 442f.)

In the past decades, the European Union has become a success story concerning peace and stability among its members. Its equal member-states have learned voluntarily to handle conflicts among one another exclusively without violence and without the need for a supranational instance with its own monopoly of power. Worldwide, the Community has gained role-model status, as to how peace, prosperity, and conflict prevention is possible by mutual agreement to the benefit of all parties. After the German Reunification in 1990, the EU members, as the actual “masters of the treaties”, signed the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam respectively, expanding their predominantly economic association incrementally into a political union. This took place through the introduction of a single currency, against the wills of some of the populaces not the least

the Germans, reforms of the existing Community institutions, and the establishment of further policy areas such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy as well as European Security and Defense Policy, the so-called *deepening*. Above all the EU offered to open its doors to ten aspirant countries from former, Soviet-communist dominated Eastern Europe. Until now, the Community has been largely Western European dominated. But with this political project of millennial developmental proportions, the Community will contribute through its Enlargement to the stabilization of these infant market economic democracies in Central and Eastern Europe by promoting massive modernization, transformation, and internal reforms. Along with the NATO enlargement, the EU will provide for the eastward expansion of the security community established after World War II, thus creating the foundation for Europe's claim to the future role as a world power in the 21st century (s. IFSH 1995; Kreile, 1999: 802; Kuehnhardt, 2001: 6).

When the Greek Cypriots finally applied for full membership in the EU with strong support from the Greek motherland, the Turkish Cypriots had little intention of enabling the reunification with Greece. Rather, the Greek Cypriots sought to effectively counter the threat presented by the Turkish Army presence to their claim of being the only sovereign peoples on the island. With the involvement of the EU, and its ambition to act as a 'world player' since the end of the Cold War, the Greeks insisted on the Europeanization of the Cyprus question after the conciliatory but exhaustive attempts of the UN in more than 30 years proved ineffective. Provisional highlights of the Union's involvement in the (Eastern) Mediterranean for "Regional Peace, Security, Stability, and Prosperity" include:

- start of substantial accession negotiations between Nicosia and Brussels since spring 1998 for the adoption of the *acquis communautaire*, the conditions for the internal market, and the common policies (CFSP, ESDP, JHA) on the entire island,
- realization of the Customs Union with Turkey after Greece dropped its veto, and
- long-term inclusion of Turkey in the future southern expansion of the Community as necessary completion of the imminent Eastward Enlargement.

In the following, the ins and outs of the dynamic process of European integration and enlargement will be explored and whether they will suffice for the case of Cyprus, in order to be used in the long run as a successful model for the resolution of conflicting ethnic interests (Zoll, 2000). Therefore, the historical roots of the unresolved Cyprus question need to be examined shortly as well as the abortive political-diplomatic approaches under UN mediation up until now. The historical analysis of why all international arbitration attempts have failed to resolve the Cyprus problem provides a foundation then for the discussion of new conflict resolutions methods. This paper focuses on the EU role and its significance concerning conflict management in the Cyprus question as well, in order to ascertain whether the Cyprus case can offer an efficacious model for solving disagreements or conflicts among ethnic groups. Furthermore, this article should determine the contribution of the EU to the mutual approach of both strictly separated Greek and Turk Cypriots through civil society actors. Finally, the question will be addressed as to what kind of potential exists for the solution of the Cyprus question under the common umbrella of the EU given the current easing of tensions between both ethnic groups.

2. *The Roots of the Cyprus Question*

The Cyprus question embodies a nationality conflict between two ethnic groups indigenous to the island. This issue belongs to the last remnants of the century old Oriental Question of the fate of the declining Ottoman Empire, indeed one of the most complicated problems of the modern European history (Zervakis, 1998: 69-90). With that, the relatively liberal position of the British colonial administration, which took over Cyprus in 1878 from the Ottoman Empire, faced the penetration of Greek nationalism *énosis* and later the Turkish-Kemalistic movement *taksim*. Resulting from concessions for extensive administrative autonomy, especially in education, a strict separation of both religious groups favoured the cultural inclination to the respective motherlands. An independent, inclusive, co-determining nationality could not develop under these conditions. Thus, the Greek Cypriot revolt against the British rule, with demands for annexation to Greece, resembled rather the irredentist movements in South Eastern Europe as opposed to the Third World anti-colonial independence movement. The consensual democracy of the Republic of Cyprus (since 1960), with its extensive self-administration for both ethnic groups, proportional ethnic composition in the government branches, and comprehensive veto powers for the Turkish Cypriot Community, was not conducive to the amicable solution of the Cyprus issue (Zervakis, 2002: 847-849). At the end of 1963, the powder keg exploded: Archbishop Makarios demanded unilaterally as President the revision of the 1960 constitution from the Turkish Cypriots, meaning a loss of many of their guaranteed rights. Their anticipated rejection heightened tensions between the various armed radicals, so that little provocation from the Greeks sufficed to trigger the spiral of violence in Nicosia, which received additional momentum from several interventions from Greece and Turkey. The civil war of 1963-64 resulted in the division of Nicosia and the solidification of the Turkish enclave. The Cyprus issue became internationalized on several occasions, particularly with the UN Security Council Resolution to deploy UNFICYP¹ for the prevention of further clashes, the restoration of public order, and the return to normality. In the meantime, the Blue Helmet deployment, originally planned for three months, continues today, developing into the world organization's longest peacekeeping mission and international diplomatic fiasco (Pabst, 2001: 139)². Both local conflicting parties are yet to succeed at finding a way to peaceful conflict management despite the help of the UN and endless peace talks between representatives of both communities. Moreover, the Turkish army's invasion in 1974 was triggered by the Greek coup against President Makarios, which was supported from the Athens Junta and called for incorporation into Greece (*énosis*). Consequently, a "population exchange" and the forced military division of the island territory (*taksim*) followed under the auspices of the UN. Thus, the end of the inner-Cyprus warfare could be enforced by the Turkish intervention and the bold deployment of the UNFICYP-soldiers, who watch over the ceasefire line since 1964. But this did not suffice for an enduring peace on Cyprus. Despite the noble intentions of all UN General Secretaries since the 1960s to overcome the island's division peacefully, the representatives of both

¹ UNFICYP = United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus

² Only the observation missions in the Middle East (UNTSO) since 1948 and in Kashmir (UNMOGIP) since 1949 are older than UNFICYP.

ethnic groups have proven themselves unwilling to reach a durable compromise, as the models for a possible solution from the conflict parties diverge stronger and stronger from one another. On the one hand, the Greek side has sought a reunification, namely based on the *status quo ante* in the form of a Federation with strong, predominantly Greek central power. On the other hand, the Turkish minority's determination for separation has strengthened continually, materializing in their unilateral declaration of independence on November 15, 1983, which Turkey alone recognizes (Zervakis, 1999: 443).

Another hindrance to a solution among the insular groups lies in the difficulty for involved regional (Greek and Turkish) and international (UN/EU) actors in Cyprus to persuade the Cypriots to change the status quo, which has historical causes but also provides rather stable conditions. A survey in the Republic of Cyprus in March 1990 confirmed the increasing mutual alienation due to the sweeping absence of social, cultural, and economic contacts between both ethnic groups since almost thirty years. The majority of the surveyed Greek Cypriots want to keep the Turkish Cypriots at a distance and exclude closer familiar or good neighborly relations categorically (Tocci, 2000: 9). The Turks on the island's northern part illustrate conversely sympathy for an approach toward the EU for economic reasons. Their historically legitimate distrust of looming Greek dominance leads them to insist on independence as well as the prior accession of Turkey in the EU (Dietz, 2002:157-158). A solution to the Cyprus issue based on postulated, insular identity (common colonial past, customs, norms and practices) or a peaceful coexistence of both communities in one political entity can be thus ruled out in the short-term.

3. Internationalization of the Cyprus Question: UN Functions

In March 1964, the "dummy government" of President Makarios was officially recognized by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the UN (UN-Res. 186/1964) as the sole internationally legitimate body for the entire republic. Since then, the Greek Cypriot politicians have been able to play out to the Turks their claim of being the sole representation of the island to their diplomatic and economic advantage. After the island divided in 1974, the Greek south part of the island accomplished a "small economic miracle" (Christodoulou, 1992) through massive financial support from international organizations and offshore activities. Regarding the political pursuit to overcome the island's division, the Republic of Cyprus with Greece's support sought the assistance of the UN. Thanks in part to the efforts of the UN General Secretaries several agreements were met in 1977 and 1979 between the leaders of both Cypriot communities, Makarios (and after his death Spyros Kyprianou) and Rauf Denktaş. These contained for the first time basic directives for future negotiations (Varvaroussis, 1995: 249-51):

- Formation of a bi-communal Federal Republic consisting of two parts and both ethnic groups. Each group should have the rights of its own territory, but the central government would have the core responsibility for guaranteeing the national unity;

- Successive demilitarization of Cyprus and the insurance of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and nonaligned status of the republic against integration or secession of either section of the island;
- Begin of negotiations on the restoration of freedom of movement, free choice of residence, and compensation for property titles from displaced persons;
- Taking confidence-building measures to build trust between both communities

Although the Security Council and the General Assembly commended these principles as a breakthrough in the Cyprus negotiation process and bolstered them in a few resolutions, a comprehensive accord failed between both ethnic groups. One cause stems from the diametrically opposed understanding of the term “federalism” between the Greeks and Turks in Cyprus. While Greek Cypriots see a central government with the ultimate responsibility of securing the so-called “three freedoms” (freedom of movement, property, residence) on the entire island, Turkish Cypriots aspire to found two partial states with their own sovereignty rights, tied to a loose confederation (Neuwahl, 2000: 9). The Greek Cypriots equate the admission of an independent Turkish Cypriot sovereignty with the solidification of the status quo island division since 1974; thus they reject a confederative concept for the island absolutely (Bahcheli/Zervakis, 2002).

On the initiative of UN General Secretary Perez de Cuellar, who conceived two further schemes for a resolution in 1983, a rapprochement was once again in sight (Varvaroussis, 1995: 251). But this time, the proposals failed, not because of Rauf Denktasch, who considered the arrangement worthy of signing, rather because of the Greek side, who felt they diverged too far from their own ideas.

The catalogue of suggestions presented by Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992 is the most comprehensive proposal on the Cyprus issue to date. In detail, the future coexistence of both groups is managed concretely in the proposal. The Security Council adopted Ghali’s “Set of Ideas” enthusiastically in two resolutions as the basis for the attainment of a settlement (Nr. 774/1992, 789/1992, in: Axt/Brey, 1997: 214ff). This time the Greek Cypriots accepted essentially all 100 points, while the Turks agreed to 91. Nevertheless, the former signaled the decisive misgiving: Denktasch demanded a weak central government with strong, partial sovereignty in the sub-states and representative parity in the council of ministers while advocating a restrictive course regarding the open issue of the return of refugees (he rejected a Turkish Cypriot resettlement and the surrendering of useable agricultural land in his constituency). He also stipulated effective rules for the protection of his ethnic group as condition for the demilitarization. In order to oblige with Denktasch and alleviate the rapprochement of both Cypriot groups, Ghali introduced a package of “confidence building measures” (inter alia opening of the Green Line for border transport, intensification of encounters between members of both societies, youth and student exchanges, language classes) to both negotiation leaders (Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis, 1997: 47f; Axt/Brey, 1997: 237). Above all, the Turkish Cypriots were favoured from this package of measures because it would have contributed to the dissolution of their diplomatic and economic isolation and stimulated up to 20 percent growth of its GNP (Pabst 2001: 141). Nevertheless, the Turkish Cypriot leadership refused to agree in April 1994 (Steinbach, 1996: 272).

Subsequently, the relationship between the acrimonious parties worsened dramatically and reached a new all-time low in 1997/98. In addition, the Greek Cypriot policy toward Europe with its strengthened cooperation and against the resistance of the TRNC was largely responsible for this. During this stalemate, the US Delegate to Cyprus, Richard Holbrooke, presented his new plan in November of 1997 (Reuter, 2001: 28f).

Along the cease-fire line, a third, mixed populated Zone was to be created and later be given back to the Greek Cypriots. There the Turkish Cypriots along with Greek Cypriots, who had been displaced from that area, would be allowed to work and live together with the protection of multinational troops under US leadership. The provisional government would prepare the construction of a federal Cypriot Republic as well as the accession of Cyprus to the EU, but under Turkish participation.

However, the Turks rejected after initial assent to this proposal as well because the Luxembourg EU-summit in December snubbed Turkey's hopes at qualifying as candidate for membership. The Greek Cypriot government had to realize that the TRNC and Turkey showed no interest in solving the Cyprus issue on UN terms and both sides had distanced each other farther apart than was the case at the outbreak of the conflict. Other political options were being explored from the Greek Cypriots.

4. Europeanization of the Cyprus Question

4.1 Cyprus Approaches the Community

After the internationalization of the Cyprus issue with the fruitless attempts at peace arbitration from five UN General Secretaries failed and the political weakness of that international organization was revealed, President Georgios Vasileiou gave in to the pressure from the Greek government of Andreas Papandreou and submitted in the name of the entire Cyprus an application for full membership in the EC on July 3, 1990 (*Erweiterung der Europaeischen Union*, 2001: 13³; Zervakis, 1997: 142). The step relied considerably on the Association Agreement from 1973, which built an official tie between the EC and the Republic of Cyprus; the agreement further planned for the creation of a customs union in two stages within two years. The accord also contained numerous agreements for the removal of all trade and customs barriers between both partners with help of the adoption of a common customs tariff, the harmonization of several policy areas (competition, national subsidies, legal and administrative convergence), and the guarantee of free movement of goods like agricultural products. In addition, the agreement included the provision to form a common Association Council. After extending the first stage several times due to incalculable obstacles regarding the island's division, a *modus operandi* concerning the second stage was reached, according to which the customs union would be realized completely in two phases by 2002 (KOM 1998: 6f). Between 1977 and 1994 Cyprus received a total of 136 million ECUs from the Community in form of loans, non-repayable assistance, and special payments. With the exception of a certain proportion reserved specifically for the Turkish Cypriot population, many projects were financed with those resources for the improvement of

³ S. <http://www.europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/de/lvb/e40001.htm>

infrastructure in the capital city of Nicosia (city planning and development, waste disposal, and electricity). In this way, all island inhabitants reaped benefits (KOM, 1993: 15).

When the Greek Cypriot decision-makers were no longer satisfied merely with the customs union near the end of the 1980s, they began to strive for the full membership, but were nevertheless less economically motivated than politically. They hoped that the prospect of membership in the EU could give a new impulse to the resolution of the Cyprus question. At the very least, they wanted to bring in the Community to finally take over responsibility for the local conciliation of the conflict. This would also provide a minimal guarantee of security for the Greek Cypriots from the Turkish army (Nugent, 2000: 136). Nevertheless, Vasileiou hesitated long to carry out this change in policy because he feared that the Europeanization of the Cyprus issue would burden unnecessarily any future agreement with the Turkish Cypriots under UN intervention. Furthermore, “Evropi” enjoyed little respect among the unions and the largest parliamentary party, the communist AKEL, because people feared the sellout of their own small and highly subsidized industry and remembered the lukewarm support from the Community in view of the Turkish invasion in the summer of 1974. Therefore, the Greek Cypriot’s turn towards Europe can be seen as a tactical move to neutralize the Turkish military occupation, which is seen as a threat to the Greek Cypriot claim to exclusive rule. Moreover, Greece has belonged to the EC as the tenth member since 1981 and not Turkey (Zervakis, 1997: 141 f; Brewin, 2000: 3). And all Athens governments up to 1999 tried adamantly to convince their EU partners that Turkey cannot claim to belong to Europe because of the Cyprus ordeal, nor is it a part of the Community’s Mediterranean interests (Zervakis, 1997: 142).

Only three years later, the EU Commission supported the petition from the Greek Cypriots – which largely came about due to pressure from Greece (KOM, 1993: 22f). However, the Commission emphasized the economic inequality between both parts of the island and that the integration of Cyprus into the Community requires first a peaceful, balanced, and enduring resolution of the Cyprus issues (KOM, 1993: 23). It also assured the UN General Secretary of the Community’s support of his efforts in the political settlement of the Cyprus question (Zervakis, 1997: 144).

In this last point, the problematic nature of the accession application for the Turkish parties as well as the (west) European member-states becomes clear. The Turkish leadership and Turkey objected vehemently to the Greek Cypriot unilateral application of EU membership in the name of the entire island. But, they justified their arguments with the international treaties of 1959/60, which excluded for Cyprus the entrance into any international organization, to which both Greece and Turkey did not belong (Pabst 2001: 116ff; Mendelson 2001). Thus they rejected categorically any EU accession of the island, if the open question on Cyprus were not managed; otherwise, they threatened with the incorporation of the TRNC into Turkey, if the EU took in the Greek dominated Republic. In addition, the Turks perceived a connection between the entrance of Cyprus into the EU and the integration of the island with Greece, which relates to the old *énoxis* movement, “only by other means” (Bahcheli/Rizopoulos, 1997: 18). The leadership of the TRNC did not refrain from its main political demands in the face of economic improvement of the population. Since then, it rejects participation in the Cypriot negotia-

tion delegation, because that would mean an affirmation of the Greek Cypriot claim to exclusive representation and due to majority relations it could not build its own negotiation position versus the EU. Another reason for the three-year delay for an EU-position on the Greek Cypriot accession application has to do with the EU partner-states' minimal interest in a membership of the divided Cyprus, especially compared to its activity with the CEE Enlargement (KOM, 1999: 23, 43, 64; Brewin, 2000: 3-14).

In case of the accession of a divided Cyprus into the Community, 15 governments, 16 parliaments, and all important institutions of the EU as well as the European Investment Bank and the European Central Bank all have a say in the matter. Given the seemingly insuperable difficulties, even into the 90s neither the Council nor the Commission showed any interest in a direct or indirect conflict arbitration in a distant, problematic peripheral region (Nugent, 2000: 138f.) Instead, the Community limited itself unobtrusively to supporting all pertinent UN resolutions.

4.2 Europeanization through the Start of Accession Negotiations

With the positive response to the Greek Cypriot accession application, the European Union became directly involved in the insular conflict for the first time. At the beginning of October 1993, the EU Council of Ministers assigned the Commission to conduct preparatory talks with the Republic of Cyprus, in order to familiarize them better with the *Acquis communautaire*. The peculiarity of the Cyprus application became evident once again at the EU summit in Corfu in June of 1994. On initiative of the Greek EU presidency, who threatened not to ratify the accession of Austria, Sweden, and Finland, it was decided to include Cyprus and Malta in the group of Central and Eastern European candidate countries. Eventually, through a historical compromise, the French President succeeded for the first time on March 6, 1995 at finding an actual date for the beginning of accession negotiations with the Greek government of the Republic of Cyprus without making such talks dependent on the condition of a previous agreement with the Turkish Cypriots. Until 1999, a "Fourth Financial Report" was signed with Cyprus for 72 million ECUs for the structural preparation of the Republic's accession (i.e. development of civil society and promotion of projects in the interest of both ethnic groups); 54 million Euros will be given for the period 2000-2004 (KOM, 2000: 8; Erweiterung der EU, 2001: 13, footnote 3). Consequently, Athens, despite hefty domestic resistance, promised to lift its veto against the establishment of a customs union with Turkey and ceased to boycott the Enlargement process. At the end of 1997, the European Council of Luxembourg decided to implement a special convergence strategy with Cyprus and opened a lucrative Community programme with the Turkish Cypriot population; at the same time, the EU, however, rejected Turkey's application for membership brusquely. On the 30-31 March 1998, formal negotiations over the "conditions of accession to the Union and the corresponding adjustment to the Treaties" were begun with Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovenia, and Cyprus (KOM, 1998: 5).

However, none of the Turkish Cypriot representatives participated in the actual accession preparations such as evaluation or *screening*, intensified convergence strategies, or accession partnerships because of the political leadership's "negative position" (ibid: 8). The former had already closed an association agreement with Turkey in Au-

gust, which prefaced a partial integration of both partners in certain policy areas (Pabst, 2001: 142). Still, the Community exacerbated the inner-Cypriot conflict with their *hellenophile* decision, because they refused to treat the Turkish Cypriots as equal partners, which under the circumstances could have been possible without acknowledging the TRNC. Only after receiving pressure from the Commission, did the Greek Cypriot government finally allow a few Turkish Cypriot representatives into the delegation, who could have been outvoted in most key issues. Out of these suspicions and in order to demonstrate their own independence, the Turkish Cypriot leader demanded his own negotiating delegation and separate referenda for the EU-accession as UN General Secretary Ghali had prescribed in 1992. In contrast, the EU maintained their negotiations with the Greek Cypriots with the vague hope that the economic and security-political advantages of EU membership for the whole island would benefit both ethnic groups. Accordingly, the perspective of EU membership could function as a catalyst for conflict resolution (KOM, 2000: 10; Axt, 2001: 77).

At the Helsinki summit of December 1999, the European Council took its most far-reaching steps given the “thaw” in Greco-Turkish relations (Zervakis, 2000: 338): it recognized Turkey as an accession-willing future candidate for membership. However, this entailed certain stipulations (respect for human rights, protection of minorities, democratization, rule of law, institutional stability), as the European Council had determined in Copenhagen in 1993 for all candidate countries. In reaction thereto, the leaders of the EU member-states emphasized that a political solution would alleviate Cyprus’ accession to the EU. If there were no solution by the end of the accession negotiations, the Council would then make a decision on the accession without using the political solution as a prerequisite, considering all significant factors (SN 300/99: 3).

The Helsinki resolutions were depicted as a “masterpiece of Byzantine diplomacy” (Zervakis, 2000: 338). While the tangible advantages of détente policy on the European level were demonstrated to Athens, the long refused status as of EU candidacy was granted to Turkey after Greece’s assent. Cyprus proved to be comparatively successful in accession negotiations, which were closed by the end of 2002, independently of a political solution of the conflict. Nevertheless, the reservations of many EU members concerning the accession of a divided Cyprus remain and the EU has not bound itself legally to solving the problem. Yet the Community has substantial leverage to bring the two groups into further negotiations because only a mutually agreeable accession can have elicited an easing or resolution of the conflict (Kizilyürek, 2001: 202); however, this will require a special accord. Otherwise, an unresolved question remains with a sole membership of the Greek part of the island: how can Cyprus enter the EU without recognizing the Turkish occupation of the island’s northern part officially?

4.3 Rapprochement Under the Mutual Umbrella of the EU

After the last progress report of the EU on November 13, 2002, the Union declared as its goal in Cyprus, “to find a political solution under the auspices of the UN before Cyprus enters the EU, although this does not represent any prerequisite for the accession” (KOM, 2001: 25). This means that the EU accession and UN conflict resolution negotiations between both ethnic groups will be treated complementarily with the in-

tention of adjusting all deviations from community law to the final accession treaty. The EU does not view itself as the conflict arbitrator, but understands to use the accession dynamics in order to bring about an agreement. A failure would intensify the division to the disadvantage of both communities (regulation of refugee issues, elimination of the differences in wealth) and their motherlands (bilateral balance, Turkish EU accession) as consequences (Wallace, 2002: 2).

When the EU summit in Helsinki in December 1999 named Turkey a future accession aspirant, the solution of the Cyprus issue came near during the year 2000 given the new, indirect rounds of talks in Geneva and New York between the two ethnic groups and the UN-special mediator Alvaro de Soto. There de Soto presented concrete, detailed discussion proposals for the central topics of the distribution of powers between both ethnicities in a Cypriot “common state” and in the “component states” (Reuter, 2001: 29-36). In autumn of 2000, the ‘comments’ from UN General Secretary Kofi Annan proved to be of particular significance for the negotiation process as well as future conflict solution. Therein, he called for the principle recognition of the political equal rights of both ethnic groups in order to reach a comprehensive balance between the claim to an exclusive right of representation in the Republic of Cyprus and the claim to sovereignty in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (Pabst, 2001: 143). Nevertheless, the Turkish Cypriots rejected Annan’s suggestions and the Turkish Cypriot leadership refused further participation in the UN talks. Contrarily, the EU Nice Summit greeted Annan’s efforts and supported them strongly. The EU criticized the negative position of the Turkish Cypriot leader and turned to Turkey as a means of leverage by making their progress in the EU accession process dependent on Turkey’s position in the Cyprus issue (KOM, 2001: 22).

In analyzing Annan’s proposals, it becomes apparent that no resettlement of the immigrated Turkish settlers was to take place, nor would all Greek refugees be allowed to return to the island’s north; this could lead to difficulties for acceptance from the Republic of Cyprus. Nonetheless, President Kliridis announced his willingness to find a compromise so as not to be responsible for the failure of new negotiations. In response, the Turkish side demands the reestablishment of the confederation because it does not agree with the accession stipulation – to speak with one voice in the EU. At the same time the Turkish Cypriots are being asked to give up their partial sovereignty to the whole country. Additionally, the occupation of Northern Cyprus is being called into question. A military presence of UN, NATO or ESDP command with mixed Greek and Turkish units seems more realistic to Annan because Turkey cannot afford exaggerated security concerns given its own EU membership prospects.

When Rauf Denktash offered to meet his former school friend Glafkos Kliridis for the first time since 1997, the proposition took place with support from Ankara, in order to show a positive sign of Turkey’s renewed willingness for negotiations before the European Council conference in Laeken, 14-15 December 2001. Thus began a new marathon of talks in Nicosia between the UN representative de Soto and two key persons who rule the island’s political knacks for decades. The new talks can be seen as perhaps one of the last opportunities to solve the island’s division before the accession of the Republic into the EU. Thus the urgency of the negotiations entailed a set schedule for the next six months (until the end of June 2002) to negotiate three times a week in

the buffer zone with UN support and under exclusion of the public. In this manner, the Greek Cypriots and the EU hope to be able to include the criteria for a resolution to the conflict into the accession treaty before the accession negotiations end.

Although no new ideas or suggestions have been made known yet, the conditions for a conflict resolution appear better than any time since the founding of the Republic of Cyprus. The EU as a peace community and its member-states are being asked to take a more active role in the Cyprus issue, in that they promote the readiness to compromise with appropriate financial as well as political-diplomatic incentives for both conflict parties. Otherwise the entrances of an ethnic divided Cyprus would increase the susceptibility to conflict for the whole island as well as between Greece and Turkey (Kühnhardt 2002: 51). Consequently, this would endanger the security of the eastern Mediterranean as well as the credibility of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy. Until now, the EU Commission has led the accession negotiations with Cyprus and Turkey with sole responsibility because most member-states show no strong inclination. In contrast to Macedonia, where representatives of the EU and the member-states send large amounts of money and prominent officials, the lack of interest and involvement in Cyprus is blatant, although the situation is just as unstable (Wallace, 2002: 7-12).

Serious difficulties in finding a compromise are to be expected in the following areas given previous experience:

1. Binding constitutional agreements within a future Cypriot EU membership;
2. Return of (mainly Greek Cypriot) property and territorial changes (to the burden of the Turkish Cypriots);
3. The issue of the future of Turkish settlers in Northern Cyprus;
4. Credible security guarantees for the economic existence of the Turkish Cypriots;
5. Unity over transitional steps to build up mutual trust and to receive support in two populations for the unavoidable adjustment process.

Despite these foreseeable difficulties, it is noteworthy that both sides are beginning as early in the negotiations as possible to eliminate their barriers to interethnic and economic contacts over the line of demarcation. The goal is to accomplish this even before the issues concerning status are resolved and the EU will help support such transitional steps with financial means.

Yet the danger of an unresolved Cyprus issue remains, should a political solution not be reached at the last minute. In order to escape the dilemma of the self-made Cyprus trap, the EU Commission has tried to reduce the asymmetry in its Greek-Turkish-Cypriot relationship. At the same time, it has concentrated for a long time on convincing the Turkish Cypriots of their advantages of a common EU membership with the Greek Cypriots (KOM, 2001: 25f.):

1. The Turkish Cypriots could determine their own inner order and security measures also after entrance into the Community. All existing accords with Turkey concerning the Cyprus solution would not be affected by the EU accession, so long as they do

not exclude that the Cypriots speak with one voice in the EU committees and fulfil their requirements as EU members.

2. The EU-Commission has worked since February 2002 on a one-time only special programme (adjustment programme) in the amount of 200 million Euros (from 2004 until 2008) for supporting the Turkish Cypriots with the creation of a functioning market economy in the event of a prior solution to the Cyprus question. In this case, the EU would offer further structural programmes for modernization of agriculture and tourism in northern Cyprus, which would belong undoubtedly to the poorest regions of the enlarged Union, in order to help alleviate fears of domination from the strong capitalistic Greek Cypriots. Furthermore, an EU informational centre in the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce is supposed to contribute efficient information on business people and Community politics as well as support the union movements in both island parts. As a result, the EU hopes to achieve improvements in relations between the ethnic groups and develop mutual interests before the EU accession. Likewise, a communication strategy seeks to promote the public awareness and interest in the EU in both Cypriot communities.
3. The EU refers to opinion polls in northern Cyprus, where more than 90% of the Turkish Cypriots recognize the economic and political advantages of EU membership (modernization, increase in income) and speak in favour of an EU accession after the solution of the Cyprus issue.
4. The Community can guarantee all Cypriots to secure the primacy of democratic and human rights including protection of cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity (KOM, 2001: 25). Democracy and rule of law as well as inclusion of Greek and Turkish Cypriots in EU work is guaranteed.
5. The EU has also let the TRNC know that Enlargement is the last chance to share in the wealth of the southern part or end up losing out.
6. In the end the Commission has demanded obstinately since 1995 and partly in cooperation with the UN “bi-communal” projects with the “confidence building measures”, the construction of a strong civil society in both parts of Cyprus (Clerides, 1997: 248f). At least a third of the 57 million Euros that the EU allocated to Cyprus for the accession preparations are being used to finance reconciliation projects between ethnic groups.

Still, these activities have not been able to unfold between the populations of Cyprus because the Turkish Cypriot leadership has built insuperable impediments for the participation of their civil actors in the event of crossing the demarcation line. Consequently, organizations, opposition parties, and unions led a demonstration in July 2001 under the slogan, “This is our land!” in which 3000-4000 Turkish Cypriots participated. The protesters contested the further economic degeneration and demanded their government to take a positive position toward the “bi-communal” activities (KOM, 2001: 10f, 22ff).

Indeed it has been expected of both negotiation leaders to consider the following basic demands for a successful conclusion of the present Greek-Turkish talks:

1. The political representatives from both parts of the island must finally recognize that one-sided suggestions will not lead to acceptable solutions for the unity, freedom, and prosperity of Cyprus. Therefore the two ethnic groups should permanently reject the option of annexation into their motherlands.
2. Also, neither ethnic group can seek to dominate the other. The effective concept for the 21st century is the trusting cooperation of all Cypriots in a united Europe, in which the EU member-states as well as the regions and communities have their own powers based on the principles of federalism and subsidiarity. Thus member-states particularly with numerous ethnicities should assure comprehensive societal and cultural rights of autonomy as a compensation for their loyal behavior toward the central government as a way of preventing separatist tendencies.
3. Similar to the Belgian case, ethnic groups may not be limited to their own settlement area, rather a federal solution with two areas and two communities should be reached.

An enduring peaceful solution for Cyprus based on the bi-communal negotiations necessitates finally not only the mediation of the UN, but also the Union as a believable regional guarantor of the stability of the entire Cyprus (*Athener Zeitung* 5 April 2002: 22-24).

5. The Integration and Enlargement Process as an Arbitration Model of Conflicting Interests?

Cyprus signifies a special case given its distinctive insular geography between Christian occident and Muslim orient as well as its apparently insurmountable international and historical problems of co-existence between two different ethnic groups with different ethno-religious identities. In view of that, the island offers the unique “window of opportunity” (Kofi Annan) to try out new models of conflict resolution (Hugg, 2001: 94). For the EU, a promotional role as stability provider, peacemaker, and prosperity benefactor in the eastern Mediterranean could develop, if it succeeds at applying the enlargement’s dynamics as a strategic instrument of flexible cooperation for overcoming the diplomatic stalemate in the island’s ongoing conflict. However, the necessary rapprochement of the deeply divided conflicting parties in Cyprus requires a different approach to problem solving capability beyond the nation-state (Zürn/Wolf, 2000: 113). Meanwhile, the EU is experimenting with new forms of governance in the European multi-level system (EU Commission 2001; Grande/Jachtenfuchs, 2000). This “European Governance” is based on a complex, balanced dialogue led by civil society, and at the same time interested in a collective, binding arbitration and decision system. If the EU manages to transfer the success of its Governance approach to a solution of the Cyprus question, then it could promote more flexibility, willingness to cooperate, and acceptance among the conflicting parties for an end to the island’s division and security dilemma (Gehring, 2000: 104).

As an educational community, the EU can act exemplarily for the political elites of Cyprus and illustrate how radical the relations in the multi-level system have changed as

a result of European integration; it follows that the classical terms of nation-state, sovereignty, and statehood have lost everyday political significance. In addition, one need to consider the large variety of political and constitutional systems within the EU, which reach from the relatively centralistic France and United Kingdom to the loose federal structure of Belgium. Therefore, it is not too difficult for the Community to bid plausible assurances of protection for the Turkish Cypriot group within its limited territory (Wallace, 2002: 9).

In coming to grips with the Cyprus issue, the EU must develop further practical measures in the direct future, in order to prevent that the small island of Aphrodite becomes the largest problem of the enlargement (Kühnhardt, 2002: 53). Simultaneously, an increase in stability can result only if the EU manages to define its relation to Turkey more clearly. Yet, it can prove quite helpful that Cyprus is the first accession country that must bring together on the national level two opposing cultures feeding on Christian and Muslim traditions. The EU should show that the accession of Cyprus cannot be perceived as a victory for the Greek Cypriot population over the Turkish Cypriot minority; rather, the entire population of Cyprus is beneficial. Thus, it must be examined, whether, firstly, the freedom to travel can be improved below the threshold of an international acknowledgement of northern Cyprus, compulsory resettlements can be excluded, and northern Cyprus can participate in the free trade and customs union. Additionally, as with the codification in the Turkish language as an official EU language in the accession treaty, the Republic of Cyprus must be persuaded to a constructive contribution (Deutsch-Zyprisches Bürgerforum, 2001: 11-19). The future of the Community depends considerably on whether the EU succeeds at establishing a broad democratic dialogue between the traditional Christian and Islamic self-perceived archrivals in a common, western and secular political framework (Siedentop, 2000: 207). Here, the EU will have to involve itself more intensively than previous in the cooperation between the population groups from both Cypriot civil societies in order to demonstrate its integrity and credibility towards these citizens. Ultimately, it will also depend on the amount of bi-communal networks, whether the Cypriots of both ethnic groups will be able to solve their conflicts amiably with EU support under the common umbrella of Europe (Welz/Llyes, 2001). In this manner, the Turks and Greeks in Cyprus must learn that they can fulfill their interests believably, profitably, and efficiently only in an enlarged European Community.

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