

Forum: Historical Security Council (HSC)

Issue: The question of the situation in Cyprus (1960)

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Introduction

Cyprus has been a first-hand witness to the glorious empires around the world. During the Bronze Age, Mycenaean Greeks settled in Cyprus. Following this stage was the Ottoman Cyprus, starting in 1570, and was made possible with the Ottoman Empire conducting a full-scale assault with tens of thousands of troops. The Turkish community emerged after these troops landed. However, the island then experienced another shift in power after the Russo-Turkish war which started in 1877. After this, Cyprus was leased to the British Empire, for hopes that Britain would protect the Ottoman Empire against Russian forces. From there on, after World War One broke out in 1914, the British Empire controlled Cyprus's administration and eventually annexed Cyprus.

In 1915, Britain tried to offer Cyprus to Greece in exchange for Greece joining the British side of the war, but this offer was declined. Yet, the Greek Cypriots remained hopeful that enosis could be achieved. Enosis is the political union of Cyprus with Greece, and was derived from the Greek language and has the literal meaning of "union". This ambitious enosis movement alerted the Turkish Cypriots living on the same island. They originally favored British rule but were alarmed by the prominent ideology of Enosis among the Greek Cypriots.

In 1955, a pro-enosis, Greek Cypriot nationalist organization, Ethniki Organosis Kypriou Agoniston (EOKA) was established. Led by George Grivas, EOKA launched several armed campaigns including Operation Forward Victory, which consisted of numerous phases and lasted for two years. Throughout their campaign, there were bombings, riots, ambushes and endless violence. Thus, in the fear of union with Greece and the formation of organizations including EOKA, Turkish Cypriots were convinced that the only way to preserve their identity was the division of Cyprus into Turkish and Greek regions, otherwise known as the Taksim policy. In 1958, a pro-Taksim nationalist organization called the Turkish Resistance Organisation (TMT) was formed. It was led by Rauf Denktaş and was another belligerent in the Cyprus Intercommunal violence, demonstrating hostility and violence.

In efforts to mitigate the crisis, representatives from Greece and Turkey discussed Cyprus's future. For the first time, the concept of an independent Cyprus was discussed, and a compromise was reached. Along with the Treaty of Establishment, the Treaty of Guarantee, and the Treaty of Alliance, the new Cyprus constitution was established. On August 16th, 1960, Cyprus was declared as an independent country.

However, peace did not last long. In 1974, The Cyprus National Guard and EOKA launched a coup d'état, violently seizing power and overthrowing Makarios III, the president of Cyprus, while appointing pro-enosis Nikos Sampson as the president. Turkish troops then invaded Cyprus and enforced Taksim, the partition of Cyprus. After rounds of negotiations, the UN peacekeeping forces administered a buffer zone between the two states.

Definition of Key Terms

Cyprus

Cyprus, or the Republic of Cyprus, is an island country situated in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. It has a unique geographical location, being at the crossroads of Asia, Europe and Africa. Also known for its mineral wealth, Cyprus gained the nickname of a "golden-green leaf thrown into the Sea".

Independence

Independence is the condition of a state or country in which residents of the region exercise self-government, or sovereignty over their lands. There are several causes for independence, which include the desire to protect their cultural identity and the feeling of being oppressed or treated unequally. Methods to achieve independence could vary from diplomatic approaches to instigating violence.

Protectorates

Protectorate states are mostly independent with its internal affairs but are still subjected to control and protection from other sovereign states. These states recognize the suzerainty of other states without direct possession. The Roman Empire was one of the first to utilize systems of protectorates and it remains to be a method of colonial expansion. Cyprus was a British protectorate from 1878 to 1914.

Annexation

Annexation refers to the unilateral act of taking possession and proclaiming sovereignty over territory outside of its domain. In other words, it is the incorporation of a new territory into its city or

country. Annexation is usually followed by military occupation of the region and is considered illegal under current international law.

UN Buffer Zone

UN buffer zones are neutral zones between two hostile parties, in order to prevent the arise of violence or aggression between them. These buffer zones are patrolled by United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), preventing violence at the borderlines which extend over 180 kilometers.

Enosis

Enosis is the political union of Cyprus with Greece, derived from the Greek language and has a literal meaning of “union”. Major actors promoting enosis include the Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA), a Greek Cypriot nationalist organization aiming to end British rule and desires for Cyprus’s reunion with Greece.

Taksim

Taksim is the ideology held by Turkish Cypriots, in which the division of Cyprus into Turkish and Greek region is the only solution to prevent enosis and Greek aggression. Followers of this ideology advocate for the recognition and independence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, though this state has only been recognized by the Turkish government.

Coup d'état

Coup d'état is an unexpected and violent seizure of power by a group of individuals, usually leading to the overthrow of the current government. The primary actors are military organisations, illegally installing regimes in their favor.

Background Information

For centuries, the island of Cyprus has been a region of political instability. With an advantageous trade location in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, Cyprus’s history of rule has shifted between multiple parties, since the earliest known civilizations. Some of the more prominent groups include the Greeks, Turks, and British, which structure the division of Cyprus. Another factor of the polarity is that Cyprus is geographically in West Asia but geopolitically a part of Southeast Europe, making it home to different ethnic groups. To fully understand the scope of the conflict and its endurance, it is crucial to grasp the history that has formulated the composition of today’s Cyprus.

Early Occupation of Cyprus

The Greek presence in Cyprus began circa 1400 BCE during the Ancient Greek Bronze Age when the Mycenaean controlled the island and spread Greek culture, religion, and language as many immigrated. After the downfall of the Mycenaean, the island was ruled by several different civilizations: Egyptians, Persians, Romans, and Venetians. In 1571, after the Turks occupied the island during the Fourth Ottoman-Venetian War, Cyprus became a province of the Ottoman Empire. For a few centuries, the Greek Cypriots and Turks lived in relative peace under the Ottoman administration.

Greek War of Independence

Prior to Ottoman control of Cyprus, Greece fell under Ottoman rule after the collapse of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, in 1453. Threatened by the growing Ottoman empire, the British, French, and Russians sponsored the Greek War of Independence. After the Greek victory in 1830, Greece became an independent nation, which prompted pro-Enosis ideas in Cyprus. The Greek War of Independence also sparked the Crimean War in 1853 and the last Russo-Turkish War in 1877. Following the Russian victory in 1878, the Treaty of San Stefano was drafted by Russia to conclude the war. A few months later, the Cyprus Convention, a secret negotiation between the British and the Ottomans, granted Britain the protectorate status of Cyprus. Only a week after the Cyprus Convention, the Congress of Berlin was held to satisfy Britain's requisites: limiting Russia and maintaining the Ottoman Empire.

British Rule of Cyprus

As Ottoman control came to an end, many Greek Cypriots welcomed British rule, seeing it as a transitional period for their enosis ideal. However, at the beginning of World War I, Britain unilaterally annexed Cyprus as part of its empire after decades of protectorate status. This was due to the Ottoman entrance into the war against the Triple Entente: Britain, France, and Russia. The unilateral annexation led to shifts in Greek-Cypriot tactics to enosis, such as participation in WWI alongside the British in hopes of attaining civil liberties for Cyprus. However, the lack of results from these efforts following the Paris Peace Talks' conclusion to WW1 and the formal Turkish renunciation of Cyprus in the Treaty of Lausanne brought an end to Cypriot acceptance of British control. During this time, multiple Greek-Cypriot organizations, many sponsored by the Church, were formed to demand enosis, yet they continued to be rejected by the British. In October 1931, the Cyprus Revolt took place when a decision to discontinue tax increases after a budget deficit was vetoed by Governor Ronald Storrs. Greek Cypriot members of parliament resigned and church officials encouraged civil disobedience. Following the revolt, Cyprus entered a period called Palmerocracy, named after Governor Richmond Palmer. During this autocratic regime, Palmer limited public dissemination of information and prohibited economic unions for his aim to decrease interest in politics amongst the people of Cyprus. These policies were ultimately

repealed at the beginning of World War II, during which Cypriots joined war efforts alongside the British army.

The Cyprus Emergency

In 1950, the Orthodox Church of Cyprus introduced the Union Referendum, an unofficial referendum on enosis, in which only Greek Cypriots voted. The referendum totaled 96% in favor of the proposal, but enosis remained disregarded by the international community. In 1955, Colonel Georgios Grivas of the Greek army founded the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA), a right-wing Greek nationalist organization backed by Archbishop Makarios III. They soon launched an armed campaign against British rule of Cyprus and in support of enosis. The campaign became increasingly radicalized with the exile of Makarios III in 1956. The Turkish resistance organization, TMT, was formed in 1958 to counter the EOKA as many Turkish Cypriots feared persecution and wanted Taksim in Cyprus.

Republic of Cyprus

The Cyprus Emergency was brought to an end in 1959 with the London-Zurich Agreements facilitating the creation of Cyprus as a sovereign country. This meeting between the United Kingdom, Greece, Turkey, and Cypriot leaders drafted a new constitution for the newly independent state. The new constitution functioned proportionally: a Greek Cypriot President and a Turkish Cypriot Vice President elected by Greek and Turkish islanders respectively. Additionally, the Vice President had veto power on the House of Representatives and the Council of Ministers. Both the House and the Council had proportional representation: 7 to 3. The House of Representatives requires separate two-thirds of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot majorities to modify laws, to ensure that no single community can pass laws that may be detrimental to the other.

On August 16, 1960, Archbishop Makarios III was elected as the first President of the Republic of Cyprus, and Fazil Kucuk was elected as the first Vice President with the implementation of the Agreement.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Republic of Cyprus

The Republic of Cyprus was established in 1960 after the London-Zurich Agreement following the Cyprus Emergency of the 1950s. While the constitution requires a Greek Cypriot President and a Turkish Cypriot Vice President, the Vice President position has been vacant since 1974. Since 1965, the Republic of Cyprus has been administered by a Greek Cypriot government, which violates the

original constitution with requirements for proportional representation. Despite this, the Republic of Cyprus is recognized as the single sovereign state of Cyprus. Currently the Northern occupied part of Cyprus is separated from the Republic by the Green Line, a UN buffer zone. The island also contains two British SBAs that are not considered a part of the Republic of Cyprus. However, the Republic of Cyprus strongly condemns the SBAs, claiming that they are remnants of British colonialism. With the split of the island by communal lines, Greek Cypriots are largely in favor of the reunification of the island, including the return of the bases.

United Kingdom

Cyprus was under the rule of the British Empire from 1878 to 1960. Since Britain's original establishment in Cyprus, their main goal has been to obtain an advantageous military base. Initially, the island functioned as a base for its military operations in the middle east. However, the Treaty of Nicosia allowed Britain to retain two Sovereign Base Areas on the island as Cyprus became an independent country. The United Kingdom currently acts as a mediator among the two other guarantor parties, Greece and Turkey, participating in peace talks.

Greece

Greece has historically been heavily involved in Cyprus's affairs as a neighbor in the Mediterranean. The majority of Cyprus's ethnic demographics fall under Greek Cypriots. Taking into account the past colonial history in the region, Greece heavily condemns the occupation of Turkey in Northern Cyprus. Greece supports the Republic of Cyprus and demands the restoration of the sovereign state with the return of its occupied territory.

Turkey

Turkey condemns the Greek Cypriot violations of the 1960 constitution by forcing Turkish Cypriots out of the government in 1963. Additionally, Turkey has spoken out about South Cyprus's wishes to Hellenize Cyprus through the use of force and ethnic cleansing. Turkey believes that Turkish Cypriots wish to live as equals amongst Greek Cypriots, whilst the latter strives for dominance.

Armenia

Armenia, a former Soviet republic situated on the eastern border of Turkey, is an ally of the Republic of Cyprus. In the early 20th century, the Armenian Genocide of an estimated 1.5 million Armenians occurred under the Ottoman Empire. While Turkey still denies this account to this day, the Republic of Cyprus has long recognized the genocide and condemns it. Armenia opposes the Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus. Currently, there are 3500 Armenians in Cyprus and they constitute a recognized minority with representation in government.

Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia and the Eastern Bloc were involved in Cyprus's conflict from 1960 to 1974. They backed Makarios III Presidency to ensure that Cyprus will not become a NATO base and therefore threaten their allies in the Middle East. Additionally, Czechoslovakia provided arms for Makarios III to prevent the Greek junta from overthrowing.

European Union (EU)

The republic of Cyprus is a European Union country, having joined recently in 2004. Since 2004, the Republic of Cyprus has been a European Union member and has adopted the eurozone currency. Prior to that, Greece became a EU member in 1981. While Turkey has been an applicant for decades, its accession to the EU is currently halted due to humanitarian violations. The EU supports the adoption of a single, sovereign Cyprus. The EU has also repeatedly condemned the Turkish invasion and has excluded the Turkish occupied territory as well as the British SBAs from Cyprus's membership. This further divides the regions of Cyprus and the relationship between the Euro-aligned Cyprus and Turkish Cyprus.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a military alliance that aims to secure peace and freedom between its members. Currently, Greece and Turkey are both a part of the NATO alliance. During past conflicts within the Cyprus problem, NATO has spoken out against Greek and Turkish involvement, to protect the treaty of cooperation between states. Furthermore, the United States of America, a founding member of NATO, has expressed interest in assisting the Republic of Cyprus in its path to political settlement.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1914	Cyprus was unilaterally annexed by Britain after more than 300 years of Ottoman rule and decades of role as a British protectorate.
1960	Cyprus gains independence after the yearslong anti-British campaign of the Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA). The Treaty of Guarantee was also

established, granting Britain, Greece, and Turkey the right to intervene, while Britain still retained sovereignty of two military bases.

March 4th, 1964	The United Nations buffer zone, or the “Green Line” in Cyprus which is patrolled by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was established, in effort to mitigate the conflict between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots
1974	The Cypriot National Guard launched a coup d'état that removed their pro-independence president Makarios, while appointing pro-enosis Nikos Sampson as the president. In response, Turkish troops invaded Cyprus and enforced partition of Cyprus at the ceasefire line specified by UN peacekeeping forces.
1975	The Turkish Federated State of Cyprus was proclaimed, but its status was rejected by the Republic of Cyprus and the international community.
November 15th, 1983	The Turkish Cypriot State president Rauf Denktaş unilaterally declared the Independence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in their parliament, eight years after the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus was proclaimed.
1997	The Cyprus missile crisis emerged. The Republic of Cyprus intended to install two Russian S-300 air defense missile sites, leading to the escalation of the conflict between Cyprus and Turkey as the latter threatened to attack and initiate a total war.

Relevant UN Resolutions and Treaties

- Security Council Resolution 186: The Cyprus Question, 4 March 1964 (**S/5575**)
- Settlement of the Cyprus Question Including Implementation of Confidence-Building Measures Between the Two Communities, 29 July 1994, (**S/RES/939**)
- The Situation in Cyprus, 29 June 1999, (**S/RES/1251**)
- The Situation in Cyprus, 29 May 2009, (**S/R/1873**)

Possible Solutions

Two-state solution

The two-state solution for Cyprus is a proposed division of Cyprus into Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot states. However, Turkey is the only nation that has publicly supported this two-state solution, claiming that this is the most effective solution that will prevent decades of useless negotiations. However, other states including the United States of America and the European Union rejected this proposal and any division of the island.

Reunification of Cyprus (The Annan Plan)

The Annan Plan, or the reunification plan of Cyprus, was proposed by the United Nations on November 11th, 2002. The plan was based on the arguments proposed by both parties (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Republic of Cyprus) in hopes of reuniting Cyprus. However, after the 2004 referendum for the Annan plan, it was discovered that 65% of Turkish Cypriots supported it, while the number dropped to 24% for Greek Cypriots. There were five revisions made before the final version, which proposed the creation of the United Republic of Cyprus. This country should be a federation of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot states. However, the plan did not solve the root cause of the division between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and both parties could not settle agreements on several terms of the plan.

Questions for Further Research

Does Cyprus' future as a nation entail a new political integration or a relationship based on partnership and active cooperation between the two peoples?

Do Greek Cypriots have as equal a claim to the Cyprus land as their Turkish counterparts? Why or why not?

Which key events lead to Cyprus' eventual annexation from Britain's colonial rule?

What were some causes of the inter-communal discourse in 1960, and how did they unfold?

Which diplomatic interventions were taken (both by and excluding the UN)?

How did the events of 1960 set the stage for later historical events, with respect to the 1974 Turkish invasion?

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