

Statement by the Government of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (14 December 1997)

Caption: On 14 December 1997, the Government of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus criticises the decision taken by the Luxembourg European Council to open accession negotiations with the Greek part of the island.

Source: Turkish Republic Of Northern Cyprus Government Statement 14 December 1997. [ON-LINE]. [Ankara]: Ministry of Foreign Affairs-Republic of Turkey, mise à jour 29.07.2004 [15.06.2005]. Available on <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MainIssues/Cyprus/Turkish++Republic+Of+Northern+Cyprus+Government+Statement.htm>.

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Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Government Statement (14 December 1997)

At the Luxembourg Summit that took place on 12-13 December 1997, the European Council has taken a decision regarding the commencement of accession negotiations with "Cyprus". This decision violates the basic rights of the Turkish Cypriot people who are one of the two co-founding partners of a "sui generis" Republic, based on the internal and external balances established by international Treaties of 1960 signed by the five parties. The unilateral and unlawful application made by the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus in 1990 is aimed at achieving its political aspirations and establishing a solely Greek Cypriot state in Cyprus. The decision taken by the EU Council, on the basis of this application by the Greek Cypriot side, is as much a violation of the equal political and sovereign rights of the Turkish Cypriot side emanating from the 1960 Agreement, as it is a denial of the parameters and realities accepted by the United Nations. Furthermore, this decision has rendered meaningless the efforts being carried out by the UN Secretary-General within his mission of good-offices. Therefore, this decision taken on the basis of the said application is not valid or binding on the Turkish Cypriot side.

As is known, the Zurich and London Agreements, which had established the 1960 partnership Republic, were founded on a balance between Turkey and Greece for the solution of the Cyprus question and prohibited the membership of "Cyprus" in international organizations, unions and pacts of alliance in which both Turkey and Greece are not members. In this connection, Point 8 of the Zurich Agreement has clearly indicated that the President and the Vice-President had the right of veto on any decision or action concerning "the participation of the Republic of Cyprus in international organizations and pacts of alliance in which Greece and Turkey" do not both participate. On the other hand, Article 1 of the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960 states that Cyprus "undertakes not to participate in whole or in part in any political or economic union with any State whatsoever". The intention behind this Article is the maintenance of a sustainable balance between the rights and interests of the two co-founding communities and Guarantors over Cyprus.

The Greek Cypriot side, in order to remove the internal and external balance established by the 1960 Agreement, destroyed the partnership by force of arms in 1963. Since then there has not been a joint administration in Cyprus, and the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities have lived under their own democratically elected separate administrations. It is an undisputable fact that the Greek Cypriot administration has never exercised sovereignty over the whole of Cyprus or the Turkish Cypriot people. In sum, there is no joint administration enjoying the mandate of both peoples and capable of speaking for both of them, or applying for EU membership and conducting accession negotiations with the EU, on behalf of both peoples or the whole of the island.

EU membership of Cyprus can only be discussed and agreed to after an overall settlement, and upon its approval by the two sides through separate referenda, as envisaged in paragraph 92 of the UN Set of Ideas. Furthermore, agreeing to become a member of the EU while Turkey is not a full member but Greece, which has created and perpetuated the Cyprus question, is, and thus destroying the balance between the two motherlands over Cyprus, is no different than agreeing to an indirect unification of Cyprus with Greece or the establishment of a Greek Cypriot republic in the island. In fact, the Greek Cypriot side is openly declaring that the aim behind its aspirations to become a member of the EU is to transform Cyprus into a second Greek state in the Mediterranean.

From the very beginning, the TRNC opposed the unilateral, unlawful and ill-intentioned application made by the Greek Cypriot administration for full membership to the EU. There exists an undemocratic and unlawful application which is contrary to the 1960 Agreements leading to the independence of Cyprus, as well as the principles of the UN negotiating process. Every step and decision taken on the basis of this application will not be legally and politically binding on the Turkish Cypriot side. The TRNC will not take part in such a process.

The fact that the EU, notwithstanding the above, has chosen to ignore the legal and political realities and the factual situation prevailing in Cyprus and adopted such a decision, is regrettable. With this decision, the EU has dealt a destructive blow to the UN negotiating process and its parameters. The EU will bear the historic responsibility for this action.

The EU, by taking this latest decision despite the above mentioned realities, has only helped destroy the established framework for a settlement in Cyprus which has emerged through the process of inter communal negotiations. The imbalance that this unjust decision has created in Cyprus, has further reinforced the reasons preventing the successful conclusion of the negotiations. For this reason, future contacts can only be held between the two states in Cyprus. Acting within the context of the Joint declaration of 20 January 1997, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, in cooperation with Turkey, will take whatever steps necessary in all fields.