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Question of Cyprus

Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 14 December 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my government, I would like to draw your attention to the following points regarding the content of the letter of the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, dated 18 November 2021 ([A/76/557-S/2021/961](#)):

Firstly, I should recall that the international community has no doubts that there is only one state in Cyprus that is constituted by the entire island of Cyprus, and that Cyprus is represented by the sole legitimate Government on the island since the Republic of Cyprus emerged into statehood in 1960. The unlawful use of force against Cyprus by Turkey has created no legal effects and has in no way altered the fact that the Republic of Cyprus has sovereignty over the whole island of Cyprus and enjoys all the rights stemming therefrom. Cyprus will continue to protect all its rights and legitimate interests in its territory, maritime space and airspace, including its *ipso facto* and *ab initio* sovereign rights over its continental shelf, in line with international legality and applicable international law.

The circulation of a chart, annexed to the letter of the Permanent Representative of Turkey dated 18 November 2021 ([A/76/557-S/2021/961](#)), depicting a divided island of Cyprus, with the names of the so-called “TRNC” and “GCASC” inscribed thereon, is a violation of international law and Security Council resolutions in itself. Security Council resolutions [541 \(1983\)](#) and [550 \(1984\)](#) deplored the purported secession of part of the Republic of Cyprus and considered the declaration of the so-called “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” as legally invalid. Furthermore, the Council called repeatedly upon all States to respect the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus, while the International Court of Justice, in its 2010 Advisory Opinion, upheld the invalidity of the so-called “TRNC” since it was established as a result of the unlawful use of force on the part of Turkey against the Republic of Cyprus.



Secondly, the maritime claims put forward by Turkey through the purported submission of purported geographical coordinates have no legal basis and create no legal effect or obligations, either vis-à-vis Cyprus, or any other third State. The maritime area claimed by Turkey is maximalist, unreasonable and encroaches on Cyprus' maritime zones and on the lawful rights of Cyprus therein, in violation of international law. With reference to the letter dated 18 March 2020 of the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations ([A/74/557-S/2020/50](#)), my government's position has been recorded in document [A/74/824-S/2020/332](#), dated 24 April 2020, where the submission by Turkey of a list of geographical coordinates concerning the outer limits of Turkey's purported continental shelf, was rejected *in toto*. Likewise, in a letter dated 20 January 2020 ([A/74/660-S/2020/50](#)), my government rejected the coordinates submitted by Turkey through its letter of 13 November 2019, contained in document [A/74/550](#).

Thirdly, Turkey continues to put forward the Turkish Cypriot community as a pretext for claiming rights over Cyprus, including in this context. The map attached to the letter of the Permanent Representative of Turkey ([A/76/557-S/2021/961](#)) clearly demonstrates that Turkey aims at depriving Cyprus – Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots alike – of approximately 44 per cent of the country's Exclusive Economic Zone, by appropriating it, in order to exclusively serve its own outlandish claims. It therefore invalidates, to say the least, Turkey's argument about safeguarding the rights of the Turkish Cypriots. If Turkey is interested in the rights and well-being of Turkish Cypriots, it could demonstrate it by cooperating to achieve Cyprus' reunification as swiftly as possible, instead of keeping them hostage in a secessionist entity in order to use them as bargaining chips for its own expansionist objectives. The management of natural resources in a reunited Cyprus has already been agreed in bicommunal negotiations, whereas, irrespective of the settlement of the Cyprus problem, the rights of all Cypriot citizens from any revenues accrued from the exploitation of hydrocarbon deposits are safeguarded through a National Sovereign Fund, established by the Cyprus Government in 2019 based on the Norwegian model.

The issue at hand is not bi-communal but inter-state. Turkey misleadingly attempts to divert attention from the fact that it is blatantly violating the sovereignty and sovereign rights of Cyprus within its maritime zones. The only solution to this is the delimitation between Cyprus and Turkey of their respective maritime zones, in accordance with international law. Cyprus once more reiterates its invitation to Turkey to enter into negotiations to this end, or alternatively, reach a special agreement (*compromis*) to jointly submit the issue to the International Court of Justice for the designation of a definitive maritime boundary delimiting the continental shelf/Exclusive Economic Zone of Cyprus and Turkey, in conformity with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 44 and 78, and of the Security Council, and published on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, as well as in the next edition of the Law of the Sea Bulletin.

(Signed) Andreas **Hadjichrysanthou**
Permanent Representative