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UNITED NATIONS AND EUROPEAN UNION IN QUEST OF CYPRUS DISPUTE SOLUTION

The objective of this article is to examine Cyprus dispute and assess contributions of the UN and the process of integration into the EU to its solution. This article provides brief historical overview of the dispute and highlights key political obstacles towards reaching an agreement. Particular attention is paid to the impact of European integration on the the settlement processes as well as Annan initiative. The author finds that there wouldn't be a sustainable solution for Cyprus without support to the proposals from its Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot communities.

Key words: conflict, settlement, UN, EU, Cyprus, Turkey, Greece, integration.

Cyprus dispute has absorbed significant amount of time and reputation of the best diplomats and experts; however it remains unresolved and undermines European stability. This issue has grown in importance in light of the fact that Cyprus became EU member state, while it has a significant part of its territory occupied by another candidate state. *The topicality of this research article is stipulated by the fact that unresolved Cyprus dispute undermines regional stability in region of the eastern Mediterranean and bares potential of the conflict between two NATO member countries.* Frictions were experienced in the framework of NATO as well as in European integration of Turkey. The UN within its mandate undertook variety of efforts to negotiate solution and contributed significant amount of efforts for reconciliation of communities; however, it is yet to be reached.

The research on the UN and the EU involvement in crafting solution for Cyprus conflict to date has tended to focus on the

shortcomings of the conflict resolution efforts rather than on the inner substance of the dispute in present time. Substantial attention to the problem was paid by Ukrainian and foreign researchers, particularly by Bose S., Christou G., Cilsal O., Diez T., Dodd C., Michalis M. and Yakinthou C. Specifically, Christou G. and Diez T. focused their research on the processes of European integration of Cyprus with the references to the dispute. However, due to the topicality of the issue further researches on this theme are in demand because of the necessity to provide timely updates with the latest developments as well as indicate assessment of the success achieved and shortcomings that need to be addressed.

The objectives of this research are to assess critically UN and EU efforts in conflict resolution, examine their role in this process and study the role of European integration in the settlement. In light of the complexities of the issue it is assumed that UN and EU extensively addressing Cyprus dispute and despite failure to achieve reunification yet, they have made a significant constructive impact.

In order to establish validity of the thesis this paper is divided into three main parts. First, it gives a brief overview of the main historical events and causes that have led to the conflict and sustain it nowadays. It will then go to the critical analysis of the UN activities in conflict resolution, particularly analysis of Kofi Annan Plan. Finally, it will address European integration of Cyprus and its impact on the solution.

With the aim to achieve objective of this research the author established the following tasks: to highlight main historical events that caused the conflict and sustain it up to nowadays, critically assess the role of the UN in conflict resolution, particularly Annan initiative, to study the impact of European integration on the conflict settlement and eventually explain the reasons that contributed to the failure of resolving the dispute.

Over the history Cyprus attracted significant interests of the regional and global powers due to its geopolitical location. Cyprus became hostage of its neighbor interests, mainly Turkey and Greece, as well as Great Britain. Geostrategic location of Cyprus attracted the

interests of Great Britain, and by extension the USA as a strategic military outpost [8, 43].

Antagonistic ethno-nationalistic sentiments of Cypriot communities are at the heart of the difficulties that impede solution of Cyprus dispute. The roots of Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot nationalism were embedded to the idea of the anti-colonialism and the consequent unification with Turkey or Greece respectively. Strategic importance of Cyprus for Great Britain soared in 1955 after the Baghdad Pact, which was seen by British government as the means of maintaining its power in the Middle East, forming anti-Soviet alliance and securing its interests in access to Suez Canal. Respectively, in 1955 Greek Cypriots developed guerrilla organization EOKA that was driven by anti-colonialism aspirations and the idea of unification with Greece (enosis). While British Middle East headquarters were relocated to Cyprus along with establishment of its military bases it faced anti-colonialism movement and confrontation with EOKA [16, 46]. In response to inter-communal violence and EOKAs insistence on the idea of enosis, in 1956 there was established Turkish guerrilla group 'Volkan' with the aim to protect Turkish Cypriots. In 1957 it was replaced by the organization TMT. Other parties in face of Turkey and Greece were introduced to the conflict. Such development marked new epoch of Cyprus modern history replete with strong ethno-nationalistic sentiments, chauvinism and xenophobia culminated in inimical separation of communities that lasts till nowadays.

After 35 years of British Colony Rule, in 1960 Cyprus achieved its independence as a result of violent uprising of Greek Cypriots against Great Britain. Cyprus' constitution envisaged proportional principle of governance between two communities and allowed Great Britain to remain its military bases. In addition, a Treaty of Guarantee allowed Greece, Turkey or Great Britain to act jointly or individually to fight any threat to the constitution [8, 43]. Political leaders in new government were elected from the extremist separatists from EOKA and TMT, and eventually acquired domestic and international legitimacy. Consequently, in 1963 inter-communal tensions erupted

that further escalated into civil war that persisted until Cyprus's de facto partition in 1974 [16, 50]. UN responded to this threat with Resolution 186 (1964) which mandated its peacekeeping troops (UNFICYP) [12, 4].

Consequently, coup of July 1974 plotted by Greek military junta took place with the objective to overthrow the president [5, 69]. Following these developments Turkey invoked the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee and occupied approximately 40 percent of the island's territory. Such actions resulted in approximately 160-200 thousand of Greek Cypriots fleeing occupied by Turkey territory, and 60-65 thousand of Turkish Cypriots moving into newly occupied territory [8, 43-44]. UN Security Council in its resolution 360 (1974) "records its formal disapproval of the unilateral military actions undertaken against the Republic of Cyprus" [13, 1]. However, Turkey refused to withdraw its forces and in the following years facilitated move of over 40 thousand settlers from Anatolian Peninsula [8, 44]. In 1975 independence of Turkish Federated State of Cyprus was proclaimed (from 1983 Turkish Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC), which enjoyed recognition solely by Turkey and faced international isolation. In such a way was shaped 'intractable conflict' which within itself presents a challenge to conflict resolution capacity of the UN [5, 64].

Over the years inability to negotiate a solution created a stalemate situation which required change in the dynamics of the approach to the problem. In absence of internal impetus and elite's will to break the stalemate, an external stimulus was required. Aspiration of Cyprus to join EU was that very external impetus that was intended to be used in order to attempt brokering an agreement between communities in new circumstances. Particularly, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan attached his name and prestige to the initiative to negotiate solution for the dispute. Kofi Annan developed five versions of unification proposal plan before submitting the final for the referendum in 2004.

EU Luxembourg Summit of 1997 resulted in decision to open accession negotiations with the Republic of Cyprus and the next year the UN extensively renews its peacekeeping role. Greece threatened

to use its veto right to halt the accession of all ten acceding countries in case of Cyprus' accession denial [16, 134]. European Council summit in Helsinki in 1999 resulted in decision of allowing the Republic of Cyprus to join in the EU regardless of the conflict's resolution [16, 98]. G8 Summit in 1999 provided diplomatic momentum for Annan Initiative by "urging the UN Security-General to invite the leaders of both parties to enter comprehensive negotiations without pre-conditions" [4].

Final Annan Plan envisaged creation of a new federal state called United Cyprus Republic. It also suggested that federal state would comprise two equal constituent states Greek Cypriot Constituent State and Turkish Cypriot Constituent State. The model of UCR proposed by Plan followed consociational principles. Federal government had specified powers outlined by constitution, while constituent states had within themselves magnitude of powers regulating ordinary matters of daily life. UN plan provided balanced model establishing the principle of cooperation including "companion concepts that no decision could be taken by persons from one constituent state alone and that no single person could veto decisions or block the running of the state run like a golden thread throughout the plan" [11, 19]. However, the veto was embedded in the plan and "institutionalised in the senate level, and a series of complex deadlock-breaking mechanisms means that the veto does not reach the executive, therefore quelling Greek Cypriot fear that minority veto will again cause the paralysis of the state" [16, 79].

Executive branch would consist of Presidential council, Federal Administration and Federal Police. Presidential Council was supposed to adopt decisions by consensus or by simple majority (depending on the issue) and should consist of 9 members elected by senators with a clear majority. President of the Council is to be both head of the state and head of the government. President and vice-president of the Council would rotate on a 20-month basis from Greek Cypriot to Turkish Cypriot [15, 32]. Rotation of the presidential and vice-presidents positions between representatives of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot community along with consensus

based decisions were designed with the thought in mind to “underline political equality and prevent any domination” [14, 18].

Federal Parliament would consist of Senate and Chamber of Deputies. Senate would consist of 24 members filled by equal number of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Each Chamber of deputies would consist of 48 representative composed in proportion to persons holding internal constituent state citizenship. Minimum of 25 percent of deputies were to hold Turkish Cypriot citizenship and maximum of 75 percent of deputies to hold Greek Cypriot State citizenship. Federal legislature would enjoy the powers of approval of international treaties for ratification, elect and oversee the functioning of the Presidential Council, adoption of federal budget and referral of serious crimes by members of the presidential council to the Supreme Court [14, 30]. There was to be no hierarchy between federal and constituent state laws. Independent institutions were to be Central Bank, Office of the Attorney General and Office of the Auditor General.

Constituent states would have their executive and legislative branches. Turkish Cypriot Constituent State executive branch would consist of popularly elected president (head of the state), prime-minister and council of Ministers. Legislative branch would be represented by Assembly of the Turkish Cypriot State comprised of 50 popularly elected deputies. Greek Cypriot Constituent State executive branch would be represented by popularly elected president (head of government) and council of Ministers. Legislative branch would be represented by House of Representatives comprised of 60 members.

According to Annan Plan Federal state would include executive, legislature, judiciary and independent institutions. External relations, relations with EU, federal finances, operation of Central Bank, natural resources, aviation, navigation, communication, territorial waters of UCR, combating terrorism and organized crime, amnesties and pardons, intellectual property, Cypriot citizenship and antiquities would be within competencies and functions of federal state [14, 23-24].

Constitutional engineers developed detailed blueprint for mutually suspicious communities. For decade these communities lived in mutually hostile attitudes towards each other and refused to recognize the other side as a political entity. Sound text of the proposal, which prevents ambiguities in its interpretation, addressed and removed significant causes of conflict between elites of 1960 state. Powers were distributed in such way that “federal government was given a certain number of important functions, but none of which were likely to cause inter-ethnic tension” [16, 93].

Nevertheless, elites in both communities have contributed much towards antagonistic attitudes towards each-other. In elite-driven society like Cypriot, fears along with ethnic prejudice were widely exploited in populist politics’ campaigns over decades. Therefore, elites were not willing to resort to power-sharing option. Negotiating of Annans’ Plan was locked within zero-sum paradigm and exposed substantial lack of trust. In this regard, even back in 1994 the UN presented its initiative in a set of Confidence Building Measures, which included proposals for co-operation in the fields of journalism, commerce, education, sport, culture, environment, health and other activities; however they were deadlocked at the discussion stage.

Opening of the checkpoints could have been used as a confidence-building or reconciliation efforts; however, just like in case of Astromeritis-Zodia in 2005 it was used by both leaders as an opportunity to blame the other for lack of good will. The conflict attitude between communities sustained with commemoration of historical events that represent loss for one community and victory for the other. Until recently the communities were taught to hate the other side through suitable interpretation of history, and only in 2004 Turkish Cypriots revised their history books while Greek Cypriots experienced two unsuccessful attempts [16, 110].

Despite adverse cultural premises for reconciliation developed over decades, Annan Plan served as a catalyst for radical change in the Turkish Cypriot leadership. In January 2003 a crowd estimated between 50 and 70 thousand of people protested in the streets of Nicosia with slogans stating: “[President] ‘Denktash, if you don’t have a pen, we have one’ (referring to his refusal to sign-off on the

Annan Plan), and continued to demand his resignation” [7, 164]. Although the referendum became the apex for the Turkish Cypriot “quiet” revolution, this was not the case for their compatriots in the south. Greek Cypriot elites remained silent until a few weeks before the referendum itself. Governing elite in Greek Cyprus labeled Annan Plan as unbalanced and unjust, particularly “‘all gain’ for the Turkish Cypriots, and ‘all loss’ for the Greek Cypriots” [16, 118].

Guarantee of the EU membership for Greek Cyprus eventually contributed to defeat of the UN plan since Greek Cypriot gained sufficient power in negotiation process which broke the balance between communities that were treated as equal. Power sharing option lost its value for the Greek Cypriots which represent majority of 77 percent against Turkish minority of 18 percent of population [9]. International recognition and advantages of EU membership empowered Greek Cypriots to diverge from option based on equality. EU accession treaty was signed by Republic of Cyprus on April, 16 2003 and “any leverage the EU had to ensure Greek Cypriot elites continued to support the Annan Plan was removed” [16, 136]. The incentive of EU accession was perceived as an impetus to overcome a history of elite intransigence and lack of co-operation but “the incentive was misapplied and caused further division” [16, 141].

In September 2008, new UN-backed talks began between Presidents of North and South Cyprus. The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon continues to facilitate solution and participated in tripartite meetings. January 2012 summit between leaders of Northern and Southern Cyprus held in New York ended up with limited progress. The central issues discussed were the election of the executive, the issue of property and citizenship. Parties agreed to continue their efforts in mastering the solution, and the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, upon the success outlined in report of his Special Adviser on Cyprus Alexander Downer, expressed an intend to call a multilateral conference in late April or early May [10]. Cyprus’ EU presidency in the second half of 2012 could be another impetus to master solution for the dispute. If this opportunity is going to be used depends on political will of parties concerned.

While conflict remains unresolved, it echoes in significant economic loss of parties concerned. According to the research of Cyprus Centre of the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) resolution of Cyprus conflict would gain Turkey every year over EUR 17 billion (3,5% of its GDP) and Greece EUR 3 billion [3, 37]. Northern part of Cyprus would get chance to fight its economic stagnation and enjoy access to the benefits of EU membership.

Having concluded this research and returning to the question posed in the beginning of this study the author can confirm that the UN undertook extensive action to find solution for Cyprus dispute. The UN used the momentum to break the ice of frozen conflict and used aspirations of Cypriot society to join EU as catalysis for negotiating solution. Annan Plan achieved genuine public debate regarding reconciliation between and within communities that have strong ethno-nationalistic sentiments, chauvinism and xenophobia. It also elaborated comprehensive solution plans that balanced interests of the communities. However, unconditional accession of Cyprus to EU did not contribute to the solution of the conflict.

Failure to reach an agreement and refusal of Kofi Annan initiative on referendum reflected that Cypriot communities were not quite ready for the reconciliation after decades of confrontation. Unification of Cyprus in 2004 was more desired by external actors, particularly, Greece, Turkey, US, UK, EU and UN than by its own communities which remained almost completely isolated from each other until only recently. Reconciliation handed from above by anybody due to external interests could serve as a source of instability in a view of the fact that such solution could lack legitimacy within Cypriot society. Without strong support from both communities the problem will persist and radical elites will attempt to take advantage of it. Main success achieved by both UN and EU until now constitute outbreak of genuine debates within and between communities on reconciliation which are fundamental for reaching an agreement acceptable by both communities.

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Мета статті полягає у дослідженні Кіпрського конфлікту та визначення внеску ООН та процесу євроінтеграції у його вирішення. У статті вивчаються головні історичні події конфлікту які зумовлюють політичні перепони його вирішення на сучасному етапі. Особливу увагу приділено впливу Європейської інтеграції на процес врегулювання конфлікту, а також ініціативи Плану Аннана. Автор доходить висновку, що без підтримки з боку турецько-кіпріотської та греко-кіпріотської громад неможливо досягти надійного вирішення Кіпрського конфлікту.

Ключові слова: конфлікт, рішення, ООН, ЄС, Кіпр, Туреччина, Греція, інтеграція.

Целью статьи является исследование Кипрского конфликта и оценки усилий ООН и ЕС, направленных на его решение. В статье определяются главные исторические события конфликта, которые препятствуют его решению. Особое внимание уделено влиянию процесса Европейской интеграции Кипра на решение конфликта, а также инициатива плана Аннана. Автор приходит к выводу, что невозможно достичь надежного решения конфликта без поддержки такого решения со стороны греко-киприотской и турко-киприотской общин.

Ключевые слова: конфликт, решение, ООН, ЕС, Кипр, Турция, Греция, интеграция.