



TEXTS ADOPTED

P9_TA(2020)0332

Escalating tensions in Varosha following the illegal actions by Turkey and the urgent need for the resumption of talks

European Parliament resolution of 26 November 2020 on escalating tensions in Varosha following the illegal actions by Turkey and the urgent need for the resumption of talks (2020/2844(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Turkey, in particular those of 13 March 2019 on the 2018 Commission Report on Turkey¹, and of 17 September 2020 on the preparation of the special European Council summit focusing on the dangerous escalation and the role of Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean²,
- having regard to its declaration of 14 February 2012 on the return of the sealed-off section of Famagusta to its lawful inhabitants³,
- having regard to the reports of the Committee on Petitions of 17 July 2008 following the fact-finding visit to Famagusta, Cyprus, of 25 to 28 November 2007 and of 21 November 2018 following the fact-finding visit to Famagusta, Cyprus, from 7 to 8 May 2018, in the context of petition 733/2004 submitted by Loizos Afxentiou, on behalf of the Famagusta Refugee Movement,
- having regard to its resolutions on the deliberations of the Committee on Petitions of 23 September 2008⁴, 22 April 2009⁵ and 13 February 2018⁶,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 6 October 2020 on EU enlargement policy (COM(2020)0660) and to the accompanying Turkey 2020 Report,
- having regard to the Negotiating Framework for Turkey of 3 October 2005,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 15 and 16 October 2020 and to the previous

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0200.

² Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0230.

³ OJ C 249 E, 30.8.2013, p. 1.

⁴ OJ C 8 E, 14.1.2010, p. 41.

⁵ OJ C 184 E, 8.7.2010, p. 12.

⁶ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0114.

relevant Council and European Council conclusions,

- having regard to the declaration by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) of 13 October 2020 on the developments around Varosha,
 - having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on behalf of the European Union of 6 October 2020 on the developments around Varosha and of 15 November 2020 on Varosha,
 - having regard to the joint statement by the VP/HR and Commissioner Ferreira of 20 October 2020 on the electoral process in the Turkish Cypriot community,
 - having regard to core principles of international law and the UN Charter, to the High-Level Agreement of 1979 between the leaders of the two communities, and to the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council (UNSC) on Cyprus, including Resolutions 541 (1983), 550 (1984), 789 (1992) and 2537 (2020),
 - having regard to the statements by the President of the UNSC of 9 October 2019 and of 9 October 2020 on the situation in Cyprus,
 - having regard to the UN Secretary-General’s statement following his meeting with the two leaders in Berlin in November 2019,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Turkey is a candidate country and an important partner of the EU; whereas, as a candidate country, Turkey is expected to uphold the highest standards of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, including compliance with international conventions;
- B. whereas Turkey is a NATO ally and should be reminded of its responsibility to play a constructive role in the de-escalation of tensions;
- C. whereas Turkey responded to the failed coup of 1974 supported by the Greek Junta by invading Cyprus with its military forces, and whereas the city of Famagusta was also invaded in August 1974 and has been illegally occupied ever since;
- D. whereas a section of Famagusta was then sealed off and has remained uninhabited, under the direct control of the Turkish military;
- E. whereas the UN considers that the responsibility for the status quo at Varosha is borne by Turkey and that Turkey therefore also bears responsibility for any effort to alter its status contrary to the 1979 High-Level Agreement and UNSC Resolutions 550 (1984) and 789 (1992);
- F. whereas UNSC Resolution 550 (1984) ‘considers attempts to settle any part of Varosha by people other than its inhabitants as inadmissible and calls for the transfer of that area to the administration of the United Nations’, and whereas UNSC Resolution 789 (1992) insists, with a view to implementing Resolution 550 (1984), that as a confidence-building measure Varosha should be transferred to its lawful inhabitants ‘under the

control of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus’;

- G. whereas the return of the sealed-off section of Famagusta to its lawful inhabitants would facilitate efforts towards the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem;
- H. whereas on 8 October 2020, following the announcement made in Ankara on 6 October 2020, a part of Varosha was declared partially ‘open’ with the cooperation of the current Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar, in violation of the past agreements and of the relevant UNSC resolutions;
- I. whereas in early September 2019, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu visited Varosha and announced the ‘opening’ of a ‘Consulate-General’ of Turkey in the wider area of Varosha, and whereas in early February 2020 the Vice-President of Turkey, Fuat Oktay, visited Varosha to hold a ‘summit’ on the ‘legal, political and economic aspects of reopening the abandoned town of Varosha’;
- J. whereas Turkey has declared that it will proceed unilaterally with various projects in Varosha, threatening to prepare the area for its illegal settlement;
- K. whereas the Turkish Cypriot community has had a new leader, Ersin Tatar, since 18 October 2020; whereas the former Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akıncı played an important, positive and historic role in promoting peace and dialogue between the two communities on the island;
- L. whereas on 10 November 2020, thousands of Turkish Cypriots protested in record numbers in the northern part of Cyprus against Turkey’s interference in Cyprus, including in Varosha, calling for freedom, democracy, and respect of the rights of Cypriots from Varosha; whereas the protest involved the main leaders of the opposition, including former Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akıncı;
- M. whereas the visit of the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, to the occupied area of Cyprus to ‘hold a picnic’ in Varosha on 15 November 2020 was a provocative act that provoked extreme reactions among Turkish Cypriots;
- N. whereas in all previous negotiations, including at the last Conference on Cyprus at Crans-Montana in 2017, Varosha was included among the areas to be returned to the Greek Cypriot administration following the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem on the agreed basis of a bi-communal and bi-zonal federation;
- O. whereas the current Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar is opposing the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem based on a bi-zonal bi-communal federation as foreseen by the UN parameters, and whereas on 15 November 2020 President Erdoğan called for talks aiming to create ‘two separate states’ in Cyprus;
- P. whereas Turkey continues its current illegal, unilateral military actions in the Eastern Mediterranean which run counter to the sovereignty of EU Member States Greece and Cyprus; whereas Turkey’s direct engagement in support of Azerbaijan, in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, goes beyond its geo-economic interests and reflects a more ambitious geopolitical agenda, as is the case with Turkey’s actions in Libya and Syria, and notes with concern that Turkey’s continuous and growing distancing from European values and standards has brought EU-Turkey relations to a historic low point;

1. Condemns Turkey's illegal activities in Varosha, in particular its partial 'opening'; emphasises that the creation of a new fait accompli undermines mutual trust and the prospects for a comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem, by negatively modifying the situation on the ground, exacerbating division and embedding the permanent partition of Cyprus; warns against any change of the status quo in Varosha in violation of the aforementioned UNSC resolutions;
2. Urges the Government of Turkey to reverse that decision, and avoid any unilateral action that could raise further tensions on the island, in compliance with the recent call of the UNSC; calls on Turkey to withdraw its troops from Cyprus, to transfer the Varosha area to its lawful inhabitants under the temporary administration of the UN in accordance with UNSC Resolution 550 (1984), and to refrain from any actions altering the demographic balance on the island through a policy of illegal settlements; stresses the need for the EU *acquis* to be implemented across the entire island, following the solution of the Cyprus problem;
3. Is firmly convinced that sustainable conflict resolution can only be found through dialogue, diplomacy, and negotiations in a spirit of good will and in line with international law and reaffirms its belief that a sustainable solution of the Cyprus problem would benefit every country in the region, primarily Cyprus, Greece and Turkey; calls on the European Council to maintain its unified position vis-à-vis unilateral and illegal actions by Turkey, to take action and impose tough sanctions in response to Turkey's illegal actions; recalls that further sanctions can only be avoided through dialogue, sincere cooperation and concrete progress on the ground;
4. Underlines the UN Secretary-General's call for the resumption of negotiations from where they were left off at Crans-Montana in 2017 and stresses that this should be done on the basis of the Common Declaration of the two leaders of 11 February 2014, the UN Secretary-General's Six Points Framework of 30 June 2017 and the convergences achieved by the end of the conference; regrets that the highest Turkish authorities have endorsed the two-state solution and urges Turkey to commit concretely to the UN Secretary-General's call;
5. Reiterates its support for a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement on the basis of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with a single international legal personality, single sovereignty and single citizenship, and with political equality between the two communities, as defined by the relevant UNSC resolutions, in accordance with international law and the EU *acquis*, and on the basis of respect for the principles on which the Union is founded;
6. Expresses its concern that the illegal 'opening' of Varosha aims at changing the status of property ownership in the area, thereby undermining the prospects for the return of Varosha as prescribed by the relevant UNSC resolutions, or through the comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem; urges Turkey to refrain from illegally settling Varosha with people other than its lawful inhabitants or calling for the lawful inhabitants to return to their properties under conditions of military occupation;
7. Stresses that direct talks under the auspices of the UN on the agreed basis remain the only option for reaching a solution that reunites the island and its people, leading, inter alia, to the normalisation of relations between Cyprus and Turkey, improved prospects for the delimitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone between Cyprus and Turkey, and

the enhancement of EU-Turkey relations; urges that the negotiations on the reunification of Cyprus under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General be relaunched on the agreed basis as soon as possible;

8. Stands by both the Turkish and the Greek Cypriot communities in their quest for peace and stability and calls on the Commission to promptly implement the second Annual Action Programme for aid to the Turkish Cypriot community, aimed at supporting projects that foster reconciliation and improve infrastructure, environmental protection and economic development; calls, in particular, for continued and increased support for civil society in both the Turkish and the Greek Cypriot communities, both through the EU Aid Programme and more structurally as part of the new multiannual financial framework, in particular through the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme;
9. Calls for the EU and its Member States to play a more active role in bringing negotiations under UN auspices to a successful conclusion, including by appointing a representative to the UN good offices mission, and to coordinate their efforts with the European Parliament to convince Turkey to reverse its illegal activities in Varosha;
10. Underlines its support for the territorial integrity of Cyprus and calls for the EU Member States to oppose any attempts by third countries to recognise a state on the island of Cyprus other than the Republic of Cyprus;
11. Deplores the statements by the President of Turkey during his visit to Varosha on 15 November 2020, which flagrantly revealed Ankara's 'road map' for the illegal settlement of the sealed-off city and his support for the permanent partition of Cyprus;
12. Calls on Turkey to refrain from proceeding with any unilateral activities, such as illegal exploratory drilling, which further violate the sovereignty and sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus, threaten to create new *faits accomplis* in violation of the Law of the Sea, undermine the resumption of substantial negotiations and the prospects for a comprehensive solution on the agreed basis, and are not conducive to good neighbourly relations in the region;
13. Calls on the UN mission in Cyprus to step up efforts to monitor developments in Varosha;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the President, Government and Parliament of Turkey.