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# The challenges of the United Nations about peacekeeping in Cyprus and protecting the human rights of its inhabitants

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## ARTICLE IN FO

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## ABSTRACT

The peace plan known as the Annan plan was presented by the United Nations and many negotiations between the two sides were held under the supervision of this organization, which failed for several reasons. And the unification of the island has not been achieved. Ethnic conflict and Turkish and Greek nationalism, differences over how to distribute power, demographic, territorial issues, problems, and how Cyprus interacts with the two countries of Greece and Turkey as the guarantors of the island's independence, are among the main obstacles of the Cyprus problem. By relying on military forces, Turkey and Greece, by taking advantage of the historical and cultural scope, are trying to gain more sphere of influence in Cyprus and resolve this issue in their own interest. It is because of this issue that the United Nations has entered the issue and has tried to solve the related challenge with numerous resolutions. Based on this, we intend to pay attention to the subject of the challenges of the United Nations about peacekeeping in Cyprus and protecting the human rights of its inhabitants based on the analytical-descriptive method and in the form of a library. The results of the research show that the relevant organization has not been completely successful in its mission, but it has been able to manage the issue of peacekeeping and manage tension and physical conflict for decades, although the presence of Turkish military forces also provides the necessary balance in the practical field and in the politics.

## **1. Introduction**

The Republic of Cyprus is an island country in the east of the Mediterranean Sea. The capital and largest city of this country is Nicosia. Cyprus is located in the south of Turkey, west of Syria, southeast of Greece, north of Egypt and northwest of Israel, Lebanon and Gaza. The island is separated by a line called the Green Line. A part of the north of this island, Northern Cyprus (the Turkish-speaking part) has Muslim and Turkish-speaking Cypriot residents, and the southern part of the island is generally Orthodox Christian (Greek). In Cyprus, both Greek and Turkish are official languages. ( Bercovitch, and Jackson,2009)

Northern Cyprus, officially the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus , is a Turkish-dominated area in northern Cyprus. The capital of this region is also divided between Turks and Greeks, like the country of Cyprus, and the north of the city of Nicosia, called North Nicosia (Lefkoshia), with a population of 50,000 people, is the center of Northern Cyprus. After the military occupation of the northern part of Cyprus by the Turkish army, thirty thousand Turkish army troops are stationed in this part of Cyprus. ( Hoffmeister,2006)

The roots of the conflict in Cyprus should be found in the colonial era. In Cyprus, some 6,500 peacekeepers were deployed at a time when several international actors were skeptical of UN peacekeeping as a result of the Congolese experience. In fact, the nature of peacekeeping forces had changed significantly since the Turkish intervention in 1974.

Our question is, what measures has the UN taken to peacekeeping and dialogue between the parties? What is the UN challenge about Cyprus focused on? The intended presentation focuses on the actions of the United Nations regarding Cyprus and its challenges. In 1974, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was deployed to maintain the peace, indicating that this potential force had the ability to undertake multiple tasks and expanded powers. As with Congo, the Cyprus conflict has been perceived differently by different actors. Later, the talks between the parties continued in different periods, which have not yet reached a conclusion.

## **History**

Turkish Cypriots After the Ottoman Empire dominated the island of Cyprus in 1571, about 30,000 Turkish soldiers settled in this country. With the arrival of the Turks, many of the island's residents were converted to Islam by the Ottomans. However, the arrival of Turkish Muslims in Cyprus continued until the end of the Ottoman Empire. A 50-year lease agreement was signed with Britain in 1878. In 1920, the Greeks wanted to hold a referendum to join Greece without British consent, but the British government did not allow it, causing the Greeks to focus first on removing Britain from the island. The independence movement, which lasted until the end of the 1950s, paved the way for the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus under international agreements in 1960. With the British withdrawal from the island, the Greeks did not agree with the Turks to have a joint government. Cyprus gained its independence from Britain in 1960, and the independent government of Cyprus declared its existence based on the participation of the Turkish and Greek communities

in the administration of the island, and Britain, Greece and Turkey guaranteed the sovereignty of the Cyprus government. The Republic of Cyprus was guaranteed by the division of power between these two Greek and Turkish communities under the Zurich Agreements in 1960, under the supervision of Britain, Greece and Turkey, and it was decided that the president would be elected from among the Greeks and the vice president from among the Turks. Following this agreement, Bishop Makarios III was elected as the president by the Greek Cypriots and Dr. Fazıl Küçük was elected as the vice president by the Turkish Cypriots. In December 1963, the events known as Kanlı Noel (Blood Noel) in Turkish took place. With the beginning of the military operations of the Greeks on the island, the Turkish Cypriots left the country, and this was the beginning of the ethnic conflicts between the Turks and the Greeks on the island, which continued for 11 years. Following the conflict between the two sides, the United Nations sent a peacekeeping force to this island in 1964, whose mission has been extended until now. ( Akgün, 2013)

It was overthrown and Turkey, citing its position as one of the guarantors of the sovereignty of Cyprus, stationed its army units in the north of the land, which effectively divided the island (Operation Attila). The Turkish part of Cyprus declared its independence in 1983 and was divided into five districts, including Lefkosa District, Ghazi Maghusa District, Girne District, Guzliart District, Skhale District. This republic is not recognized by the United Nations and the countries of the world. UN Security Council Resolution 541, adopted on November 18, 1983, declared the decision of Northern Cyprus to declare independence legally invalid. The resolution called on both sides to cooperate with the Secretary-General and called on other member states not to recognize Northern Cyprus, while recognizing only the Republic of Cyprus as the only legitimate government on the island. The Turkish part of Cyprus has not been recognized by any country other than Turkey (recently after the Karabakh conflict, steps have been taken to recognize this Turkish part by the Republic of Azerbaijan) and this part acts as an "observer" in the conferences organized by the conference. From the point of view of the international community, this part of Cyprus is an occupied part of the Republic of Cyprus. The relations of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus with 13 other countries, excluding Turkey, from the continent of Europe, Asia and America are active in the field of commercial affairs and services with representative offices, but they do not have the right to provide visas and diplomatic affairs. ( Olcay,2014)

Active participation of the United Nations in the Cyprus issue to resolve the dispute

The civil strife in Cyprus was first brought to the attention of the Security Council on December 26, 1963, in a letter from the Cypriot government, which listed actions and threats against the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Cyprus and requested the United Nations to protect the country. The Cypriot government, which until then was exclusively in the hands of the Greek Cypriots, announced that a Turkish attack was imminent. (Olgun,2016)

As a result of British pressure and actions, on January 2, 1964, Cyprus accepted the offer of the British, Greek and Turkish governments to participate in a conference in London on the future of the island. Britain informed the UN Secretary-General that the governments of Britain, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus wanted him

to appoint a UN observer in Cyprus. However, Britain and the United States repeatedly presented plans that largely excluded the United Nations but included NATO. ( Sandıklı and Akçadağ, 2011)

A second plan was also presented that the proposed peacekeeping force would not consist exclusively of NATO forces, which would have to be approved by the United Nations. In this regard, Britain sent regular reports to the Secretary General of the United Nations. The government of Cyprus was also aware of the current measures. However, Makarios (then President of Cyprus) made it clear that he would not agree to an international force unless it was under the effective authority of the Security Council. Britain and the United States reportedly put a lot of pressure on the Cypriot government, even threatening to block Makarios' efforts at the United Nations if he rejected the idea of NATO peacekeeping. ( Bora,2013)

Makarios wanted to exclude the three countries from the negotiations and make the UN directly responsible for solving the Cyprus problem, isolating the Turks who had fewer friends in the UN than in NATO. Moreover, the prevailing decolonization sentiment in the UN might even have given Makarios the opportunity to nullify the London and Zurich agreements (both created under NATO's operational auspices). On the other hand, the two great powers with the right of veto, namely France and the Soviet Union, wanted the United Nations to intervene in this case and third countries not to interfere in this matter considering their own interests. These issues became a prelude to the involvement of the United Nations in this issue. Negotiations were conducted within the framework of the principle of goodwill of the United Nations, based on the parameters set by the United Nations, taking into account political and regional equality, with the aim of establishing a new partnership with the two constituent countries. During the negotiations, the party that said yes to the UN solution proposals has always been the Turkish Cypriot side, but the Greek Cypriot side did not reach an agreement and refused to share a common future with the Turkish Cypriots. Another issue that the active participation of the United Nations prevented from a severe regional crisis was the issue of the population of the parties. On August 2, 1975, the population exchange agreement between Mr. Rauf Denktaş and Glafcos Clerides was concluded under the supervision of the United Nations in Vienna. With the implementation of this agreement through UN peacekeeping forces, approximately 120,000 Greeks moved from the north to the south and 65,000 Turks from the south to the north, creating two demographically homogeneous groups. These two parts were separated by a "middle zone" 180 km long and between 5 m and 7 km wide. Negotiations to find a solution to the Cyprus problem continued intermittently after 1975 under the supervision of the United Nations. Progress in the dialogue has without exception been blocked by Turkey's intransigence. In December 1999, the United Nations made another effort to find a solution for Cyprus through close negotiations, which paid full attention to the relevant UN resolutions and treaties. After a hiatus of more than a year, direct talks began on January 16, 2002 between the then president of Cyprus, Glafko Chlorides, as the representative of the Greek Cypriot community, and the leader of the Turkish Cypriots, Rauf Denktash. In an effort to move the process forward, the UN Secretary-General on November 11 presented a detailed plan for a comprehensive solution. The plan was resubmitted after revisions on December 10 and February 26, 2003. The leaders of the two communities were asked to meet with the Secretary-General in the Hague on March 10, 2003 to discuss and agree to put the plan to a separate referendum, which was defeated by Turkish opposition. On February 4, 2004, the UN Secretary-General

requested the resumption of negotiations in New York, and on February 13, it was agreed that the two sides would consider negotiations with a favorable opinion based on the UN Secretary-General's plan to reach an agreement on the changes that were in the design indicators. ( Qerimi,2015)

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1218, unanimously adopted on December 22, 1998, after reaffirming all resolutions on the status of Cyprus, addressed the peace process surrounding the Cyprus dispute and called on both sides to cooperate with the Secretary-General. The Security Council also expressed concern over the lack of progress towards a general political settlement in Cyprus. Secretary General Kofi Annan approved the initiative to reduce tension and promote progress on the island between the Republic of Cyprus and North Cyprus. The Secretary-General was asked to continue his goals, taking into account resolution 1178.

The resolution called on the military authorities of both sides to refrain from actions that could escalate tensions, and it was important that Cyprus adopt the measures proposed by the peacekeeping forces to reduce tensions, which were agreed to by the northern side of the island. There were also concerns about the military buildup in southern Cyprus and the lack of progress in reducing the number of foreign troops. In this regard, the Council asked the Republic of Cyprus to reduce its defense costs and withdraw foreign forces with the aim of demilitarizing the entire island. This resolution further stabilized the peace process on the island.

The United Nations Security Council, through Resolution 1179 dated 1998, emphasized the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus and condemned the secession of Cyprus and called it unacceptable. Also, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 649, which was unanimously adopted on March 12, 1990, asked both to pursue their efforts together with the Secretary-General to find a mutually acceptable solution for the establishment of a federation and requested both to continue a general agreement that was agreed in 1989.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 750, unanimously adopted on April 10, 1992, emphasized that the Cyprus dispute should be resolved on the basis of a single Cyprus with a single sovereignty and citizenship. The Council asked the representatives of the Republic of Cyprus and North Cyprus to adhere to these principles, which should not include separation or union with another country.

Finally, an agreement was reached and according to the plan proposed by the United Nations, on April 24, 2004, the people of Cyprus were asked to participate in the referendum. 64.91% of Turks accepted this plan, but 75.83% of Greeks rejected this plan (Kofi Annan plan). One of the reasons for this is the fact that the status of ownership and properties of the Greek side, which remained silent in the northern part, was not determined. Also, Kofi Annan's plan was a form of forming a confederation, which was not accepted by the Greek side, and the Greeks were more inclined to form a federation. Of course, the issue of the two British bases on this island was also a reason, because the United Nations had actually implicitly agreed to it by not mentioning these bases. The above vote created a gap in the global sanctions against the Turkish Cypriots and improved the position of this Turkish Cypriot in the international arena. Creating the ground for the unity of Cyprus is in line with the integration of Turkey with the European Union. (Çelikkol, 2015)

In 2017, the Greek side could not reach an agreement with the Turkish side during the Cyprus conference in

Crans-Montana, Switzerland. On the other hand, António Guterres report on Cyprus, which he presented to the Security Council on October 15, 2018, stated that "new ideas may be needed to achieve results in finding a solution to the problem". This showed that he is looking for new and different positions to solve the Cyprus problem. (MFA,2022)

Recently, with the proposal of the United Nations, a plan was discussed between the parties, which could not satisfy the involved parties. António Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, announced after the informal conference on Cyprus on April 29, 2021 in Geneva that the United Nations could not find enough common points to start formal negotiations to resolve the issue of the division of Cyprus. This conference is under the supervision of the United Nations with the participation of representatives of Cyprus. South and North as well as Greece, Turkey and Britain (the guarantor countries of the Cyprus peace) had started in Geneva. Despite the failure of the Cyprus conference, Guterres has said that he will continue his efforts and is determined to continue his efforts to continue negotiations and achieve positive results to resolve the Cyprus conflict. ( UNDP,2021)

Important and decisive resolutions of the Security Council regarding Cyprus

- Resolution 353

Resolution 353 of the United Nations Security Council, which was unanimously approved on July 20, 1974 in response to Turkey's invasion of Cyprus, called for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign military personnel present in the Republic of Cyprus, in violation of the United Nations Charter. The resolution further calls on Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom to immediately enter into negotiations to restore peace to the island and establish a constitutional government for its people. (Resolution 353, 1974)

- Resolution 354

United Nations Security Council Resolution 354, adopted unanimously on July 23, 1974, was a short resolution that reaffirmed the provisions of Resolution 353 and called on all parties to the conflict in Cyprus to immediately comply with Resolution 353 and establish a ceasefire. Give Resolution 354 also called on all countries to refrain from any action that might worsen the situation in Cyprus. (Resolution 354, 1974)

- Resolution 355

United Nations Security Council Resolution 355, adopted on August 1, 1974, recalled its resolutions 186, 353 and 354 and noted that all countries have declared their respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus and requested the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures regarding a possible ceasefire and report to the council. This resolution sought to end the conflicts caused by the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. (Resolution 355, 1974)

- Resolution 186

Resolution 186 of the United Nations Security Council, which was unanimously approved on March 4, 1964,

during the Cyprus crisis of 1963-1964, and called on all member states to adhere to their obligations under the charter and called on the government of Cyprus to take all necessary measures to stop violence and bloodshed. He called on the communities in Cyprus and their leaders to exercise restraint. This resolution then recommends the creation of a peacekeeping force for the benefit of maintaining international peace and preventing the recurrence of war, and emphasized the tripartite agreement of the Greek, Turkish and British governments to appoint a mediator for a peaceful solution to the Cyprus problem. (Resolution 186, 1964)

- Resolution 357

United Nations Security Council Resolution 357, which was unanimously approved on August 14, 1974, after reaffirming previous resolutions in this regard, called on all parties present in Cyprus to cease any war and military action. This organization demanded the resumption of negotiations, and it was decided that in case of failure of the ceasefire, they would hold a meeting by taking immediate measures to consider more effective measures. (Resolution 357, 1974)

- Resolution 358

Resolution 358 of the United Nations Security Council, which was unanimously approved on August 15, 1974, expressing deep concern over the continuation of violence and bloodshed in Cyprus and regretting the non-compliance with Resolution 357, the Council recalled its previous resolutions in this regard and emphasized on their full implementation. In this resolution, the Council asked all parties to immediately and fully observe the ceasefire. (Resolution 358, 1974)

- Resolution 359

United Nations Security Council Resolution 359, on August 15, 1974, citing the Secretary-General's report, expressed concern about the continuation of military action in Cyprus. Recalling that the United Nations peacekeeping force was deployed in Cyprus with the full consent of the Cypriot, Turkish and Greek governments, the Council deplored the fact that members of the force were killed and wounded. The resolution calls on all parties to respect the status of troops and on all parties to cooperate with them in the performance of their duties in all areas of Cyprus. (Resolution 359, 1974)

- Resolution 360

United Nations Security Council Resolution 360, adopted on August 16, 1974, after recalling previous resolutions, recalls that all countries have declared their respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. Therefore, with this introduction, this resolution officially declared its opposition to Turkey's unilateral military action against Cyprus. The Council then called on the parties to adhere without delay to the previous resolutions, particularly Resolution 353, and requested the Secretary-General to report to them as necessary so that further steps may be taken to achieve peace conditions. (Resolution 360, 1974)

- Resolution 361

Resolution 361 of the United Nations Security Council, which was unanimously approved on August 30, 1974, after recalling the previous resolutions, pointed out the dire humanitarian situation in Cyprus. He also thanked the Secretary General for the actions of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Cyprus. Acting Secretary General Waldheim's role in facilitating dialogue between the leaders of the conflicting parties was welcomed. In this resolution, the council expressed its concern about the plight of refugees and asked all parties to do everything in their power to reduce human suffering and ensure the observance of basic human rights. The resolution further requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on the situation and to continue providing UN humanitarian assistance to all the people of the island. This resolution emphasized by asking all parties, in good faith, to take steps that may lead to comprehensive and successful negotiations, and also reiterated all parties to fully cooperate with the UN peacekeeping forces in Cyprus. (Resolution 361, 1974)

Providing peace and security along with maintaining the sovereignty of the parties with reference to the human rights situation

A few countries, especially the countries with the right of veto, except for the Soviet Union, preferred to describe the normative goal of the United Nations as "restoring peace in Cyprus" instead of maintaining international peace and security. This was mainly due to the distinction between the interstate and intrastate dimensions of the parties to the conflict. However, successive resolutions of the Security Council maintain their focus on international peace and security. One of the characteristics of the United Nations response to the Cyprus conflict was the focus on the discourse of sovereignty. Especially in the early stages of the Security Council negotiations, all members, regardless of their political position on this issue, repeatedly referred to principles such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, and non-interference by third parties (including Turkey and Greece). Some UN members insisted that the UN should respect and strengthen the sovereignty of Cyprus as embodied in its constitutional rule. ( Bölükbaşı,2001)

Few governments tried to highlight the issue of human rights and the guarantee of individual freedoms in the issued resolutions, but the United Nations focused more on the issue of the sovereignty of the Cyprus government due to the emergency situation in Cyprus. But when the news of the expulsion of some Greeks from Turkey was heard in retaliation for the mistreatment of Greek Cypriots by Turkish Cypriots, the members of the council raised the need to protect human rights. The scale of the refugee problem on the island was actually comparable to that of the Cold War: an estimated 20 to 25 percent of the Turkish Cypriot population became displaced or refugees within a few months. After highlighting the issue of human rights in the case of Cyprus, the players insisted on the primacy of sovereignty and its related principles. Any reference to human rights was almost always accompanied by a more prominent reference to the sovereignty of the state and the territorial integrity of Cyprus. This position also showed itself in the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. The most specific is Resolution 2077(XX) of the General Assembly on December 18, 1965. In its fifth introductory paragraph, the resolution emphasized the importance of the full implementation of human rights for all Cypriot citizens, regardless of race or religion. He also mentioned the guarantee of



the rights of minorities. However, in the first two paragraphs, he immediately emphasized the "sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus" and "the fact that ... Cyprus ... should enjoy complete sovereignty and independence without any foreign interference." Also, in Resolution 367 of the United Nations Security Council, approved on March 12, 1975, after receiving a complaint from the government of the Republic of Cyprus, it again called on all countries to respect the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. ( Bora,2013)

#### Non-interference of third parties in the Cyprus issue

Non-intervention was a sensitive issue that UN members always mentioned. Among the socialist countries, they believed that the basic element that is important in all the decisions of the Security Council regarding Cyprus is the confirmation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Cyprus. Indeed, the potential risks associated with foreign intervention in the affairs of Cyprus was a common concern among the countries (Walker,2005) .

The Soviet Union even considered the initial deployment of UN forces as "intervention" in the internal affairs of Cyprus. This view implied a normative dilemma inherent in the Soviet position, in that the United Nations was expected both to protect Cypriot sovereignty from foreign aggression and not to deploy troops. However, at the request of the Cypriot government, the Soviet Union eventually voted to deploy UN peacekeeping forces. (Theophanous,2009)

Some members of the United Nations did not invoke the principle of non-intervention in Cyprus. They did not link UN intervention to the potential international consequences of the conflict. In other words, they did not necessarily or consistently advocate that the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, limit its overall mandate to the maintenance of international peace and security. Because they believed that there is a possibility of the conflict spreading to other international areas or a threat to regional stability, and therefore it was not considered as a prerequisite for the active participation of the United Nations in the conflict. From the beginning, the Turkish side wanted to intervene to deal with the internal conflict in Cyprus. On the other hand, Greece's request was simply to remove an "external threat". Over time, Greece backed down from its position and agreed to the deployment of UN forces in Cyprus (Solomou, & Faustmann,2010).

The Security Council recommended that the operation of the forces should be in the interest of maintaining international peace and security, to achieve the best results to prevent the recurrence of war and, if necessary to help maintain and restore law and order. UN peacekeeping mission in Cyprus The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) is a United Nations peacekeeping force established by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 186 in 1964 to prevent the recurrence of conflicts following intercommunal violence between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. It was established that its mission was to restore law and order and facilitate the return to normal conditions in Cyprus. After the 1974 Greek Cypriot coup and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the UN Security Council expanded its mandate to prevent conflict from turning into war, and the UN peacekeeping force settled to patrol and assist in the UN buffer

zone in Cyprus. These forces had a vague mission. In the first place, it was not clear how the force would prevent a recurrence of the conflict. Secondly, it is not clearly defined what is meant by the restoration of "law and order" and "normal conditions". For the Cypriot government, this meant disarming the so-called Turkish "rebels". For Turkish Cypriots, this meant a return to the order envisaged in the original Cypriot constitution. The Security Council did not clarify these points. Resolution 186 was the result of long negotiations. Considering the conditions of Cyprus, this resolution was the only way to reach an agreement and maintain the mission. Apart from the ambiguity of the mission, two factors prevented the veto: unlike the controversial Congo mission, the UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus was only authorized for a limited period (three months) and financed by voluntary contributions. From the beginning, this mission has been extended several times through various resolutions, the most important of which are mentioned. Resolution 1251, which was approved on June 29, 1999, one of its provisions is the extension of the mission of the UN peacekeeping forces in Cyprus. ( Akçalı, and Antonsich,2009)

Resolution 1789 of the United Nations Security Council was unanimously approved on December 14, 2007, according to which the Security Council extended the mission of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in Cyprus until June 15, 2008. It also adopted resolution 1818 (2008) to extend until December 15 the mission of the Cyprus peacekeepers, and welcomed the opening of the Ledra Street crossing two months ago, "which has helped to strengthen trust and greater interaction between the two communities". He stressed the importance of Cypriots continuing to cross the Green Line and encouraged the opening of other crossings. Also, Resolution 1847 of the United Nations Security Council was unanimously approved on December 12, 2008. Expressing its full support for the UN peacekeeping forces in Cyprus, the Security Council extended this mission until June 15, 2009. Also, Resolution 1898 of the United Nations Security Council was approved on December 14, 2009, which extended the presence of UN peacekeeping forces in Cyprus until June 15, 2010. Through this resolution, the Council called on the two sides, in consultation with the Cypriot peacekeeping forces, to continue to engage urgently on the delimitation of the buffer zone in accordance with the 1989 agreement, in order to reach an initial conclusion. It also called on the Turkish Cypriot and Turkish forces to restore the military status quo in Strovilia /Akyar that existed there before June 30, 2009. (Solomou, & Faustmann,2010)

In addition, according to the same resolution, i.e. Council Resolution 2578, by expressing serious concern about the violation of the existing military situation along the ceasefire lines and the report of both sides' encroachment on the Green Line, it asked the parties to adhere to their commitments. The Council also emphasized the importance of the efforts of the United Nations in 2018 to ensure peace and security in the buffer zone and again called on the parties to stop unauthorized constructions and prevent unauthorized military or civilian activities inside and along the ceasefire lines. (Firat,2009)

#### United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Cyprus

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Cyprus was established in August 1974 at the request of the Government of Cyprus and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. UNHCR was also

responsible for reviewing applications for refugee status at the request of the Cyprus government. At the same time, UNHCR assisted the government in developing its own national legislation and procedure for processing asylum applications. The process was activated in 2000, and in January 2002, the Cypriot government began receiving and processing asylum applications. Since 2002, Cyprus has received 93,283 asylum applications, of which 7,036 were in 2020. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Cyprus was established in 1974 to coordinate humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons in Cyprus. The focus shifted in the late 1990s, when UNHCR began assisting the Cypriot government in the gradual development of its refugee infrastructure. Today, UNHCR's role in Cyprus is to assist the government in further reforming and improving asylum laws, procedures and capacity for the refugee protection system to fully comply with international standards. Legal policymaking includes monitoring and influencing laws through expert advice and advocacy, providing technical assistance, and promoting good practices. (Qerimi,2015)

Security Council statement on the reopening of the Maraş/ Varosha area

Resolution 789 of the United Nations Security Council, unanimously approved on November 25, 1992, emphasized in paragraph C the expansion of the control of the UN peacekeeping forces in Cyprus in Maraş/ Varosha. Also, UN Security Council Resolution 902, unanimously adopted on March 11, 1994, expressed its support to the Secretary-General for his efforts to reach an agreement on confidence-building measures regarding the Maraş/ Varosha area and Nicosia International Airport. And he considered this issue on the island as facilitating the political process towards a general settlement. According to the resolution of May 11, 1984, the Security Council considers any attempt to use Maraş/ Varosha by people other than its original inhabitants "unacceptable" and insists on the transfer of that area to the United Nations administration. The resolution of September 14, 1992 also emphasizes the implementation of the 1984 resolution and expanding the control of the UN peacekeeping forces in Cyprus to include varosha. June 30, 2021 UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed his deep concern over the July 20, 2021 announcement by Turkey and Turkish-Cypriot leaders on the reopening of Maraş/ Varosha, saying the UN position "remains unchanged and The relevant resolutions of the Security Council emphasized." The Secretary-General's statement, which was approved by all 15 members of the Security Council, stressed that "no action should be taken in relation to Varosha that is not in accordance with its resolutions". In a statement released by Farhan Haq, his deputy spokesman, Mr. Guterres asked all parties to "refrain from any unhelpful actions and engage in dialogue to establish peace and prosperity on the island through a comprehensive solution." The UN Secretary-General has repeatedly called on all parties to refrain from unilateral actions that create tension and may jeopardize ongoing efforts to find common ground between the parties for a lasting settlement of the Cyprus issue. (Talmon,2006)

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus disagreed with the UN statement and called it distorted based on the claims of the Greek Cypriot side. The mentioned ministry stated that the decision of the Turkish Cypriot side was merely the demilitarization of a part of the

Maraş/ Varosha region (3.5 square kilometers) and called this action based on the stability of peace and based on international law. The Greek party took this action to seize the land; Illegal and unacceptable. Turkey, on the other hand, acknowledged that UN resolutions are not higher than property and sovereignty rights. (Qerimi,2015)

Complaint of the Republic of Cyprus (South Cyprus) to the Security Council for the reopening of Maraş/ Varosha

On July 21, 2021, the government of the Republic of Cyprus (South Cyprus) complained to the Security Council about the reopening of the Marash/Warosh area. The government of Cyprus strongly protested this action, and the western parties emphasized their support for the Republic of Cyprus. Because of the dispute between North and South Cyprus over this area, the United Nations had requested in its resolutions that the control of the Maraş/ Varosha coastal area be entrusted to this organization. The reopening and handing over of this area to the civilian institutions of the area under the control of the Turkish Cypriots was in fact a challenge to the approvals of the international community, according to which the coastal area of Maraş/ Varosha should be returned to the Cypriot government in a peace agreement. According to the UN plan for the reunification of Cyprus presented in 2004, the coastal area of Maraş/ Varosha is one of the areas that should be returned to the Greek residents of the area under the rule of the Cypriot government. Of course, the Greek Cypriots have rejected the UN proposal to establish a federal government in Cyprus in a referendum. (Panara and Wilson,2013)

## Conclusion

The involvement of the United Nations in the Cyprus conflict reflects the concern that the issue was the maintenance of regional stability and international peace and security, which has been able to at least prevent the increase of tension and keep the situation in the region stable. The United Nations has played a significant role. Of course, the cooperation of the parties to the conflict should not be overlooked. According to the author, the separation of the two regions has been one of the other ways to maintain peace and has prevented scattered conflicts, although from the point of view of the United Nations and its members, the Cyprus dispute is the separation of that island. Another challenge that exists in Cyprus is the government's sovereignty, which, through various resolutions, has asked the parties to reach a comprehensive agreement and guarantee the sole sovereignty of Cyprus, keeping peace and security in mind. The Turkish Cypriot side disagrees with this opinion and intends to pursue the policy of "one island, two governments and common interests " although the role of Turkey in pursuing this policy is undeniable. It seems that this will be a big challenge for the United Nations. Because the United Nations failed to reach an agreement between the parties in 2021 and could not reach a conclusion, but the Secretary General of the United Nations admitted that he hopes to be able to resolve the conflict in this part of the world. With these words, it can be assumed that the United Nations has specific plans and goals to resolve the Cyprus conflict.

It should be noted that there have always been significant differences between the two opposing views regarding the views of the parties and the approach that should be adopted by the United Nations. For example, we can mention the contradiction that arose in Kofi Annan's plan. Although the parties reached an agreement, after the Greek Cypriot people voted against this plan, the differences intensified again. Although the views of the governments about the Turkish Cypriot part, which was eager to resolve this dispute, changed, but since that novel, nearly 26 years have passed, this dispute has remained unresolved. Today, the Turkish side and its desire to preserve the government and its independence have fueled the resolution of this dispute. The opinion of the United Nations to resolve the dispute is compatible with the opinion of South Cyprus, which most countries insist on. Also, the recent disputes intensified with the announcement of the reopening of the Maraş/ Varosha area and the United Nations called it illegal and believes that this area should be returned to the Republic of Cyprus and the Greek residents should return to their properties and lands. Therefore, the second-biggest challenge of the United Nations for Cyprus next year is the reopening of the Maraş/ Varosha area, which the United Nations must solve by planning and talking to the parties, because it will increase tension and hinder the agreement for the political future of Cyprus. The third challenge is the multiple extension of the peacekeeping mission of the United Nations, which due to the political situation prevailing on the island, extends this mission every year, which imposes costs on this organization.

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