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The Cyprus Conflict

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Abstract: For about 60 years, Cyprus which is a small island in the Mediterranean Sea has been regularly subjected to the news. Causes which make Cyprus so important are; closeness of Cyprus Island to petrol of Middle East and, being situated in a key geopolitics location in the middle of Europe, Asia and Africa continents. In fact, geopolitical importance of Cyprus is exceedingly enough to lead solutions of the problem to a stalemate.

The origin of the Cyprus issue is based on the map of “Great Design”. In this map; the large part of the Balkans, more than half of Anatolian, Aegean Islands and Crete, Rhodes, Cyprus, Thrace and Istanbul have been expressed as Greek territory. Enosis has also appeared as a result of Great Design idea. It means union. It is a phrase used to indicate the wish of Unification of Cyprus Island with Greece.

Accordingly, appearing of Cyprus as a problem in terms of the Turkish-Greek relations corresponds to attempts of Greece to annex Turkey and then Turkey's begin to be included in the issue. Greek Cypriots abolished Republic of Cyprus by unilaterally terminating Zurich and London agreements on 1st January 1964. Although Cypriots are breakers of peace and destroyers of the Republic, groups with ambitions and large states have still adopted a manner in favor of Rum-Greek couple in solving the Cyprus issue.

In this study, Cyprus was tried to be discussed firstly with a historical perspective. Then, breaking points of recent period have been examined. In among these breaking points, it is mentioned about issues such as Turkey-EU relations, Customs Union Agreement, EU membership of Greek Cypriot, Annan Plan and recent period Cyprus policies of Turkey. A profit and loss account was tried to be made by generally scrutinizing the aforesaid aspects. By evaluating the opportunities offered by Cyprus, the thesis put forward by parties on behalf of solution of the Cyprus issue are subject to examination in detail. Finally, it was mentioned about the steps taken in recent days by Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot to resolve the issue.

Key words: Cyprus issue, Enosis, Partition Thesis, European Union, Annan Plan, Recent Period Solution Recommendations

1. Introduction

Cyprus situation, is a complicated and difficult problem with a past that is very long. Therefore, this issue that has been on top of the agenda since the 1950's is unfortunately still unsolved. Cyprus problem is on top of the list of the Turkish-Greek problems also. With all its public institutions and establishments, and it's people, Cyprus is owned up in Turkey, and with this qualification it is an issue that interests all of the Turkish public.

What makes Cyprus so important, without a doubt is the Cyprus Island's close proximity to the Middle East petrol, and for its key geopolitical position in the middle of the Europe, Asia and Africa continents. In fact, this Geopolitical importance of Cyprus in itself is more than enough to put the problem into an impassable situation. Today, Cyprus which has a vital importance for the existence of Turkey in Eastern Mediterranean, will continue being one of the high argument points of the Mediterranean in the future also. Based on this direction; in this exercise, Cyprus situation which is a problem for Turkey and Greece is examined, with recent solution suggestions taken into account also.

2. The Historical Process

2.1. Before the Ottoman Empire

The administration of the island had changed before the conquest of the Ottoman Empire of the Cyprus. In Cyprus dating up to B.C 3000, Egyptian, Hittites, Achaeans, Dorians, Greeks having some colonies,

Phoenicians, Assyrians, Persians, Alexander the great, Romans, Arabs, Byzantines, the English, Genoese, Mamelukes and Venetians had reigned until 1571.

In A.C. 488, the Byzantine Empire recognized the independency of Cyprus church. The origin of Cyprus issue is based in 395 because the Byzantine Empire declared Greek as the official language in the island and some people which aren't Greeks began to become Greeks. After A.C. 632, the island was invaded by some various Arabs. However, Arabs didn't found the domination in the island. During the Crusades, the island entered into the dominance of the British King 1st Richard. However, the King left the island firstly to the Templer Cavalier and then to Guy de Lusignan. Lusignans hegemonised the island until 1489 (Vatansever, 2012: 1489-1490).

2.2. The Period of Ottoman Empire

Sultan Selim the stern conquered the Egypt in 1517 made an agreement with Venetians in Damascus. With this agreement, the tax which consists of 8000 Duka golds would be given to the Ottomans. Therefore, Cyprus legally connected to the Ottoman Empire and Venetians kept the island. However, the pirates predominating in the island attacked and invaded to the ships passing from the region and carrying pilgrim. In the period of IInd Selim, Shaykh al-islam Ebussuud Efendi published a fetwa for conquering the island on account of the fact that Veterians didn't conduct their commitments upon the consultation of Cyprus Population to the Ottoman Empire.

In the conquest of Cyprus, Lala Mustafa Pasha was assigned as the Chief Commander and Piyale Pasha was assigned as the Fleet Commander. With the conquest of Famagusta of the Ottoman Army in 1 August 1571, the island completely participated to the lands of Ottoman Empire and the conquest was completed.

The Ottoman Empire began to construct the architectural works to ensure the social and cultural development by inhabiting and the handicraftsmen were brought to the Cyprus in order to increase the decreased population of the Island. The land administration in the Cyprus was performed by founding the foundations as other countries in the Ottoman Empire did. The Ottomans constructed the artistic structures such as many public houses, Turkish baths, mosques, small mosques, Islamic monasteries, libraries, fountains, aqueduct and etc. in the island. At the same time, the former structures were used by being made the necessary restorations and additions.

In 1877, Russians started a war to the Ottoman Empire and the Treaty of San Stefano was signed between the Ottomans and the Russians in 3 March 1878. Moreover, England signed the confidential agreements with the Ottomans in the dates of 4 June 1878 and 1 July 1878 in order to help the Ottomans against the Russians. Then, the Ottomans provisionally assigned the administration of the island to England in 22 July 1878. England accepted that he would pay 22936 pocket gold (87799 English Pound) for the first year and 22936 English Pound for the second year to the Ottoman Empire during his administration of Cyprus.



The 308 year period of Ottoman Empire in the island provisionally finished. England taking advantage that the Ottoman Empire is the side of the Central Powers in the First World War completely annexed the island in 5 November 1914. With the Treaty of Lausanne signed in 23 July 1923 after the winning of the War of Independence conducted in the leadership of Atatürk, the Republic of Turkey which was officially recognized by the Allied Powers accepted the annex of Cyprus by England in accordance with the Articles 16, 20 and 21 of this agreement.

2.3. The Republic Period

The Ottoman Empire withdrew from the 1st World War with the Armistice of Mudros in 30 October 1918. In accordance with Article 20 of the Treaty of Lausanne, the Turkish people were required to choose one of the Turkish or English citizenships. People who chose the Turkish citizenship migrated to Turkey for years. As a result of these migrates, it is seen that there were 235.000 Cypriots in Turkey, 40.000 Cypriots in Austria, 17.000 Cypriots in America and Canada in accordance with the data of 2000. At the same time, Romans who properly conducted the Enosis aims targeted the British administration in the island at the first time with the leadership and incitement of the Eastern Orthodox Church and maintained their attempts for changing the status of the island in the period up to 1959. England aimed to maintain the colonial administration at those times. In this process, Romans who alleged the customs rights which the English administration put into force in 11 August 1931 rebelled for Enosis in 21 October 1931 with the provocations and incentives of Greek Consul Kiru and in the leadership of Priest Nikodimus (Açıkses and Cankut, 2014: 1247,1248).

Although during the period following the Treaty of Lausanne until the Second World War, both Greece and Turkey presented an attitude of loyalty to the obligations stated on Lausanne; after the handing over of the Twelve Islands to Greece, they went into certain nationalist expectations. With the ending of Greece Civil War, from the start of the 1950's, both countries started making claims of rights to the Island of Cyprus, and following the public opinion and pressure in Greece and the involvement of England in this Subject; the situation has been transferred to United Nations. Turkey at first saw this as an internal problem of England, however, as the demands of Greece over Cyprus became official, they started becoming interested. This interest was also caused by the pressure from the Cyprus Turkish Public and also for the great interest shown to the subject by the national press and the public opinion.

Turkey was defending the case saying that although in general they prefer the English Dominance in the Island, if there is an issue of independence in the Island, according to the Treaty of Lausanne, they should

be accepted as a side involved in the situation. This subject was taken to the United Nations by Greece in year 1954, but no result was achieved. Following this England gathered up both the countries in England to hold a meeting, however due to the events of 6-7 September in Turkey, not only these meetings came to a standstill, but also resulted in being one of the main factors that caused the spoiling of the Turk-Greek Relationship.

In 1959 however, necessity of the collaborations and solidarity between the allies caused by regional events in international system; as a result of the bilateral negotiations done in Zurich with the pressure of USD and NATO, it was decided to the construction of 'The Republic of Cyprus'³. However, short time after this, the tensions amongst the society increased with the pressures given to the Turkish public of Cyprus. With the increase of this pressure between the years of 1963-64, and with the actions taken against the Turkish Public in the island, denying them the use of constitution, and along with Makarios's declaration that he does not recognise the agreement in Zurich, Turkey made the decision of making a military intervention by using its authority as a guarantor, and the Turkish planes started to fly over Cyprus. However, USD stopped this decision of Turkey with a very strong reaction, showing their reluctance, that there would be a disruption to the relationship between Turkey and Greece because of a war caused over Cyprus, and this would in general effect West-NATO and in private, there would be negative effect to the interests of USD. This block that is recorded in the history as 'The Johnson Letter' has caused distrust in relationship in the angle of Turkey-USD also. After this date, the meetings continued in Greece with the appointment of the military junta (?) however, following the provisions of guns to the Island by Greece, and following the increasing level of intervention towards Turkish public which reached to the levels of massacre, Turkey declared a military intervention by using their rights stated on the agreements. After the results of the attempts by the mediators, the guns in the Island were withdrawn, and the developments until the 1974 repeated causing more high tensions and resulted in the Cyprus Piece Operation.

2.4 Cyprus Piece Operation and Cyprus Analysis

In June of year 1974, with the support of Greece and with the attempts of the EOKA Organization, Makarios Administration was overturned with a coup, and Nikos Sampson was brought to power. Turkey who was restless about this situation, after their meetings with the guarantor countries to discuss their purpose of answering their responsibilities towards the Turks in the island, by taking care of their security, and preventing unrest, on the 20th July 1974, made the decision of intervention into the island. After the first intervention, it was discussed and defended in Geneva that both societies in the island were separate realities, and that there could be an agreement in a way of federal government, but these discussions ended up being impassable.

As a result of this, after a second intervention, Turkey took possession of thirty percent of the island, and was able to secure the condition of two zone federation. 1974 Cyprus depression, as well as effecting the relationship of Turkey and Greece towards each other, at the same time, has caused changes in their international relationship with other countries also. And reality was that, for Turkey, whilst the topic of Cyprus became an unchangeable agenda in its international relationships, not being able to resolve the problem with a fair and permanent solution on these international discussions and the negativity created in the relationship with USD because of the weapons embargo caused by Cyprus, Turkey's freedom of movement in foreign policy became limited. In terms of Greece's point of view, the Cyprus problem is accepted as an international reputation issue and attempts are made to pass all the blame to USD and the NATO.

Especially from the angle of military and economy, Turkey's dependence on USD and other leading NATO countries and the fact that the embargo applied to Turkey by the American administration is tied up to the Cyprus condition, has forced Turkey to continue their international connections in a reasonably difficult conditions. Turkey's military intervention to Cyprus resulted in the definite separations of the two nations living on the island, and by establishing their own national administration, the Turkish society

declared that without Turkey's effective guarantee, they would not live side by side with the Greek Cypriot society. Aftermath of 1974, during all the discussions done concerning Cyprus issue, in regards to the Turkish-Greek relationship, basis of the approach by Cypriot Turkish society has been in the direction of building a federation where there are two sides, equal rights for both Turkish and Greek society, and with Turkey's effective guarantee. Greece and Cyprus Greek society however favoured the politics of building a unitary state during these discussions, where minority rights of the Turks in Cyprus would be under a guarantee.

After this period, in connection with Cyprus, between the two societies new tensions and bilateral distrusts in the Aegean Sea made appearance. Turkey, with its relationships with Greece, gives priority to build a balance in the subjects which are causing disagreements in the Aegean Sea. At this point, the real problem comes up as 'the tension that continues in Cyprus is making the solving of the other bilateral problems more difficult'. Turkey and Greece who carries similar worries, during the discussions to find a permanent solution to the Cyprus problem; because of their distrust to each other, maintain their strict attitude on the points where there is a worry of endangering their own interests. And this, turns into a deadlock. The frame of a draft agreement prepared in 1985 is also prepared with similar worries taken into account, however, this draft while it was fully acceptable by the Turkish Society of Cyprus, was refused by the leadership of Greek Cypriots, also with a little effect from the pressures coming from Greece (<http://www.iktisadi.org/kibris-sorununun-ortaya-cikisi.html> Accession Date:07.05.2016)

3. The Recent Period Breaking Points

Following the Greece's membership into EU which took place in the 1980's; in the duration that the Greek's membership lasted from the start of 1990's to year 2004; and as a final, with the Annan Plan referendum; a lot of turning or breaking points has been experienced. These turning points, while mostly giving direction to the problem that is to the disadvantage of the Turkish side of the island; the problem that is already one of Turkey's main external political problems over 50 years; it also became the key point to the Turkey-EU relationship.

3.1 The Application of Custom Union for Turkey and the EU

The European Economic Community played a big role in the determination of Turkey to the participation of European Union as a newly founded organization even if the reserve actions of Greece were very effective because The European Union was seen as a means of avoidance from the domestic crises and the increase of the national wealth level for Turkey. Within 10 years after the enforcement of Treaty of Rome in 1958, Turkey experience 28.4 % increase in the domestic trade of the Community for each year. Turkey wanted to revive his commercial condition by participating to the Union. In this period, Turkey wanted to participate immediately into the European Economic Community due to two reasons. According to these, Turkey didn't want to be outside of a political union to be founded in Europe. Moreover, Turkey didn't want to be deprived of the commercial compromises to be given for Greece within the custom union. While the European Union was struggling with its domestic problems, the relationships with Turkey officialized by starting the membership negotiations in 28 September 1960. At the end of negotiations until 21 October 1960, the following issues were agreed:

- The partnership relation shall be based on the principle of custom union.
- Turkey shall represent the European Economic Community in his organs.
- Turkey shall zeroize the customs for the European Economic Community with 12 and 24 years periods.
- The aid of 200 million dollars shall be made for Turkey in order to cover his lost.
- The final target is the full membership of the Union (Özer, A. Sayıştay Journal, Issue: 69, 51,52 (<http://dergi.sayistay.gov.tr/icerik/der69m4.pdf>, Accession Date: 29.03.2016)

Turkey that wanted to developed the relations with the EU which have consolidated its union after the signature of Maastricht Agreement in 7 February 1982 and was called as the European Union encountered

with the Cyprus issue in every stage. Turkey understood that the full membership relations with the EU would be delayed due to the answer in 1989 and the political changes in the East Europe directed to the realization of the Custom Union which was suggested by the EU Commission and he encountered with the Cyprus issue.

3.2 The Full Membership of Greek Cypriots to the EU as Republic of Cyprus (2004)

With the Greek's membership into EC (European Community) in year 1981; the Cyprus problem started becoming one of European Community's internal problems. From this date onwards, Greece, thanks to their membership; pressured EU institutions to make decisions favouring the Cyprus Greek side. The establishment of the relationship of Cyprus problem with Turkey coincides with the same period as Turkey's full membership application to EC in year 1987. Greece worked on connecting every new establishment between EU and Turkey to the solution of the Cyprus Problem, using the advantage they had for being inside the EU decision making mechanism.

After the positive response in 1993 to the membership application made by Cyprus Greek Section in 1990, the Cyprus Problem starts to become 'European' by changing its quality. When the Cyprus Greek Section made application for the membership in 1990, Turkey and Northern Cyprus Turkish Republic stated that this application lacked legal basis, and that it was invalid. Northern Cyprus Turkish Republic President Denktas however emphasised that the 1960 Cyprus Republic is a structure based on political equality of both nations, and therefore the Cyprus Greek Administration whom does not represent the Cyprus Turkish society cannot apply for a membership on behalf of both nations.

Following the Southern Cyprus's full membership application on behalf of the entire island, and the starting of the improvement of Turkey-EU relationships in the direction of Customs Union; the signal of direction which the Cyprus problem will move towards started to show itself at the decisions made at the EU Summits. The 1994 Corfu Summit decisions, which was used as a bargaining element for the EU-Turkey Customs Union negotiations, took place under the light of Greece's veto threat. Greece declared that they would not vote for Turkey's EU membership until there is a reasonable date given for starting the Cyprus negotiations. European Commission published a document called Agenda 2000. In this document, the EU's strengthening and expanding strategy for the next period is revealed.

At the Luxemburg Summit that took place at the end of 1997, the recommendations towards expanding within the scope of Agenda 2000 were discussed and accepted; and it was announced that along with the five countries, the negotiations with Cyprus would also start. The fact that Turkey was not taken within the scope of expanding in the 'Agenda 2000' report prepared by the European Commission on the 16th of July 1997 which took into hands the strategies for expanding; and also the none-confirmation of Turkey's membership at the 12-13 December 1997 Luxemburg EU Council Summit was the cause of Turkey's reaction towards cutting political dialogue with the EU. The political relations with the EU was suspended. In accordance with the decision made in Helsinki Summit on the 10-11th December, with Turkey's gaining of the status as a candidate country, the relationship between Turkey and EU reaches a turning point. Helsinki decision when examined, gives the conclusion that 'if Turkey does not take steps that will bring the solution proposals leading to a result regarding Turkey-Cyprus problem; EU will say 'yes' to Southern Cyprus's membership, instead of waiting for reaching a solution that is acceptable by Turkey.

EU's tendency of putting the Cyprus problem in front of Turkey as a condition was clearly apparent on the 8 November 2000 Participation Partnership Document (?). It is stated after the Helsinki Summit that, Turkey's membership into EU would be a possibility, in the event of the resolving of the Cyprus problem. As it is stated in EU's Copenhagen Summit in December 2002, in the event of reaching a solution; EU will decide on Cyprus's membership within the context of Cypriot Turks, however in the event that the solution is not reached; the process of entering the union will be suspended for the Cypriot Turks. But after the rejection of The Annan Plan which was the most extensive attempt in resolving the problem, by the majority of the Cypriot Greeks at the referendum on 24 April 2004; on the 1 May 2004, only the Cypriot Greeks under the name of 'Cyprus Republic' became an EU member. The Greek Administration's membership was perceived as a huge mistake, and the necessary preventions to stop this was not taken

by Turkey. With the membership of SCGA (Southern Cyprus Greek Administration) into the EU on the 1 May 2004, it was also proven that the Cyprus problem is a problem that effect relationships between TR-EU. Because, Greek administration was going to veto Turkey's EU membership, as long as the continuation of the Cyprus problems and for their inaccessibility to the Turkish ports.

UN Secretary general Kofi Annan said the following; 'the joining of Cyprus Greek side to the Union in 2004 while Turkey was still working on EU membership made the process of resolving the Cyprus problem more difficult.' Turkey changed their Cyprus policy to suit to the decisions made in Helsinki Summit; and followed a strategy that is in line with the EU. Despite the fact that the Annan Plan was not applied due to the rejection by the Cypriot Greeks at the referendum; Turkey's foreign policy which was compatible with the EU played a key role in setting a date on the 17 December 2004 for starting the negotiations for full membership, starting on the 3 October 2005 at last. However, the negotiation process that started on the 3 October 2005 was suspended on the 15 December 2006, as a result of Turkey not meeting their responsibility as per the Custom Union towards Southern Cyprus. The point reached today is, that Greek Administration is using their advantage of being an EU member as a leverage against Turkey. Turkey is put under pressure by the EU to recognise SCGA as the legitimate government of Cyprus Republic (<http://www.abhaber.com/kibris-sorunu-ve-turkiye-ab-iliskileri/> Accession Date : 07.05.2016).

3.3. The Annan Plan (2004)

Cyprus needs a just and viable settlement.. There is a great believe by the Turks, (and this being Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus) that only a sincere and constructive approach could produce this. It is important that vital interests of both sides should be taken into account in order to make this settlement a lasting one. Based on these facts, Turkish side took another step into launching the negotiation process at the end of 2003.

Meeting the UN Secretary General in Davos on the 24th of January 2004 was an important move by the Turkish Prime Minister. UNSG Annan seemed keen on starting the talks on Cyprus and it helped that the President Denktas and the Northern Cyprus Government seemed politically willing.

1 May 2004 is an important deadline to meet a solution. It is to the interests of all concerned to meet this deadline for the sake of international peace and security. Entrance of Cyprus into the EU is vital, and the only way this is possible is with the ending of these problems.

The UN Secretary General suggested that the negotiations should re-start, by sending letters to all parties involved. The meetings took place on the 10-13 February in New York, and the Turkish side joined these meetings, accepting the invitation of the UNSG. The objective of these meetings, mainly was to bring both Turkish and the Greek Cypriots into being a new state of affairs in Cyprus. And Turkey's attitude during these meetings were constructive and positive at this time in New York. This attitude paved the way for the resumption of the negotiations in the Island. All in all, these meetings could be called successful.

First phase of the discussions took place in the Island between the 19 February and 22 March and the second began in Switzerland on the 24 March 2004. The negotiations were done in two parallel tracks; political and technical level. Although the Turkish side displayed a constructive approach as they did in New York; the two sides were not able to reach an agreement on the political level. Some progress was seen at the technical level during the talks that took place in the Island. The talks in Switzerland saw the participation of the two motherlands and Guarantor powers Greece and Turkey during this second phase. The final text of the plan was submitted by the UN Secretary-General on the 31st March; which was then finalised with the contribution of all parties and by the UN Secretary-General himself.

Parties and the EU Commission -which was also at present - agreed to the EU commitments with regards to the comprehensive settlement. The European Union made it very clear that they strongly preferred the accession of a reunited Cyprus. They stated its support to the good offices mission of the UN Secretary-General and made commitments specific to encourage and promote such outcome.

Both parts of the Island took a referendum on the 24th of April to put the agreement reached in Switzerland to the opinion of their people, which enabled for both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to

exercise their inherent constituent powers. The results were at the two opposite ends! Greek Cypriots voted rejecting 75.83% against the agreement, while the Turkish Cypriots voted with a clear majority of 64.91% in favour of it; despite the significant sacrifices that it entailed for them. When looked at the actions of the leaders of Greek Cypriots, their referendum results came as a no surprise. They conducted a very strong and active State-run 'NO' campaign, with Greek Cypriot leader Mr Papadopoulos's televised speech delivered on 7th of April, calling Greek Cypriot people to cast a resounding 'no' to the plan, being one of them. As a result, despite the efforts of the international community; the Greeks in Cyprus were led by their leaders, to a loud and clear message of 'NO' in their votes.

The UN Secretary-General Mr. Annan said in his speech of 31 March 2004, 'a new state of affairs would emerge, far better designed than the one on 1960.' The UN Plan continued with one major message; a partnership between the Greek Cypriot State and the Turkish Cypriot State. The establishment of a United Cyprus, with a federal government and two Constituent States; 'the Greek Cypriot State' and 'the Turkish Cypriot State'. The stipulation of the UN Plan was that ' "the Constituent States are of equal status, each of them exercises its authority within its territorial boundaries" and that "the identity, territorial integrity, security and constitutional order of the Constituent States shall be safeguarded and respected by all."

The Main Articles of the Foundation Agreement by the UN stipulated that "the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots affirmed that Cyprus is their common home and acknowledged each other's distinct identity and integrity and that their relationship is not one of majority and minority but of political equality, where neither side may claim authority or jurisdiction over the other."

The referendum brought out the reality that the Greek Cypriots could not represent the Turkish Cypriots, nor the whole of the Island, and they had no authority to do so.

(http://www.mfa.gov.tr/cyprus-issue-_summary_.en.mfa Accession Date: 07.05.2016).

3.4. The Cyprus Policy in Turkey during 2002-2016

Turkey's Mr Recep Tayyip Erdogan, current president, who was the prime minister in 2004, had the agenda of persuading the European governments to start the formal talks on Turkey's bid to join the EU, and he was seen to support the Annan Plan to help this agenda. As the time moved on, Turkey's joining the EU has become a remote prospect, situation which is recognised by both Mr Erdogan and the EU leaders. However, the interest in reinvigorating the accession talks continues. One thing remains a fact; and that is the unpredictability of Turkey on the Cyprus equation, especially Mr Erdogan in particular.

Mr Erdogan is in the middle of battling foreign and security policy challenges. From Iraq and Syria to Russia, he has issues... This raises a pressing question 'will he deem in Turkey's interest to secure peace on one flank, by agreeing to a Cyprus deal?' This would earn him credit with the US and EU, and reducing and eventually eliminating subsidies for the self-proclaimed Turkish Cypriot state, Turkey would get some breathing space in their budget, as well as having their troops freed up for a use somewhere else.

Greek Cypriots sees the withdrawing of all Turkey's soldiers from Northern Cyprus, a none-negotiable element of any deal. There is also an apparent friction between Mr Akinci and Mr Erdogan; as stated by Mr Akinci last year, it feels like the relationship between Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots is like a motherland and her child; where as it should have been like a brother and sister. Although Mr Erdogan has adopted a hands-off approach to the talks; there seems to be no signs Turkey withdrawing all their soldiers from Northern Cyprus, and Mr Akinci's views seems to be a final reminder that Turkey may have the final word, not the Turkish Cypriots, when closing a deal.

There are no surprises here. You just have to look at Cyprus's history. It has always been the outsiders who have determined Cyprus's fate. Ottoman conquest in 1571, the British takeover in 1878 and the linkage of independence in 1960 to Greece, and Turkey and the UK as the guarantor powers to name a few... Cyprus now needs to consent to two communities, and Turkey needs to support, in order to unite again.

(<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/083fa076-bf91-11e5-846f-79b0e3d20eaf.html#axzz47ymhSDU6> Accession Date:07.05.2016)

4. The Current State Of Affairs

Search of a solution to the problem that started after the Second World War in Cyprus has been on the go for years. Starting of the Cyprus Republic in year 1960 did not bring a solution to the problem. In 1974, the island physically split into two; with Greeks in the South and Turks in the North. The attempts to eliminate this split remained inconclusive; and EU's acceptance of Greek side's full membership in year 2004 as the representative of the entire island made the UN Annan Plan ineffective.

4.1. TR Thesis

While the leading states of the world which are defined as the international community, the United Nations and the European Union are searching solutions for the Cyprus issue, they abide by the decision which is accepted by the UN Security Council and General Assembly.

Turkish authorities stated in their various explanations that they would not give up the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit said in this statement published in Hürriyet Gazette in 31 December 2000 that "The existence of two different countries should be accepted in Turkey" and he contrasted with the attitude of Annan and the UN decisions.

In this condition, how can be possible to carry out the request for Turkey which is expected to support the solution of Cyprus Issue? As long as there is a significant difference between the solution of international community and the solution of Turkey, it is not possible for Turkey to meet the expectations of the EU in this issue.



4.2. The Thesis of Rum/Greeks

The Enosis activities accelerated in Greece with Rum after the end of IInd World War. The Greek Parliament decided the annex of Cyprus to Greece with by unanimous vote in 28 February 1947. The Greece Government transferred the Cyprus issue to the United Nations in 1954. This event led to the tension in the island and the rampages of Rums. The United Nations accepted the negotiation of Cyprus Issue in the General Assembly. The Turkish Government densely reacted to these developments and declared that the island would not give to Greece. Finally, the offer of "self-determination" of Greece was rejected in the General Assembly of United Nations. After this development, the activities of Enosis organization E.O.K.A were made in Cyprus.



As a reaction of “Enosis” thesis of Rums and their attempts, the Turkish Cypriots revealed the “Taksim” thesis.

4.3. The EU Policies

The European Union insisted to resolve the Cyprus Issue in order to remove the impediments in the relations with Turkey and Cyprus. The EU continued to reveal this insistence in various ways. After the actualization of custom union in 1996, this insistence was clearly observed in every decision which is taken in relation to Turkey which has begun to prioritize the issue of a candidate of full-membership in the EU. In the Dublin Summit after the actualization of custom union (13-14 December 1996), “The EU Summit confirms the importance for developing the political relations with Turkey.” was said in every decision taken in relation to Turkey but “The EU Summit calls Turkey to use his population in order to find a solution in the direction of the decisions of the UN Security Council” in the last sentence of the decision and this political attitude hitting the headlines in the last years become definite.

5. The Present And Future Prospects in Cyprus

Cyprus island has always been an important island throughout the history. With its widely dominating position to the Southern Anatolia and Mesopotamia, it is seen by the countries that wants to open up to Middle East, and control those areas; as a base that is indispensable. With this feature, it has always attracted attention from the countries in the region as well as the countries outside the region. Apart from a small amount of copper, there is no significant natural resources, however the main feature that determines the Island's value is its close proximity to the trade routes and strategic zones.

5.1. The Geopolitical Position

The rich copper deposits processed since the Bronze Age gives a significant importance to Cyprus. The natural richness such as olive, cereal, grape makes Cyprus an important trade center. With these properties, Cyprus becomes a charming center which many former communities struggled to capture the island and the communities, which had ruled the island before, leave the important culture heritage in the island.

The Cyprus Island which is important in terms of geopolitical issues has been an important island during the history. It is seen as an important base for the countries which want to spread into the Middle East which dominates the South Anatolia and Mesopotamia and to control these lands. The Cyprus Island has a predominant position to Middle East with at least 270 degree angle and to South Africa with 360 degree

angle in the east of Mediterranean Sea. Otherwise, the north coast of Cyprus gives opportunity to control all coasts of Mediterranean Sea for Turkey.

5.1.1. The energy sources in the East Mediterranean Basin

After the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus started to search petroleum and natural gas in the East Mediterranean Sea in 19 September 2011, Turkey signed “the Continental Shelf Limitation Agreement” with Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus as a reaction of this development. The agreement was signed by the Prime Minister of Turkey Erdogan which was in New York due to the meetings of the UN General Assembly and the president of the republic of TRNC Eroğlu in 21 September 2011. The Agreement was limited a part of continental shelf in the Mediterranean Sea with Turkey and TRNC with a line gained with the integration of 27 geographic coordinates determined by regarding the fair principles and in accordance with the international law. With this agreement, Turkey was granted to research petroleum in 12 mile shelf in TRNC. In accordance with Article 3 of the Agreement, in the event that the reserve of natural resource is founded in the continental shelf of two parties, the agreement parties mutually agree on how this reserve is efficiently processed. The agreement regards the legal, equal and inseparable rights on the continental shelf of the island of Turkish Cypriots like Greek Cypriot. Moreover, it is clearly stated in the agreement that Turkey and TRNC shall maintain the attempts to find a comprehensive solution for the Cyprus Issue (Article 4). In accordance with Article 5, in the event that there is a conflict in the interpretation and practice of the agreement, this conflict shall be solved with the negotiations among the diplomatic ways and other peaceful methods to be based on the mutual consent of the parties.

(Vatansever, 2012: 1525; <http://webb.deu.edu.tr/hukuk/dergiler/dergimiz-12-ozel/3-kamu/9-mugevatansever.pdf>, Accession Date: 28.03.2016).

5.1.2. The Cyprus Lifeblood Project

The sea passage is formed from the high dense polyethylene pipe line. Within the scope of the project, the water taken from the Anamur-Alaköprü Barrage will be brought to the Anamuryum Equalizing Tank and to be given to the Deniz Passage Isale Line from the Anamuryum Equalizing Tank in a controlled manner. The Project reaches water to 83 thousand 600 decare in Anamur, Mersin as well as TRNC. The water is planned to reach all lines within TRNC in a short time. The first region to be reached water after the opening is Nicosia. It is planned that the 38 million cubic meter of yearly 75 million cubic meter water to be transferred will be used for drinking water and the rest is used for watering.



With the Project, 7 thousand 525 people will be imploded and the net income will be increased by 80 million lira in a year. The first region to be reached water after the opening is Nicosia. With the project of era, one of the biggest problems of TRNC will be resolved until 2045.

"IF THE SOUTH WANTS THIS WATER..."

"We reached water by constructing 1000 watering facilities and ponds in 1000 days.

We resolved the problem of drinking water especially in Ankara, Istanbul and Mardin because we said that water is civilization; way is civilization. While there was 6.100 km divided way, we added 17 thousand km divided way.

Is it possible to talk civilization for a country which doesn't have water? Citizenships couldn't find water to be washed. From Where, to Where... Turkey experienced a drought in 2014. We succeeded that everyone had water with our cautions and facilities. The Development Project of Mediterranean Sea is targeting to make realize 3700 projects with 37 billion lira. With similar projects, the opportunities of our country are making realize. We are progressing step by step in the watering, forestry, agriculture to the 2023 targets.

It is the politics of artifact.

If the South wants to use this water, we make peace and we give water to them. The important thing is human for us and we are always saying us rather than me. This is our feature."

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "The Project of Era is conducting, which carry water from Turkey from TRNC."

(<http://www.haberturk.com/ekonomi/ekonomi/haber/1141214-asrin-projesinde-acilis-gerceklesiyor>
Accession Date: 28.03.2016).

5.2. The financial relations with Cyprus and Foreign Trade

It can be said that the economy of TRNC has entered a fast development process since 2002. While the importation was in the level of 30 million dollars in 1997 with Turkey, this number exceeded to 1 billion dollars in 2007. While the exportation was in the level of 6.6 million dollars in 1997 with Turkey, this number exceeded to 48 million dollars in 2007.

5.3. The gambling hotels and universities in Cyprus

The gambling hotels:

The Undersecretary of North Cyprus Ministry of Culture Şahap Aşikoğlu stated that the opening of gambling house in the southern part of island which experiences the economic crisis will not affect the Cyprus Turkish Economy.

Aşikoğlu who answered the questions of BBC stated that only the profitability of gambling houses may decrease in the event that the gambling tourism declines in the South and Rum tourists who spend the night don't have any contribution in other sectors. The President of the Republic Nikos Anastasiades explained that they will permit to be opened the gambling houses in the country within the scope of plan which they have prepared in order to recover the economy. Anastasiades recorded that they have worked on a legislative proposal in this issue.

The Cyprus Rum Orthodox Church objected to open the gambling houses in the country. The mutual passing in the island is permitted in April 2003 and Rums started to play gambling to the North.

"The Gambling Houses don't save Rums":

There is no definite data on when rum citizenships pass to the North and how much money they spend there. However, the Undersecretary of North Cyprus Ministry of Culture Şahap Aşikoğlu said that they guess 200 thousand passing just for gambling. The Undersecretary Aşikoğlu recorded that the opening of gambling houses has been discussed approximately for three years; the casinos in the Turkish Side has directed to the market of Middle East, America and China by arranging big tournaments and they don't think that the gambling houses to be opened in the South affects the market share of Turkish Side.

According to Şahap Aşıkoğlu, the gambling houses will not contribute the economy of Rums. 32 gambling houses operate in the North Cyprus. The Government takes 100 thousand Euro permission payment from the gambling houses in a year. The gambling house is the discussion topic in the North Cyprus. The Undersecretary of North Cyprus Ministry of Culture Şahap Aşıkoğlu said *“It is a sector carrying the social risk. We aren’t pleased to have the gambling houses and the gambling houses dominate in the tourism. It creates serious problems. We are in the second or third place in the addiction to gambling.”*

(http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2013/04/130401_kibris_casino , Accession Date: 28.03.2016).

Universities:

The higher education is mainly conducted in universities. All these universities are private. The number of applications to the universities from abroad has gradually increased.

Some Turkish Cypriots preferred to conduct their education abroad, especially in Turkey. While the Turkish Cypriots student number in the higher education is 9,414 in Turkey, the Turkish Cypriots student number in the higher education is 1,631 abroad.

The foreign students in TRNC who come from Turkey are 14,624 and the foreign students in TRNC who come from Middle East are 1,896. Most of students give opportunities such as post graduate and doctorate(http://etkinlik.aydin.edu.tr/dosyalar/34D_dogu_paradigma.pdf)

6. Final Evaluation: Can The Cyprus Problem Be Resolved in Year 2016?

Nowadays, after more than half a century in which Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have lived in almost complete separation while nursing bitter historical grievances, a different spirit is in the air.

Over the past eight months, this iciest of frozen conflicts has thawed to the point that some politicians and diplomats close to negotiations think that 2016 may be the breakthrough year for Cyprus. It is not only EU, US and UN officials who express cautious enthusiasm about the latest attempts to settle the dispute, but local political leaders too.



There are no formal deadlines in the talks, conducted between Nicos Anastasiades, the Greek Cypriot president of Cyprus, and Mustafa Akıncı, leader of the breakaway Turkish Cypriot northern area. But both men want to sustain the momentum built up since they met last May, just two weeks after Mr.Akıncı was elected. Parliamentary polls are scheduled for May 22 in the Greek Cypriot south, and a no-holds-barred election campaign risks souring the atmosphere if the talks are not completed ahead of that vote. The two leaders, who have already met 20 times, would therefore like to wrap up the negotiations by the end of March.

They have made the most progress on how to share power in a future decentralized Cypriot state, on the nature of its legislative and judicial institutions and on the political equality of the two -a particularly sensitive issue in the north where Turkish Cypriots fear being overwhelmed.

There is also a broad, if incomplete understanding on how to tackle property disputes between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots who lost homes and land after Turkey’s military invasion of the north of the

island in 1974. Other issues, notably territorial exchanges, security guarantees and the withdrawal of Turkish troops, are to be addressed in the final stages of the talks.

A deal would represent a moment of hope in a region beset with ethnic violence, political conflict, religious extremism and social distress in Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. Apart from demonstrating that political courage and painstaking diplomacy can bear fruit in apparently unpromising circumstances, it might send a signal, from an island shared between Christianity and Islam since the 16th century, that no conflict need to be permanent.

“In the event of a solution, Cyprus would be a model for coexistence between Muslims and Christians,” says Mr. Anastasiades.

Among the chief reasons for optimism is that he and Mr. Akıncı—who built credibility in both communities during a 14-year spell as mayor of the northern sector of Nicosia—are both committed to a deal and have forged a seemingly warm relationship. They were born within 15 months of each other in the 1940s in Limassol, a southern city where, Mr. Anastasiades says, “people are open-hearted, open-minded and honest”.

In May they walked together across the UN buffer zone that divides Nicosia’s Old Town. In December they delivered new year’s greetings in a joint television appearance, each leader speaking in Greek and Turkish. (<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/083fa076-bf91-11e5-846f-79b0e3d20eaf.html#axzz48TEfyauL> Accession Date : 12.05.2016)

7. Conclusion

Based on the above, it would be no exaggeration to state that a window of opportunity for the resolution of the Cyprus question within 2016 does exist.

As the Cyprus problem continues on and on; not only the solution becomes more difficult, but in parallel with Turkey's international relationships; certain developments are also being experienced.

The only way to prevent these developments is to somehow find a solution to the Cyprus Problem. To find a solution model that is acceptable internationally.

This can be a federal solution that has been worked on for many years, however if it is not to be; then there has to be a different solution model that will be acceptable to this situation.

The uncertainty about the future in Cyprus must now be eliminated. These types of abnormalities will continue unless this problem is resolved.

Without the recognition, certain relationships will be built out of desperation, and steps taken, however, the political recognition will not take place. Nothing will be normalised.

This will be the case between Southern Cyprus and Northern Cyprus Turkish Republic, as well as in their contact between Turkey and Southern Cyprus.

Changing of this situation is dependent on somehow resolving the Cyprus Problem. And the current negotiation process that is in place is the last chance that is caught to reach a solution before the end of the year to resolve the Cyprus problem. This chance must be evaluated very well. Especially in Southern Cyprus, after the resulting of the elections due in coming days, the period that will pass until September carries a very big importance.

During this period, the leaders will have to succeed in the topics of the Administration, the Split of Power; Economy, EU and Ownership; the maximum progress they can achieve.

Following this; they are in a position to testing of the topics left behind such as 'Security and Guarantees', and 'Land', in intensified negotiations, to see if a comprehensive solution can be reached.

At the end of this process, if a comprehensive solution can be worked out this will be the end of it all, however, if this is not achieved, then a search must begin to find other ways of normalising the situation in Cyprus.

Because, as it's seen with the Visa situation, the demands of the international improvements and needs and the Cyprus problem will no longer continue together. For this reason, this situation must now, somehow, come to an end. (<http://haberkibris.com/bu-is-artik-bitmelidir-2016-05-04.html> Accession Date : 12.05.2016).

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