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Cyprus: An Update

This is a position paper on the Cyprus issue under the light of the recent developments towards re-uniting the island and the Cypriot membership in the European Union (EU). The timeframe of this research extends from the re-introduction of the 150-page Annan plan to re-unify the island during early 2004 until the end of the referendum processes on the island on April 2004. The positions of the immediate actors such as Greece , Turkey , and the Turkish and the Greek parts of the island will be under the scope of this paper. In order to appreciate the latest developments in Cyprus , one should place his/her scope on the geopolitical importance of the island as well as the EU enlargement towards Cyprus .

In this respect, I will assess the Annan plan with respect to the constitution of the future state, map of the borders of the 'component states', resettlement issues as well as the position of those who earned the citizenship of the Turkish sector after 1974.

I. Geopolitical Importance of Cyprus and the Cypriot Approach to the EU:

Cyprus has been a focal point of strategic interest for major powers throughout its history. This is due to the islands integral role on the sea routes between Europe , Asia , and Africa . As such, the legal sovereign of Cyprus could plausibly impart an effect on the commercial as well as defence-oriented navigation in the East Mediterranean . Hence, the island has historically been attractive to the major powers. To count a few, the Venetians, the Ottoman Turks and lastly the British were latest sovereigns of the island. If one considers that the island is almost 70 kilometres off the Turkish coast and is on the routes of major seaways for Turkey , we can understand the Turkish desire to have a say on the administration on the island. On top, Turkey also wishes to retain a say on the administration of its kin on the island.

On the other hand, if Greece owns the island it will have the opportunity to encircle Turkey all the way from northern Aegean to the East Mediterranean . Increasingly, Greece has actively pursued a policy of annexing the island or in other words realizing the 'megalo idea' to bring all Greeks under one banner. Strategically, beyond encircling Turkey in East Mediterranean , in case Cyprus becomes a part of Greece the latter will become an authority regarding sea and airways in the East Mediterranean . Beyond Greece and Turkey , Britain as well has had strategic interests on the island. When one considers how Britain used its bases on the island during the invasion of Iraq , one can appreciate the vitality of the British military bases on Cyprus for the British foreign policy in the Middle East . Hence, a probable reason as to why Britain supported the Annan Plan from the beginning was the guarantees

that the plan extended to Britain to keep its military bases on the island¹[1].

Before delving into the current developments on the island, one should very briefly put a scope on the historical unfolding of events on the island prior to the Turkish intervention in 1974. Cyprus became independent after the London and Zurich agreements in 1960. The new republic of Cyprus was of consociational nature: the Greek and the Turkish nations were balanced. The republic, in this format, continued until 1963, when the Greek side declared that the Republic of Cyprus cannot function in this format and the Greeks needed more extensive rights. The result was a political crisis and civil strife, which lasted until the Turkish intervention to the island to protect the Turkish nation from Greek aggression.

Despite these political problems and acts of aggression however, Republic of Cyprus committed itself to EU membership right after the initial application of the United Kingdom in 1962. On December 1972, an Association Agreement was signed between Cyprus and the European Community. In 1987, there came an agreement laying down the terms for gradual establishment of a customs union was signed. This, coupled with other developments, encouraged the government of Cyprus to apply for full membership on behalf of the entire population of the island in 1990²[2]. While the legality of the application was soon to be questioned by the Turkish side and while the founding treaties of Republic of Cyprus explicitly stated that Cyprus could not join an international organisation, where Turkey, Greece and United Kingdom were not members, the European Community took the application under consideration.

The Cannes European Council in June 1995 affirmed that 'negotiations on the accession of Malta and Cyprus to the Union will begin on the basis of the Commission proposals. The Luxembourg European Council in December 1997 started the accession negotiations and suggested that the 'perspective of a future membership should encourage efforts to find a solution to the Cyprus problem'. Yet, later the Copenhagen Summit in December 2002 invited Cyprus to become a full member of the EU regardless of a solution on the island³[3]. In this perspective, the paper will examine the efforts of Annan and the respective sides to come up with a solution to the Cyprus problem.

II. Recent Unfolding of Events in Cyprus with respect to the Annan Plan:

After the Copenhagen Summit until the elections in the northern part of the island in December 2003, there were no major attempts to solve the Cyprus problem. Yet, with the elections the reunification attempts seemed to gain a new momentum. The public in northern Cyprus clearly demonstrated its wish for a solution with their votes. Mr. Talat became the premier as his party came the first in the elections with its overt

¹[1] The Times, 20 February, 2004 .

²[2] Joseph, S.J. (1997), *Cyprus : Ethnic Conflict and International Politics*, London : Macmillan.

³[3] www.europa.eu.int

programme of joining the northern part of the island to the southern part on its route to the EU membership. Hence, both a more flexible Turkish position as well as an implicit EU reluctance towards accepting the island into the union with its current divided shape paved the way for this new momentum.

In this respect, the Turkey prepared itself for re-unification talks through building an alliance between the military, the higher echelons of the ministry of foreign affairs, and the political body composed of the president and the prime minister. In this respect, it is important to mention that it was the looming possibility of accession negotiations with the EU that brought in Turkey this – otherwise difficult – coalition of forces together. As a result, the notorious National Security Council of Turkey agreed to seek a solution for the ongoing division in the island taking the Annan Plan as reference under the light of the realities on the island. This was a hard won battle for the supporters of the Annan Plan, since the plan had been a taboo for the Turkish decision makers since its introduction.

On this basis, the Turkish prime minister, Erdoğan conveyed Turkey 's readiness to start Cyprus talk on the basis of Annan Plan to Kofi Annan himself in Geneva on 24 January 2004 4[4]. The following official visit of Erdoğan to Washington was a further mark on the willingness of the Turkish side to pursue Cyprus talks on the basis of the Annan Plan.

At this point, it makes sense to mention some key points from the original Annan Plan, which came about in November 2002. The plan originally foresaw

a single Cypriot citizenship,

a six-member presidential council proportional to the population of the two states, with a 10-month rotating presidency,

a transitional government for three years,

territorial adjustments lowering the Turkish Cypriot stake in the island from 36% to 28.5%,

Cyprus to join the EU and maintain special ties with Greece and Turkey ,

Cyprus to be demilitarised and barred from purchasing arms, with UN observers to monitor compliance,

Greece and Turkey allowed to maintain limited military forces on the island,

constitution to safeguard civil rights and rights of minorities,

4[4] Yetkin, Murat, 'Cozum Yolu Nasil Acildi [How did the settlement process start in Cyprus ?]', Radikal, 15 February 2004 .

a reconciliation commission to promote tolerance and mutual respect⁵[5].

This plan, however, failed in its attempts to come up with a solution to the problem as the Turkish side refused to further negotiate the plan at the end of 2002.

In retrospect, the final stage of negotiations in Cyprus started when the two leaders from the Turkish as well as the Greek sectors agreed with Kofi Annan to discuss his plan for a final settlement on the island by 11 February 2004 . The respective New York meetings resulted in an agreement to discuss the conditions of a possible settlement on the island rather than reaching a settlement. This gave a chance to the both sides to write down their desired modifications on the plan⁶[6]. The events simultaneously took a different shape and accelerated once Turkey – in principle – accepted that the Annan Plan could be taken to referendum on the island regardless of an agreement.

This was the most blatant reflection of the Turkish policy to be always one step ahead of the Greeks in terms of finding a solution to the problem on the island. According to the Turkish proposal if the Greek and the Turkish sides in Cyprus could not come up with an agreement, then Greece and Turkey as guarantor powers will be involved in the negotiations. In case still there arises no settlement, then Annan will have a free hand to fill in the gaps in the plan and introduce this settlement to referendum in two sectors by the end of April.

Nevertheless, the plan assumed a central place in attempts to come up with a settlement on the island in the first months of 2004. Initially, the Turkish side came with certain demands to modify the original Annan Plan. The most important demand of modification was to forge a two sectoral structure on the island. Hence, the Turkish side considered the Greek settlers on the Turkish side as an immediate dilution of a two-sectoral structure. Roughly, in the beginning, the Annan Plan sought to allow Greek settlements on the Turkish side while considering that the number of settlers will not surpass 21% of the Turkish population in 15 years.

Respectively, the Congress of the United Cyprus Republic would be composed of 25% Turkish m.p.s and 75% Greek m.p.s and the Senate equally would allocate 24 seats to each constituent nation. The Turkish side, in its turn, was insistent that the number of Greeks allowed to settle in the Turkish side should not go beyond 10%, and these Greeks should vote in the Greek sector during the general elections so that the 24-24 equality in the Senate would not be hampered. The Turkish side also insisted on the recognition of 'two equal nations' on the island, whereas the Annan Plan foresaw two equal component states for the indissoluble union of the Republic of Cyprus . Hence, it did not talk about two different nations. One more crucial point for Turkey was to retain the Turkish guarantee on the island. Hence, the Turkish side

⁵[5] BBC, 'What is the UN's Cyprus Plan?', 15 November, 2002
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2481189.stm>

⁶[6] Cumhuriyet, 11 February 2004 .

evaluated keeping soldiers on the island within the perspective of being a guarantor power.

The Annan Plan appropriated 6000 soldiers to Turkey until Turkey becomes an EU member, and required Turkey to pull all its soldiers out of the island once it became an EU member. Turkey, however, objected limitations on its military might on the island and insisted on retaining – though symbolic – a certain number of soldiers on the island even after its EU membership. The Turkish side also objected the borders set by the Annan plan and demanded a flatter border line rather than a border full of zigzags⁷[7]. Finally, and most importantly, the Turkish side demanded that any settlement should be included in the *acquis communautaire* of the EU. This was an attempt to hinder any future revocations of the settlement⁸[8].

Similarly, Mr. Papadopoulos, the president of the Greek Cyprus, signalled that he might not agree to all the conditions of the Annan Plan. He put that ‘the Cypriot people can rest assured that I have no other concern but to best serve their interests, especially Cypriot Hellenism at this critical phase’⁹[9]. It was certain that the best result for the Cypriot Greeks would have been a deadlock rather than a solution. In a case as such the Greek part of the island would have entered the EU independent from the north, and the application of the *acquis communautaire* on the north of the island would have been forestalled. Hence, ironically, although the citizens of northern Cyprus would become EU citizens, they would not be allowed to use their rights accruing from being EU nationals unless they appealed the Greek Cypriot authorities to pursue their rights¹⁰[10].

By then, it was becoming obvious that for the Greek side the major problem was the position of the Turkish military and de-militarization of the island following an eventual Turkish accession into the EU. As well, the composition of the presidential council and the tenure of the presidents of the united Cyprus in the aftermath of any settlement were other points of concern. Moreover, Papadopoulos demanded more territory for the Greek side in order to indirectly increase the number of Greek returnees to the northern sector and to decrease the number of settlers from Turkey in the northern sector. In his return, Denktaş, the president of Turkish Cyprus, strove to guarantee the sovereignty of the Turkish sector vis-a-vis the future central authority. He also demanded certain guarantees from Annan with respect to the number of Turkish soldiers allowed on the island in return to accepting Annan’s eventual referee position. As such, already in the very beginning it appeared that

⁷[7] Cumhuriyet, 16 February, 2004 .

⁸[8] Cumhuriyet, 22 March, 2004 .

⁹[9] BBC, ‘UN Cyprus Talks Extended by a Day’, 11 February, 2004
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3475503.stm>

¹⁰[10] Interview, ‘KKTC Basbakanı Mehmet Ali Talat, Kıbrıs Sorununu Milliyet’e Degerlendirdi [The Prime Minister of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus reflected on the Cypriot Problem to Milliyet]’, Milliyet, 16 February, 2004 <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2004/02/16/siyaset/asiy.html>

both sides lacked trust towards each other¹¹[¹¹].

Despite these initial differences, many asserted that essentially there was light at the end of tunnel. Still, one final obstacle before the New York talks were concluded was the last minute Greek insistence that the EU should also be included in the negotiations. If accepted, this would have naturally increased the number of involved to unbalance the leverage of the Greek side. Nevertheless, the European Commission did not necessarily accept to partake in the negotiations. The final round of negotiations on the island was set start by 19 February, while Annan asserted that in this process the UN would receive any possible suggestions from the EU with respect to how to fit the final settlement into the EU *acquis communautaire*¹²[¹²].

Despite the initial hopes in New York , soon it appeared that the negotiations on the island were not leading to any conclusion. The president of the Greek sector demanded that all settlers from Turkey should return to Turkey . The Turkish side, however, refused any demand as such claiming that this would be against their constitution. Alongside, the Greek part also opposed any limitations on the number of Greek settlers on the northern part, two-sectors, property rights, and the Turkish guarantees on the island. The Turkish side, in its turn, insisted on assessing the losses of the Turks on the island during the period of Greek atrocities against them between 1963 and 1974 ¹³[¹³].

Already after a week of discussions, the negotiations on the Annan Plan between the Greek and the Turkish sides came to stall. The leaders from both sides rapidly started to exploit the deadlock in the talks to enhance their domestic support and to demonstrate that the other side does not want any settlement. Both the Greek and the Turkish leaders, however, terminated the meetings without any solution after fifteen rounds.

This started the second round of meetings with the involvement of Turkey and Greece as the guarantor powers in Bürgenstock in Switzerland on 24 March 2004 . Alongside the prime ministers of Turkey and Greece , the prime minister of the Turkish sector as well as the president of the Greek sector took part in the meetings. It is worth mentioning that, by now, the president of the Turkish sector, Rauf Denktaş, was already out of the meetings. By this time, Annan proposed a fourth modification on his by now infamous plan.

The plan reflected an endeavour from Annan to operate a delicate balance between the demands of both the Turkish and the Greek sides. The Turkish side was satisfied with respect to the issues such as political equality, security and the position of the guarantor states in effect to the stability on the island. The Greek side, on the other

¹¹[¹¹] Cumhuriyet, 12 February, 2004 .

¹²[¹²] Yetkin, Murat ' Ankara sonuc almaya başladı [Ankara started to reach conclusions]', Radikal, 14 February, 2004 .

¹³[¹³] Cumhuriyet, 20 February, 2004 .

hand, had certain objections with respect to the number of soldiers allowed to remain on the island and the number of Greeks allowed to return to the northern part of the island. The fourth version of the Annan Plan took certain precautions with respect to sustaining the political equality of the two sectors through curbing the voting and election rights of the Greeks settled in the north.

The plan guaranteed that the component Turkish state would have a separate government, parliament, and judicial apparatus. In regard to the territorial settlement, the fourth version presented the Turkish sector with two options: either the Turkish sector would have decreased its territory from its current 36% to 29% or else the Turkish sector would decrease its territory to 24% in return to a decrease in the number of those Greeks allowed to return to the Northern sector from 21% to 18%. As well, the presidential council would be composed of 6 Greeks and 3 Turks and the presidential tenure was 40 months for the Greeks and 20 months for the Turks¹⁴[14].

One major diplomatic failure for the Turkish side was when the EU decided against the Turkey's demands to include the derogations to do with land acquisition and settlement in the *acquis communautaire*. The limitations in the plan regarding free circulation, settlement, and property ownership contradicted the basic freedoms in the constituent EU treaties. As a result, there appeared a danger that the limitations of the Annan Plan would be open for judicial review at the European Court of Justice. The Turkish side advocated a position that in case these limitations were revoked, this would have led to instability and possible civil strife on the island¹⁵[15].

In order for these derogations to remain in the aftermath of the Cypriot accession to the EU, however, they had to be inserted in the treaties of basic EU law. Since the Cypriot accession agreement, which was among the basic treaties of EU law, has already been approved in the parliaments of the member states, the major discussion was how to add any derogations with respect to the Annan plan in the accession treaty and whether this would be ready by 1 May, 2004 ¹⁶[16]. This also showed that until the very end there was no trust between the two sides. The Turkish demands on this issue were rejected by the EU on grounds that it was already too late to come up with such demands¹⁷[17].

The fifth and the last version of the Annan Plan did not alleviate critiques either. This was due to the fact that the final plan was not a settlement, but at best imposition since the two sides could not quite agree on a final treaty. Annan tried to correct the problem to do with the derogation in his final plan through introducing an 'Act of Adaptation'. Still, this was far from becoming pending on the EU states. Obviously, the only way for the Turkish sector to retain guarantees in the north was to have the

¹⁴[14] Cumhuriyet, 30 March, 2004 .

¹⁵[15] Gürel, Şükrü Sina, 'Oyunu Bitirmek [To finish the game]', Cumhuriyet, 20 March 2004 .

¹⁶[16] Cumhuriyet, 20 February, 2004 .

¹⁷[17] Cumhuriyet, 10 March, 2004 .

plan approved as an annexed protocol of the Cypriot Accession Treaty in the parliaments of the respective EU member states. Also, there were no financial guarantees for the Turkish population to be displaced once the Greeks from the south return to the north.

The number of Greeks to be settled in the northern sector was almost 70 thousand, including those over 65 years old and the Karpaz Greeks. As such, the new Republic of Cyprus was not built as a two sectoral body. The percentage of those Greeks settled in the north could eventually increase to 33%. This population would have voting rights in the local elections. Finally, the referendum did not leave any time for the population to appreciate the basics of the new constitution. The constitution was not prepared by the representatives of the population, but by the UN. On top, the final text was in English¹⁸[18]. In this respect, the transition period for the consolidation of the federal republics and the Greek settlement in the South were all too short. This would have resulted in around 60 thousand Turks leaving their homes without prior preparation.

We need to evaluate the issues of the transitory period and Greek settlements a bit further. The component states can limit settlers in their own sectors. The latest version of the plan decreases the ratio of the Greek population to 18% from 21%. However, the plan also shortens the transitory periods for each and every stage. As well, in Article 3 Paragraph 6, the plan mentions that the component states can take protective measures within the line of the EU law. As such, the plan gives clues that in case the EU did not accept the derogations on the island as a part of its primary law, it was accepted that the derogations could wither away. The seventh paragraph in this perspective goes to show that the derogations could be temporary as they were set to finalise after 19 years or after Turkey's EU accession actualises¹⁹[19].

In comparison, those who considered the Annan Plan as a positive step from Turkey considered it as an end to the Greek claims to represent the island as a whole. In this context, they also thought that the guarantee from the European Commission that the settlement on the island will be under the guarantee of two EU states – Greece and Britain – as the guarantor powers was enough. The Commission also extended that the settlement would become a part of the EU law, EU and the Council of Europe. This was also considered as a positive step. Accordingly, another positive point was that the treaties of 1959-1960 portrayed a functional federation in Cyprus, but did not build this federation on geographical differentiation between two states.

The Annan Plan, on the other hand, relied on a federal structure and partnership. As a result, no part would have a chance to establish an authority on the other. Hence, the Greek Cypriot's claim to represent the island as a whole will come to an end. One

¹⁸[18] Critiques on the final Annan Plan by the main advisor to Denktaş – Mumtaz Soysal, Cumhuriyet, 5 April, 2004 .

¹⁹[19] Şükrü Sina Gürel, 'KKTC'de egemenlige son [Farewell to the sovereignty of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus]', Cumhuriyet, 1 April, 2004 .

final point was related to the state structure. In 1960 in the Cyprus Republic the president was Greek and the vice-president was Turkish. They were elected for five years. The Congress had legislative powers and for five years two nations were to elect their representatives 70% Greek and 30% Turkish respectively. There were 7 Greeks and 3 Turks in the Council of Ministers.

The Annan Plan, in this regard, foresaw a presidential council, composed of 6 Greeks and 3 Turks with respective voting rights. The minister of foreign affairs and the minister of EU affairs were to come from two different sectors. The Annan Plan extended the guarantees of the 1960 agreements. The guarantee agreements were not only for the Republic of Cyprus , but also for the component states²⁰[20].

The 'yes' lobby in the Greek part of Cyprus, on the hand, came to believe that the Annan Plan gave them a chance to uproot the Turkish settlers, the Turkish army as well as giving a chance of Greek refugee returning to the north of the island²¹[21]. Hence, the Greek refugees were to return to most of their lands and houses, which they left in 1974. In three and a half years, 64 Turkish villages were to become Greek and as such around hundred thousand Greeks were to be settled in these villages. The plan returns one third of all Greek property, which remained in the Turkish sector. Greeks could export their manufactured goods to the Turkish market²²[22].

While Annan was modifying his plan to increase the advantages of both the Greeks and the Turks, in both sectors the 'no' lobby was on the rise. In the Turkish sector, this lobby was led by the President Denктаş and similarly the Greek president Papadopoulos asked for a 'no' in the referendum. Later, the Orthodox Church, the AKEL communist party also joined the 'no' lobby in the south. At the same time, the referendum process led to problems between the previously staunch allies, Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus .

The government in Turkey was especially criticised by the Turkish public as it did not initiate a general discussion on the Annan Plan in the Grand Turkish National Assembly. After much debate, however, Denктаş was invited to address the Grand Turkish National Assembly. Strategically, Erdoğan did not turn up at the Assembly when Denктаş was giving his address.

Hence, on the way to the referendum, the Turkish side did not have a uniform stance. Denктаş was blatantly opposed to the Annan Plan, whereas the Turkish government and the premier Talat were supportive of the plan. The debate between these two sides became more vocal when Denктаş started to receive boosting from those

²⁰[20] Cumhuriyet, 6 April, 2004 .

²¹[21] 'Annan Planina Neden Evet Diyecegim ? [Why will I vote 'yes' on the Annan Plan]', Agathokleus, Takis, Alithia, 2 April, 2004 in Cumhuriyet, 5 April, 2004 .

²²[22] Cumhuriyet, 3 April, 2004 .

groups on the marginal right in Turkey 23^[23]. Yet, the disagreement with Denktaş did not prevent the Turkish government from giving its consent on the settlement. Greece, similar to Turkey, also proclaimed that it is in consent with referendum to take place on 24 April 2004 and in case both sides reciprocally vote 'yes' in the referendum, Greece will conclude its internal process of approval²⁴[24].

The day Turkey delivered its guarantee letter on the Annan Plan, Papadopoulos asked the Cypriot Greek population to vote 'no' in the referendum. The 'no' supporters gained even further grounds when Verheugen delivered the final guarantee that regardless of the results of the Greek vote in the referendum on the Annan Plan, the Greek side would become an EU member representing the island as a whole²⁵[25]. Hence, it looked almost certain that the southern sector would vote 'no' to the Annan Plan.

This was despite eight positive points identified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece . Some of these positive points were as follows.

First, the latest Annan Plan mentions the election of a president and a vice-president by the presidential council and as such solves the problems of representativeness.

Second, in reality, in the latest version the Annan Plan did not foresee a transition period and as such the new Cyprus union could emerge already by 25 April.

Third, all Greek refugees had the right to receive 1/3 of their territories in the north and to receive securities for the remaining 2/3 of their properties.

Fourth, despite the fact that the Annan Plan decreased the ratio of the Greek immigrants to the population of the Turkish sector to 18% from 22%, in 19 years this ratio could reach 33%.

Fifth, the Turkish and Greek citizens can live in the two respective sectors up to 5% of the total population for the first 19 years. However, after this term there would not remain any limitations. Still, Papadopoulos was vociferous in calling for a 'no' vote in the referendum²⁶[26]. His only concern seemed how to push the Turkish military forces out of the island.

In the meantime the UN Security Council failed to approve Annan's proposal to modify the position of the Peace Corps on the island, to demilitarise the island and to impose embargo on states selling weaponry to the island. Russia blocked the resolution claiming that it was too soon to introduce any resolution granted that the

23^[23] Cumhuriyet, 12 April, 2004 .

24^[24] Cumhuriyet, 8 April, 2004 .

25^[25] Cumhuriyet, 9 April, 2004 .

26^[26] Cumhuriyet, 8 April, 2004 .

Annan Plan was still to be voted on. The main aim of this proposal was to pave the way for the application of the Annan Plan on the island right after the referendum. Yet, the Russian veto basically crippled the plan and convinced the communist AKEL party to ask for a 'no' vote during the referendum²⁷[27].

III. Conclusion:

Despite much debate and discussion, the Annan Plan failed to find a solution to the problem on the island with the Greek Cypriot's refusal. The Turkish side voted almost 65% 'yes' whereas the Greek side voted 75% 'no' to the plan. The aftermath of the referendum was more or less a diplomatic blow for Turkey and the Turkish Cyprus. Simultaneous with the referendum results, the EU made it clear that it would not be in a position to recognise the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus .

Still, this did not mean to say that the EU would not extend financial aid to the Turkish sector and hence the EU came to realise that it should collaborate with the Turkish side. The EU also made it clear that the Turkish armed forces on the island are not a source of problem. In Verheugen's words, 'an EU member country cannot qualify the armed forces of an accession country as a serious threat'.

Still, the EU accepted the 'green line' between the Turkish and the Greek sectors of the island as an internal border of the EU rather than appropriating it as an external border of the Union . The EU resolution also demonstrated that the EU endowed the final responsibility to control transportation of the services and persons through the 'green line' with the Greek Cypriots²⁸[28].

Similarly, the Turkish side could not receive any favourable signals to improve the position of the Turkish Cyprus from the Council of Europe and the United Nations. After all the Greek Cypriot side entered the EU as a full member on 1 May, whereas the Turkish side despite its 'yes' vote in the referendum was kept out. The effects of Cypriot accession on Turkish EU accession prospects remain to be seen.

²⁷[27] Cumhuriyet, 23 April, 2004 .

²⁸[28] Cumhuriyet, 29 April, 2004 .