

23 January 2024

Excellency,

Cyprus Peace and Dialogue Centre (CPDC) and Determination for Peace (Apofasi Irinis) would like to take this opportunity to welcome and congratulate you on your appointment as the personal envoy of the Secretary-General.

We, as members of CPDC and Apofasi Irinis, stand united in our overwhelming concern over the continuing political deadlock and the lack of a negotiating process leading to a comprehensive solution in Cyprus. The prolonged status-quo in Cyprus is unacceptable, dangerous and unsustainable. It creates a deeper social and cultural division that affects every aspect of life in our communities. It also hampers economic opportunities, creates barriers to education and cultural exchange and, most importantly, prevents the realization of a peaceful, harmonious and prosperous Cyprus.

We strongly believe that the solution of the Cyprus problem is not just desirable, but essential. Such a solution should address the legitimate concerns and aspirations of both communities, ensuring political equality, security and mutual respect as well as their common future within the European Union. As such, it must be rooted in the principles upon which the EU is founded, i.e. democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

The need for such a solution is urgent. The longer the status-quo persists, the harder it becomes for Cypriots to exploit all the remarkable talents inherent in both communities, to realize their true potential through joint governance and cooperation and to respond more effectively against global challenges and risks that may lie ahead.

As the Secretary-General H.E. Mr. António Guterres stressed, we also firmly believe that “the essence of a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus problem is practically there”, and a solution based on a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality could be found if there is necessary political will and determination. Recent bi-communal research findings show that there is a clear and growing majority in both communities that can accept such a solution provided they are given the right incentives.

In that regard, the High Level Agreements, the Joint Declaration of 11 February 2014, as well as all prior convergences achieved to date should be upheld by the two sides, and the comprehensive negotiations should resume from the point they were terminated in Crans Montana in line with the six-point framework presented by the Secretary-General on 30 June 2017, as well as his statement of 25 November 2019, with a view to achieving a comprehensive and durable settlement to the Cyprus problem.

H.E. Ms. María Ángela Holguín Cuellar
Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General
New York.

However, this time must be different. The negotiations should resume in a phased, meaningful and results-oriented manner with a mechanism agreed by the parties for resolving possible impasses, leading to a comprehensive settlement agreement that would be submitted for the approval of both communities in separate, simultaneous referenda. As the continuation of the status-quo is unacceptable and unsustainable, it should not be among possible outcomes. The consequences of a new failure should be made clear to both sides. We also strongly embrace the Security Council position that the negotiations should ensure transparency and effective participation of women and youth as well as members of the civil society.

As a pro-solution Cypriot civil society initiative and a strong supporter of a federal settlement, we firmly believe that in order to achieve a successful outcome in both referenda, the respective publics should be well-informed through intensive public information campaigns throughout the process of negotiations.

To this end, we call upon our leaders, the international community and all stakeholders to commit themselves to a comprehensive and durable solution of the Cyprus problem with a sense of urgency, which would be of utmost importance to the future well-being of both communities.

We would also like to emphasize that we are ready to support your efforts for the resumption of a renewed process, based on the agreed framework and taking on board the entire body of work of the negotiations, and commit ourselves to contribute to a sustainable solution in Cyprus.

Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration.

Cyprus Peace and Dialogue Centre (CPDC) Determination for Peace (Apofasi Irinis)

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**cc: H.E. Mr. Colin Stewart, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head
of Mission - Nicosia**