



Security Council

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Resolution 2537 (2020)

**Adopted by the Security Council at its 8751st meeting, on
28 July 2020**

The Security Council,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General of 10 July 2020 on his Good Offices ([S/2020/685](#)) and on the United Nations operation in Cyprus ([S/2020/682](#)), and *expressing* its full support for his Good Offices to remain available to assist the sides, should they jointly decide to re-engage in negotiations with the necessary political will,

Underscoring that the responsibility for finding a solution lies first and foremost with the Cypriots themselves, and *reaffirming* the primary role of the United Nations in assisting the parties to bring the Cyprus conflict and division of the island to a comprehensive and durable settlement with a sense of urgency,

Urging the sides to renew their efforts to achieve an enduring, comprehensive and just settlement based on a bicomunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in relevant Security Council resolutions, including OP4 of its resolution [716 \(1991\)](#), and *stressing* that the status quo is unsustainable,

Expressing deep concern at the further escalation and increased tensions in the eastern Mediterranean over hydrocarbons exploration, *convinced* of the many important benefits, including economic benefits, for all Cypriots that would flow from a comprehensive and durable settlement, and *reiterating* the Secretary-General's call for serious efforts to avoid any further escalation and to defuse tensions,

Recalling its resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and related resolutions, *recognising* that the full, effective and meaningful participation and leadership of women is essential in building peace in Cyprus and will contribute to making any future settlement sustainable, *welcoming* efforts to bring together a broader range of women actors on both sides, *encouraging* the sides to ensure the unique concerns of women are addressed in a future settlement, and *looking forward* to the outcome of the gender-sensitive socio-economic impact assessment requested in its resolution [2453 \(2019\)](#),

Recalling its resolution [2250 \(2015\)](#) that recognises the important and positive contribution of youth in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and as a key aspect of the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, and *further encourages* the full, effective and meaningful participation of youth in this process,



Recognising that effective contact and communication between the sides enhances the prospects for settlement and is in the interests of all Cypriots, and helps to address island-wide matters, including environmental protection and crime,

Recognising the impact on the island of Cyprus of the COVID-19 pandemic and the efforts made by both communities to suppress the spread of the virus and mitigate its effects,

Further recognising that the COVID-19 pandemic has restricted opportunities and capacity for negotiation, and *expressing concern* that the uncoordinated decisions to close the crossing points along the Green line in response to the pandemic have prevented most bi-communal engagement, and that the prolonged closure of the crossing points threatens to set back the progress made in this area since 2003,

Expressing concern at the continued deterioration of the law and order situation in Pyla, and *urging* both sides to continue to work with UNFICYP to establish effective measures to tackle criminal activities,

Emphasising the importance of confidence-building measures and their timely implementation, and *urging* the sides to step up their efforts to promote intercommunal contacts, reconciliation and the active engagement of civil society, in particular women and youth,

Noting that the Government of Cyprus is agreed that in view of the prevailing conditions on the island it is necessary to keep the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) beyond 31 July 2020,

Welcoming measures to date to strengthen the liaison and engagement capacity of the mission, *noting* the importance of transition planning in relation to the settlement, and *emphasising* the need to review regularly all peacekeeping operations, including UNFICYP, to ensure efficiency and effectiveness,

Echoing the Secretary-General's gratitude to the Government of Cyprus and the Government of Greece for their voluntary contributions to the funding of UNFICYP, and *expressing appreciation* to Member States that contribute personnel to UNFICYP,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative Elizabeth Spehar, and senior United Nations official Jane Holl Lute,

1. *Welcomes* the trilateral meeting of the leaders and the Secretary-General on 25 November 2019 in Berlin, at which both sides reaffirmed their commitment to a bicomunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in relevant Security Council resolutions, including OP4 of its resolution [716 \(1991\)](#), the Joint Declaration of 11 February 2014, the prior convergences, and the six point framework presented by the Secretary-General on 30 June 2017 at the Conference of Cyprus;

2. *Further welcomes* the Secretary-General's agreement to extend his efforts to achieve terms of reference to serve as a consensus starting point for phased, meaningful, and results-oriented negotiations at the earliest feasible opportunity, and *urges* the sides and all involved participants to renew their political will and commitment to a settlement under United Nations auspices, including by engaging actively and with a sense of urgency with the Secretary-General and senior United Nations official, Jane Holl Lute;

3. *Reiterates its call for* a reduction of tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean, and *further calls* upon the leaders of the two Cypriot communities and all involved parties to refrain from any actions and rhetoric that might damage chances of success;

4. *Reaffirms* all its relevant resolutions on Cyprus, in particular resolution 1251 (1999);

5. *Recalls* its resolution 2506 (2020) and *calls upon* the two leaders urgently to:

(a) put their efforts expeditiously behind further work on reaching convergences on the core issues;

(b) reaffirm their political support for all Technical Committees, empower them to submit proposals for their consideration to enhance intercommunal contacts and improve the daily lives of all Cypriots, and consider the advice of the Good Offices Mission of the Secretary-General regarding further ways to empower the Technical Committees and improve their performance;

(c) ensure effective coordination and cooperation on health matters, including in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other infectious diseases which have island-wide implications, including through the effective use of the expertise available in the bi-communal Technical Committees on Health, Crisis Management, Humanitarian Affairs and Economic Matters;

(d) ensure effective coordination and cooperation on criminal matters;

(e) promote peace education across the island, including by further empowering the Technical Committee on Education to implement the recommendations contained in its joint report of 2017, in particular those concerning policy-making, and to address impediments to peace in school materials, including text books, as a contribution to trust-building between the communities, on which there continues to be little progress;

(f) improve the public atmosphere for negotiation to secure a settlement, including by preparing the communities for a settlement through public messages on convergences and the way ahead, and delivering more constructive and harmonised messages, and by refraining from actions or rhetoric that detracts from a successful process or could make it more difficult to achieve, recalling the Secretary-General's statement of 25 November 2019 in this regard;

(g) increase their support to, and ensure a meaningful role for, civil society engagement in peace efforts, in particular strengthening the participation of women's organisations and youth in the process, including by empowering the Technical Committee on Gender Equality to meet and develop an action plan supporting women's full, effective and meaningful participation in peace talks and providing direct support and encouragement to civil society organisations to enhance inter-communal contact and trust-building;

6. *Calls for* the establishment of an effective mechanism for direct military contacts between the sides and the relevant involved parties, encourages full engagement with the proposal on the establishment of such a mechanism presented by UNFICYP, and *calls for* its timely implementation;

7. *Calls upon* the sides to reduce existing barriers to intercommunal contact, and emphasizes the importance of effective communication for risk-mitigation and trust-building between the communities;

8. *Further calls for* the reopening of all the crossing points and the return to the operating status that existed prior to 29 February 2020 as soon as practically

achievable, and for any continuing restrictions on movement across the island to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to be coordinated, and not go beyond what is necessary to protect public health; and noting that the opening of the crossings since 2003 has been an important confidence-building measure between both communities and one which is essential for the settlement process;

9. *Welcomes* the progress towards the inter-operability of mobile phones across the island, and *calls for* further work to ensure the arrangement is made more broadly available and affordable to subscribers on both sides of the island, and *urges* the sides to agree and implement further confidence building measures, including those related to the military, economic cooperation and trade;

10. *Commends* the work of the Committee on Missing Persons, and *calls upon* all parties expeditiously to enhance their cooperation with the Committee's work, in particular through providing full access to all areas and responding in a timely manner to requests for archival information on possible burial sites;

11. *Expresses* its full support for UNFICYP, and *decides* to extend its mandate for a further period ending on 31 January 2021;

12. *Expresses serious concern* at the increased number and severity of violations of the military status quo along the ceasefire lines, *urges* the sides and all involved parties to respect UNFICYP's mandated authority in, and delineation of, the buffer zone, *urges* the use of the 2018 United Nations aide-memoire by the sides to ensure peace and security in the buffer zone, and *calls on* both sides to prevent unauthorised activities between the ceasefire lines;

13. *Calls on* the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkish forces to restore in Strovilia the military status quo which existed there prior to 30 June 2000, *recalls* the status of Varosha as set out in relevant resolutions, including resolutions [550 \(1984\)](#) and [789 \(1992\)](#), and reaffirms that UNFICYP's freedom of movement should be respected;

14. *Welcomes* the announcement that 18 suspected hazardous areas across the island have now been cleared of mines, and *urges* the leaders of both communities to agree and continue a plan of work to achieve a mine-free Cyprus;

15. *Requests* UNFICYP to take fully into account gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate; *requests* the Secretary-General and troop- and police-contributing countries to increase the number of women in UNFICYP and ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of its operations;

16. *Welcomes* the initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General to standardise a culture of performance in UN peacekeeping, *recalls* its requests in its resolutions [2378 \(2017\)](#) and [2436 \(2018\)](#) that the Secretary-General ensure that performance data related to the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations is used to improve mission operations, including decisions such as those regarding deployment, remediation, repatriation and incentives, *reaffirms* its support for the development of a comprehensive and integrated performance policy framework that identifies clear standards of performance for evaluating all United Nations civilian and uniformed personnel working in and supporting peacekeeping operations that facilitates effective and full implementation of mandates, and includes comprehensive and objective methodologies based on clear and well-defined benchmarks to ensure accountability for underperformance and incentives and recognition for outstanding performance,

calls on the United Nations to apply this framework to UNFICYP as described in its resolution 2436 (2018), and *notes* the efforts of the Secretary-General to develop a comprehensive performance assessment system;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take necessary measures to ensure full compliance of all UNFICYP personnel, civilian and uniformed, including mission leadership and mission support personnel, with the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to keep the Council fully informed about the Mission's progress in this regard, *stresses* the need to prevent such exploitation and abuse and to improve how these allegations are addressed in line with its resolution 2272 (2016), and *urges* troop- and police-contributing countries to continue to take appropriate preventative action, including vetting of all personnel, pre-deployment and in-mission awareness training, and to take appropriate steps to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel, including through timely investigations of allegations by troop- and police-contributing countries, and UNFICYP as appropriate, holding perpetrators to account, and repatriating units when there is credible evidence of widespread or systemic sexual exploitation and abuse by those units;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit by 10 January 2021 a report on his Good Offices, in particular on progress towards reaching a consensus starting-point for meaningful results-oriented negotiations leading to a settlement, *encourages* the leaders of the two communities to provide written updates to the Good Offices Mission of the Secretary-General on the actions they have taken in support of the relevant parts of this resolution since its adoption, in particular with regard to paragraphs 5 and 6 and 8, with a view to reaching a sustainable and comprehensive settlement, and *further requests* the Secretary-General to include the contents of these updates in his Good Offices report; *further requests* the Secretary-General to submit by 10 January 2021 a report on implementation of this resolution, and to keep the Security Council updated on events as necessary;

19. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.
