

The Impact of Peace and Conflict in Cyprus on Turkey's International Relations

Rekurd S. Maghdid

Economy and Administration Department
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Koya University
Email: rekurd.sarhang@koyauniversity.org

Abstract

This paper is about a very significant subject that has influence on Turkey's past, present and future. Cyprus issue, which became a dynamic of change in Turkey's foreign policy, has impact on the evolution of Turkey's international relations. From time to time this issue puts Turkey in trouble with some international organizations like the European Union, which Turkey tried a lot to get in. This paper answers the question how did and does Cyprus question affect Turkey's international relations? The position of powerful countries within the context of time and place and their relations with Turkey concerning the island? Depending on some examples and truths from sufficient references, the paper shows very significant clues that, in one way or another, Cyprus issue have negatively and (rarely) positively affected Turkey's international relations. Beginning with energy, this paper simplifies the fluctuating relations between Turkey and other countries involved in Cyprus issue. The most important entities which Cyprus dispute affected in their relations with Turkey are: the UN, the EU, the USA, Russia (USSR), Greece, Arab countries and Israel.

Keywords: Cyprus issue, Turkey, UN, EU, and Greek Cypriots.

1. Introduction to the Cyprus Issue

Because of its geographic position Cyprus has strategic importance to the Middle-East and to the EU. For centuries, Cyprus was under the sovereignty of Latin domination until 1571, when the Ottoman Empire entered the island and collapsed the Latin domination. The Ottoman Empire was there for more than three centuries until 1878, afterwards with a convention between the Empire and the UK. The Ottoman Empire ceded the administration of the island to the Great Britain and in exchange Great Britain would have defended the empire territory against Russia.¹ This Defense Alliance Convention was not beneficial for the Ottoman Empire than to the Great Britain because as it is clear at that time Great Britain did not have good relation with Russia. The island remained under the British administration till 5 Nov 1914 when the Ottoman Empire took its place at the Germanic front against the UK, and the UK annexed the island as one of its colonies. By the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Republic of Turkey signed the 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty with THE BRITISH EMPIRE, FRANCE, ITALY, JAPAN, GREECE, ROMANIA and the SERB-CROAT-SLOVENE STATE. According to this peace treaty, Turkey recognized the British Empire's sovereignty on the island as a colony of UK.²

There are several treaties and agreements prior to the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus. The most significant ones are: Zurich-London Agreement that was signed in 19 February 1959, the Treaty of Establishment, the Treaty of Guarantee, and the Treaty of Alliance. Due to this accord Cyprus had its independence and the Republic of Cyprus was established in 1960.³ This republic had a constitution, in which the Articles of the Treaties and Agreements related to the island became the basis of this constitution, but this constitution had some weakness, the most significant one is that it did not extremely concentrate on the unity of the island. On the other hand, one of the dangerous articles is the article IV in which according to that article the guarantors of the republic (UK, Greece and Turkey) had the right of military intervention when the status of the Republic of Cyprus is in jeopardy. Moreover, the new Republic did not have the right of changing or removing some of the provisions of the constitution unless the guarantors and both communities of the Republic agree to any change. Nonetheless, each one of Turkish and Greek Cypriots tended to unite Cyprus to their home countries, Turkey and Greece.

After the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus, the island saw violence and dissettlement. Greek Cypriots tried to unite Cyprus with their home country, Greece, so as to reduce Turkey's influences on the island and jeopardize Turkey's territorial sea interests. The Turkish Cypriots, on the other hand, tried to either annex Cyprus to Turkey since the island is 40 Kilometers far from the Turkish borders or at least stay independent as it is so as to hold their constitutional rights. The Greek Cypriots established a militant group EOKA, *Ethnikí Orgánosis Kipriakou Agónos* (Greek for National Organization of Cypriot Struggle). In return, Turkish Cypriots formed a militant group TRO "Turkish Resistance Organization" in

¹ Retrived from (Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, Turkey): http://www.mfa.gov.tr/cyprus-issue-summary_en.mfa in 5/1/2016.

² Spencer C. Tucker. 2014. *World War I: The Definitive Encyclopedia and Document Collection*. Vol. 5. ABC-CLIO. p. 930.

³ Judy Carter and others. 2015. *Regional and Ethnic Conflicts: Perspectives from the Front Lines*. Routledge. p. 80.

1958. Although the two Cypriots came to the mentioned agreements, the chaos continued in the region. Due to this period of violence the Security Council of UN adopted some resolutions to terminate the discrimination because it was regarded as a threat to international peace and settlement. Moreover, they adopted Resolution 186 and they send peacekeeping force, UNFICYP⁴, which was officially established on 27 March 1964.⁵

It can be said that the country experienced a period of peace and settlement given that the UNFICYP prevented any chaos or invasion. Nevertheless, Whatever the UNFICYP achieved during the decade were all destroyed and lost due to a Greek coup d'état that aimed at annexing the island to Greece. This coup which was called Greek junta regime (a dictatorial regime) led a military coup in 15 July 1974 against president Makarios' government, although he was Greek. Therefore, the United Nations Security Council, in 19 July 1974, condemned this military intervention and regarded it as a threat to the clear invasion from outside to the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus.⁶ As a response to this coup, in 20 July 1974 Turkey decided to invade with about 40000 military forces to the northern part of Cyprus since the northern part of the island was inhabited by Turkish Cypriots and Turkey suggested that their intervention was to protect the Turkish Cypriots.

After several years of military clashes, Cyprus was split between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. This split continued until now. There were many attempts to solve the Cyprus issue, the most important one is Kofi Annan's plan. Meanwhile, none of these suggestions succeeded. Cyprus question could have exceedingly influence Turkey's relations with her neighboring countries and other considerable organizations, due to geographical location of Turkey that binds Asia to the Europe, Islam with Christianity, and due to its role in the Middle East. The Ottomans could increase their relations and alliances in exchange with this island as what they did with the British Empire against Russia. Nonetheless, this island became more important since the mid-twentieth century due to the change of conflicts and strategic alliances between states involved in the dispute. Moreover, Turkey becomes less powerful economically if she leaves Cyprus with empty hands to the Greeks.

The Cyprus issue is also economically another issue because if Turkey accepts what the Greek Cypriots propagate for and try to achieve then Turkey will lose the territorial sea which can strongly affect Turkish economy and thereby Turkey will not be able to help other countries and can not make alliances with other neighboring states such as Macedonia and others. Due to the territorial sea agreements, if Turkey lets the Greek Cypriots do what they did with Aegean islands then this will puts Turkey in trouble concerning energy. Some oil rich states such as Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran and Iraq send and sell their oil through pipelines that goes to Samsun, next to Ceyhan then to Israel and other states in Europe. So, if the Greeks have power over this territory, they will not let Turkey to benefit from this or at least they will ask for taxes. Moreover, Cyprus issue affected Turkey's international relations. Cyprus, sometimes, negatively influenced Turkey's relations with some countries while some other times Cyprus question has become a factor of gathering Turkey with other states. The most important entities that Cyprus question affected Turkey's relations with are: the UN, the European Union, USA, Russia (USSR), Greece and Arab countries and Israel.

⁴ (UNFICYP) means United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. The UN Security Council sends this peacekeeping force to maintain ceasefire in any country that is under the threat of tragedy of war.

⁵ Retrived from the UN website: <http://www.un.int/cyprus/scr186.htm> in 7/1/2016.

⁶ Retrived from the UN website: <http://www.un.int/cyprus/scr354.htm> in 7/1/2016.

2. The Impact of Cyprus Issue on the relations between Turkey and the International Organizations

2. 1 Turkey and the United Nations

Turkey is member in the UN since 24 October 1945 and from that date Turkey has relations with this international organization while Cyprus became member in the UN in 1960⁷. The first resolution that was adopted about Cyprus was in 1964 when the violence spread all over the island and the Greek and Turkish Cypriots wanted to unify the island to Greece and Turkey. In March 1964, the UN decided to take action against what was happening in Cyprus to maintain cold-peace. The main reason behind the UN Security Councils adoption of the Resolutions was to prevent war in the region.

The unsettlement of the island and any violation to the international treaties and agreements would have brought tensions and conflicts between Turkey and Greece. Due to a long period of violence and unsettlement the UN adopted more than 120 Resolutions that aiming at solving the Cyprus dispute and to some extent the Resolutions had a great role in settling the situation in the island because the unsolved conflict was regarded as a threat to international peace and security. Thus, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 186 on March 4, 1964 deciding to send a peacekeeping force (UNFICYP). This force was officially established on 27 March 1964.⁸

When the Greek junta regime staged a coup d'état in Cyprus, the situation in the island changed completely because it was a challenge for the international security. Therefore, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 353 on July 20, 1974 in which the Council condemned the illegal coup. Moreover, in that Resolution the UN Security Council called all the parties which were related to the island (Greece, Turkey, Greek and Turkish Cypriots) to immediate cease fire and respect to the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Cyprus. The Resolution for the first time used the term "...threatens the international peace and security"; this means that the situation should have been taken seriously by the international community⁹.

The UN decided to, considering the critical situation of the island, prolong the duties of UNFICYP. In 12 March 1975, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 367 by which the Council "Regrets the unilateral decision of 13 February 1975, declaring that a part of the Republic of Cyprus would become a Federated Turkish State"¹⁰. This resolution was not good for Turkey because if the Turkish Cypriots were forced to accept all the Greek Cypriots' violation then Turkey would have lost the territorial sea and the efforts to protect the Turkish Cypriots were all useless. Moreover, in 1983, the General Assembly stated out that a part of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus is still occupied by foreign forces and demanded the withdrawal of all occupation forces from the Republic¹¹. So for the first time the word "occupation" was utilized by the UN General Assembly and Security Council. This affected

⁷ Yucel Acer. 2003. *The Aegean maritime disputes and international law*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd. p. 46.

⁸ United Nations: Department of Political Affairs. 2008. *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council: supplement 1989-1992*. United Nations Publications. pp. 143-4.

⁹ Retrieved from UN official website: <http://www.un.int/cyprus/scr354.htm> in 10/1/2016

¹⁰ Necatigil, M. Zaim. 1993. *The Cyprus question and the Turkish position in international law*. Oxford University Press. p. 439.

¹¹ Athanapoulos, Haralambos. 2001. *Greece, Turkey, and the Aegean Sea: a case study in international law*. McFarland. p. 31.

Turkey because by this accusation Turkey will have less opportunity of becoming member in the Security Council.

When the Turkish Cypriots declared a republic in the Northern Cyprus the Greek Cypriots and Greece started to illegalize this republic. Therefore, on 18 November 1983, the UN Security Council adopted the Resolution 541 in which the Council considered this attempt as contradictory to “the 1960 Treaty concerning the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus and the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee.”¹² This Resolution and those which accused the Turkish Troops as occupiers angered the Turkish Cypriots because the TRNC considered the declaration of their republic as their political and legal right since the Greek Cypriots administrated the southern part and the republic was dissolved by the Greek Cypriots. The TRNC was solely recognized by Turkey and got all the supports from Turkey. In this way, Cyprus became one of the greatest figures that affected Turkey’s relations with the United Nation. Nonetheless, in none of the resolutions the UN did not mention any punishment against Turkey.

There are several reasons that made UN not attempt to punish Turkey as their resolutions accused her as occupier. First, Turkey was one of the Guarantors of the Republic of Cyprus. Second, Turkey did not go to Greek Cypriot region. Third, the UN realized that Turkey plays a great role in the Middle-East because of her geographical location. Forth, Turkey became a member in NATO since 1983, thus Turkey became an internationally recognized military power in the world. Finally, Turkey was regarded as an ally to the UK and the USA. Therefore, it was difficult to the UN to make any military action or economic sanction against Turkey.

The UN Security Council was always recalling its relevant resolutions. On 12 March 1990, the UN Security Council in Resolution 649, recalled its previous resolutions and especially concentrated on the Resolution 367 of (1975) and “its support for the 1977 and 1979 high-level agreements between the leaders of the two communities in which they pledged themselves to establish a bi-communal Federal Republic of Cyprus that will safeguard its independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-alignment, and exclude union in whole or in part with any other country and any form of partition or secession.”¹³ Turkey was very pleased with any resolution aiming at solving the issue peacefully and taking a Federate Republic into strong consideration. As a result, Turkey’s relations became stronger in 1990s because the UN concentrated on solution rather than naming Turkey as occupier of Cyprus.

In all the UN Resolutions between 1990 till 1999 the Security Council reaffirmed its support for the unification of the two administrations, independence of the republic, and territorial integrity of Cyprus. On the other hand, the UN praised Turkey’s role in the region. From 1990 till now the UN did not reuse the term occupation about the Northern Cyprus because the situation in the Middle East and especially Iraq, Iran, Syria and Israel extremely needed Turkey. So, Turkey’s position in the UN re-appeared as strong as before 1974 until 2004 when Turkey showed a good intention to the international community by persuading the Turkish Cypriots to accept the Annan Plan. This Plan was a referendum to unify both administrations on the basis of the Swiss federal model which is a multi-party federal parliamentary democratic republic. The Swiss Federal Model is a political system that is used in Switzerland. It is a federal, democratic, multi-party, and parliamentary republic.

¹² Retrieved from the UN official website: <http://www.un.int/cyprus/scr541.htm> in 11/1/2016.

¹³ Retrieved from the UN official website: <http://www.unint/cyprus/scr649.htm> in 11/1/2016.

The Annan Plan was proposed by the UN Secretary General (Kofi Annan) in 11 November 2002. It was a very concessive and well arranged plan that could settle the issue of the divided island¹⁴. This was considered as a good and an independent solution by Turkey and TRNC. The Plan was rejected by the Greek Cypriots by %75 and was accepted by the Turkish Cypriots by %65. Therefore, Turkey's Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, declared that "Northern Cyprus could no longer be kept internationally isolated"¹⁵. Thus, Turkey's positive steps in so called Annan Plan pushed the UN make relations with Turkey better and this led Turkey to be an elected member in the UN Security Council in 2009.

2.2 Turkey and the European Union

Cyprus issue has affected Turkey's relations with the European Union very much. To be an EU member Turkey tried since 14 April 1987, "under Article 237of the EEC Agreement"¹⁶. Although before this year Turkey attempted to give its accession to the EU, all the attempts failed due to several internal and external issues. Cyprus question has strongly influenced Turkey-Greece relations. Thus, in the eighties, the Greece membership has threatened Turkey's membership since they had historical tensions and conflicts about Cyprus. Turkey's membership in the Union is beneficial for Turkey as well as the EU in many aspects. Economically speaking, Turkey is the most significant gate for business for the EU countries and it can influence the economic evolution of Turkey's trade. Turkey can be the trade boarder between Europe and Asia. Meanwhile, politically speaking, Turkey's geographical position has enormous advantages for the EU, since Turkey is a Muslim country having a secular constitution that can prevent any fundamentalist Islamic terror threat to the West.

Regardless of all the advantages of Turkey's membership, in 3 July 1990 the EU started to bring Cyprus issue around the table of Turkey-EU negotiations¹⁷. The accession was immediately interpreted as violating the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkish Cypriots and Turkish leaders¹⁸. Nonetheless, Turkey's military intervention to Cyprus in 1974, affected Turkey in many ways and it became one of the argumentative points between Turkey and the EU. Turkish troops existed in Cyprus for decades and the Republic of Turkey decided to maintain her troops in the territories which belong to the Turkish Cypriots in order to protect them from another coup or massacre in which Greeks might have staged against the Turkish Cypriots. The EU Commission has, for many times, repeated that Turkish troops should leave the island. Moreover, since the EU involvement in the Cyprus issue, the EU countries have always repeated their support for a solution related to the foundation of a federal state with two communities, bi-zonal and based on political equality of the sides in Cyprus.

One of the things that angered Turkey and the TRNC was that the Greek Cypriots negotiated on behalf of the whole Cyprus because Turks thought that this was a real violation to the international treaties and agreements that the Greek and Turkish Cypriots signed.

¹⁴ William Mallinson. 2005. *Cyprus a Modern History*. London- New York: I.B.TAURIS. p. 162.

¹⁵ Hans-Joachim Heintze and Andrej Zwitter. 2011. *International Law and Humanitarian Assistance: A Crosscut Through Legal Issues Pertaining to Humanitarianism*. Springer Science & Business Media. pp. 91-2.

¹⁶ Yeshilyurt Zuhul Gunduz. 2003. *Turkey's Approach towards the EU: Views from Within Perceptions*. Journal of International Affairs. Vol III. p. 121.

¹⁷ Heinz Kramer. 2000. *A changing Turkey: the challenge to Europe and the United States*. Brookings Institution Press. p. 176.

¹⁸ I bid.

Nonetheless, this violation of the international treaties was only declared by Turkey and the TRNC. On the other hand, European Union Council refused all these accusations and they used to suggest that when Cyprus is accepted, the whole island will be member of the EU. Further, they assured Turkey that Cyprus accession will not negatively affect Turkey accession to the EU. As a matter of fact, Cyprus accession has become a big problem and it has become one of the main issues that Turkey and the EU negotiated about.

The EU, for many times, has concentrated on the sovereignty of all its members as a message to Turkey that Turkey will not be accepted to EU if Turkey does not recognize the Republic of Cyprus (Greek Cypriot). Moreover, in December 1996, the European Court of Human Rights delivered a landmark ruling that declared Turkey as an occupying power in the Northern part of the Republic of Cyprus¹⁹. The EU played a pro Greek Cypriot role when they recognized Turkey as occupier. Therefore, Turkey's political relations with the EU became worse due to the influences of Cyprus dispute on the negotiations. From time to time, the EU has given Turkey the hope that she will be accepted as a member in the EU. For instance, one year after Luxembourg Summit in 1997 when the Union gave the Greek Cypriots a candidate status, the EU gave the same status to Turkey in December 1998.²⁰ Indeed, the EU realized that no settlement will be achieved in the island without the support of Turkey. Also, the EU wanted Turkey to put pressure on Turkish Cypriots to reach a settlement with Greek Cypriots and also not to risk negative reactions of Turkey about accession of the Cyprus. Therefore, this attempt can be considered as one of the EU's outright deceit on Turkey and another step to hinder Turkey's membership in the European Union.

In fact the issue of Cyprus was exaggerated by some countries in the EU. This exaggeration was solely to prolong the process of Turkey's membership in the EU. Countries like Greece, Germany, and France, in many of the EU summits and informal meetings, revealed their intentions in rejecting Turkey in the EU. The French presidents (Jack Shirack, Nicolas Sarkozy, and Francois Hollande), insisted that they do not want Turkey to have a chair in the EU, as Nicolas Sarkozy repeated in the Brussels summit "I do not believe Turkey has a place in the European Union"²¹. France attempted to legalize this illegal intention through several issues. Even before negotiations about Cyprus, the EU Commission stated out that Turkey did not step to make fundamental changes in her economy. On December 18, 1989, The EU Commission report "confirmed Turkey's 'eligibility' for membership, adding that relations should continue to be developed within the Accession Agreement"²².

By contrast, the United Kingdom, who is a permanent member in the UN and is a strong power in the world, had and has positive attitude in the direction of Turkey membership in the EU and the settlement of Cyprus issue. In most of the meetings the UK showed her tendency to accept Turkey's accession. The most important factor for this tendency is that Turkey and the UK are allies. Moreover, the UK is one of the participants of the treaties signed about Cyprus, among them Treaty of Guarantee. In a Press Conference in 27 July 2005, Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the UK, clearly supported Turkey in the accessions and stated out that the UK votes in favor of Turkey in any case which is related to

¹⁹ Europe Publications Staff. 2002. *The Middle East and North Africa 2003*. Routledge Publication. p. 252.

²⁰ Laure Delcour. 2013. *Shaping the Post-Soviet Space: EU Policies and Approaches to Region-Building*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., p. 41.

²¹ The Economist Newspaper. 2011. *The Economist*. Cornell University. p. 56.

²² Gunduz, Yeshilyurt Zuhail. 2003. *Turkey's Approach towards the EU: Views from Within. Perceptions* (Journal of International Affairs). Vol III. p. 122.

Cyprus question²³. The UK hoped for a solution that proved equal rights for both sides. Nonetheless, when the UK realized that Greeks are not grateful with the agreements and treaties, the UK's attitudes towards Turkey became better. Thus, the UK can be measured as the first EU country that has constructive perception towards Turks and the Cyprus Issue.

The real political tensions between Turkey and the EU appeared after May 2004 when the EU accepted the Cyprus Accession. Turkey warned the EU that there will be consequences of this membership²⁴. Although Turkey played a great role in persuading the Turkish Cypriots to accept the Annan Plan, the EU did not take this initiation since Turkey was previously labeled as Occupier by the EU. Turkey expected good responses from the EU since the Greek Cypriots rejected the plan. Nonetheless, this expectation did not come to be true because in 1 May 2004 the EU accepted the Greek Cypriot administration on behalf of the whole island. Thus, even though Turkey has been a NATO and OECD member, which means that Turkey has fulfilled a very huge duty to be a member in the EU, the EU Commission has always claimed that Turkey should recognize the sovereignty of all member states, including Cyprus. Also, the Commission declared that Turkey should open her airports for the Cypriot planes as well as ships.

Despite the fact that the EU was against Turkey's membership, Turkey has not ignored her attempts towards the membership. Turkey tried to lessen the effects of Cyprus issue on her accession. As a result, at the Brussels Summit in December 2004 the main issue became Turkey and her acceptance of Cyprus membership in the Union²⁵. In this Summit Turkey accepted the acceptance of Cyprus membership in return, the EU gave Turkey a date to start her accession negotiations. This acceptance shows that Turkey and the TRNC are forced to be satisfied with empty hands since the EU forced Turkey to accept the Cyprus membership without real tendency of accepting Turkey in to the EU. Even though the EU made Cyprus an obstacle to hinder Turkey, but this issue is just a trick like other tricks to busy Turkey. For example, the EU claims that Turkey has little democracy that is why they do not accept Turkey; by contrast, they opened the gate for undemocratic Slovakia²⁶. Furthermore, the Union accepted Bulgaria in 1 January 2007²⁷ while that country was bankrupted; in comparison, Turkey has a powerful growing economy and the EU still denies this fact. Therefore, the Cyprus dispute is a mere puzzle that the EU wants to use in order to delay Turkey as usual.

All in all, most of the EU members put Cyprus Issue as an obstacle to refuse Turkey's membership. Nonetheless, the real reasons of the EU refusal are:

1. Turkey has a 75 million Muslim population.
2. Turkey is the owner of Ottoman history that occupied more than half of the Europe.
3. The EU members are not welcomed with a new upsetting member that has unsafe borders with Arabs, Iran and Armenia.
4. Turkey did not guarantee the rights of about 20 million Kurds.
5. France and Greece have historical backgrounds to reject Turkey.

²³ Reuben Wong, Christopher Hill. 2012. *National and European Foreign Policy: Towards Europeanization*. Routledge. pp. 78-80

²⁴ Pauline Green, Ray Collins. 2003. *Embracing Cyprus: the path to unity in the new Europe*. I.B.Tauris. p. 134.

²⁵ Umit Cizre. 2008. *Secular and Islamic politics in Turkey: the making of the Justice and Development Party*. Routledge. p. 182.

²⁶ The Times. 1998. *Ghosts at the Teast. Cyprus, EU and Turkey, Selected Extracts from the World Press* Edited by A. C. Gazioglu. CYREP (Cyprus Research and Publishing Centre). p. 21

²⁷ William J. Duiker and Jackson J. Spielvogel. 2015. *World History, Volume II: Since 1500*. Cengage Learning. p.832.

6. Turkey's economy and infrastructure were not strong enough to respond the challenges, although in the last decade Turkey has experienced a real positive change in their economy.

3. The Impact of Cyprus issue on the relations between Turkey and the Great Powers (USA and Russia):

3.1 Turkey and the USA

The United State of America was and is a superpower in the world and had a good relation with Turkey for decades. The USA is one of the states that backed Turkey in the issues that endangered Turkey's security. Moreover, Turkey opened her air space and borders for the USA during the Cold War with the USA and other wars that the USA held in the Middle East. On the other hand, Turkey is not the only country that is in alliance with the USA; Greece is, also, another country that is considered as a close ally to the USA. Therefore, the USA could not use her power against one of the two conflicting countries. The USA played the same role that the UN played in solving the Cyprus issue and any tension between Turkey and Greece. There are two reasons behind this US policy. Firstly, Both of Turkey and Greece are US allies. Secondly, the Americans are very much interested in the security of Israel; therefore, they do not want to make any enemy to Israel.

When the Great Britain gathered Greece and Turkey in several treaties, Treaty of Lausanne and London-Zurich agreements, the UK failed to end all the problems between the two countries. As a result, the UK was satisfied to leave the issues related to Greece and Turkey to the United States²⁸. After the Americans' involvement in the Greco-Turkish tensions, certain differences occurred between the policy that the UK utilized and the one that the US is interested in about Cyprus, though both states were much concerned in protecting the Israelis. The USA, from the very beginning of her running, did not only prevent risks to Israel, but also attempted to make both of Turkey and Greece have very strong relations including some military cooperations with Israel. Thus, the USA could take benefit from Cyprus dispute to provide security for Israel and to have stronger relations with Turkey as well.

The USA as a permanent member of the United Nations and the only polar in the world never helped the Greek Cypriots in terms of military. On the other hand, many US governments provided Turkey with well developed weapons. Cyprus question has not had direct effect on the Turkish-American relations, but from time to time when the tensions with Greece about Cyprus increased, the Americans tried to show their gratitude for Turkey. The United States of America was in need of Turkey in many years, like in the Cold War period (1960s), Oil Crisis (mid-1970s), first and second Gulf War (early 1990s). Moreover, Turkey was the first Muslim country who recognized the state of Israel. Therefore, the Americans wanted to at least persuade Turkey that they are independent for this issue so that Turkey will not become upset with the American peace operations and cooperate more with the US governments and Israel as well.

Turkey through military exercises with Israel showed the USA that Turkey is the only country in the area that has such relation with an unlikable state in the region which is Israel. By contrast, the Greek Cypriots with their risky and undesirable policies made the Americans

²⁸ William Mallinson and Bill Mallinson. I bid.

to be nearer to the TRNC and Turkey. In January 1997, the Greek Cypriots signed an agreement with Russia to buy Russian S-300 surface-to-air²⁹. This urged the US government to stand against the idea of military agreement with her ex-enemy. In that year the US president, Bill Clinton, raised Americans' deepest criticism against this agreement³⁰. This criticism coincided with the TRNC government's one. So, the Greek Cypriots bound TRNC, Turkey and the USA against herself. Therefore, it can be inferred that the Cyprus issue has indirectly strengthened the Turkish-American relations by putting these two countries in onside and the Greek Cypriots in the opposite side. The USA supported Turks more than Greeks because Turks generally supported US policies while Greeks from time to time elected Marxist party and signed agreements with the Socialist countries.

3.2 Turkey and the Russia

The relations between Turkey and Russia in terms of foreign affairs are unchanging. For centuries Turkey and Russia had tensions and conflicts with each other. During the Ottoman Empire, Russia could never have come to Cyprus even after the Bolshevik revolution by which Communism was at her peak and the Ottoman Empire was vice versa. Cyprus had a great place in the tensions between Russia and Turkey in the history of their relations. In 1878, the Ottomans left the administration of the island to the UK and in return the Great Britain would be defending the Empire territory against Russia. Thus, Cyprus became a key in which Turks used in order to prevent the threats of Russia.

The USSR and USA, during the Cold War period, were two superpowers in which each one was leading its own sphere of influence. Each wanted to expand their allies and defeat the other's allies. The USA played a negative role in the Iraq-Iran war because both countries were, in one way or another, USSR allies. On the other hand, the USSR attempted to do the same to the USA allies and especially NATO members. It can be inferred that USSR had some kind of wrath against Turkey due to Jupiter Missiles Crisis. Russians were not in favor of a settlement in the region. The USSR in many channels supported Greece. Moreover, the USSR was one of the states that had very close relations with the Greek Cypriots. The Greek Cypriots identified herself as the chosen place for "Russian off-shore market"³¹. During the deepest tensions between the USSR and the USA, the Greek Cypriots and the USSR signed a double-taxation treaty in 1982. According to this treaty the Soviet government controlled companies were free of tax for their investment on the island and in the territorial sea³².

The indestructible political and economic relation between the USSR and the Greek Cypriots was considered as a threat by Turkey. These relations have been increased to military supports after the collapse of the Soviet Union. When Turkey bought 120 Army Tactical Missile System from the USA in December 1995, the Greek Cypriots got a justification to increase the diplomatic relations with Russia to military ones³³. First, they tried

²⁹ Taylor & Francis Group, Lucy Dean. 2004. *The Middle East and North Africa*. Contributor Europa Publications, Routledge. p. 260.

³⁰ I bid.

³¹ Kratz S. Oliver. 1999. *Frontier emerging equity markets securities price behavior and valuation*. Springer Publication. p. 64.

³² I bid.

³³ Michális Stavrou Michael. 2012. *Resolving the Cyprus Conflict: Negotiating History*. Springer Publication. pp. 294-6.

to get more help from the USA by asking Clinton, the former President of USA, for guarantee that Turkey will not use it against them. Later, in January 1997, the Greek Cypriot administration decided to buy S-300 air-defense system from Russia as response to Turkish military reinforce³⁴. This brought a crisis to the territory and especially to the relations between Turkey and Russia. Moreover, Turkey and Israel made a military exercise against these missiles. Then, Turkey was about to get in a war with each one of Russia and Greece. Therefore, Cyprus issue has been a stick behind Russia's (former USSR) hand to use it against Turkey and Cyprus dispute affected Turkish-Russian relations in making more gaps between the two ex-neighboring states.

4. The Impact of Cyprus Issue on the relations between Turkey and its Neighboring countries

4.1 Turkey and Greece

Cyprus issue has very much affected Turkey's relations with Greece due to the population of the island which consists of two nations, Turkish and Greek Cypriots. The island was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in 1571³⁵. From that time Turks and Greeks lived in the island together. The island had and has great importance for both nations. If any one of the two could have control over the island then that nation would have more economic and political excellence in the region. Thus, the Turkish Cypriots wanted Partition (Taksim) while the Greek Cypriots wanted to unite the island with Greece (Enosis). These two absolutely different perspective towards the island built tensions and conflicts in Turkey's relations with Greece. The tensions went to its climax in 1974 when the Greek junta regime staged a military coup d'état aiming at annexing the island to Greece and in return Turkey intervened to protect the Turkish Cypriots. This coup threatened the relations between Turkey and Greece to the extent that Turkey and Greece were about to come into a direct war with each other. Therefore, tensions have many times occurred between Turkey and Greece, and the relations remained in this way until 1999 when Earthquakes shook two huge cities of the two countries.

Over the years, the scope of Turkish-Greek relations was defined by lack of dialogue between the two countries. Nonetheless, Turkey tried to solve this dispute through negotiations and international treaties given that Turkey knew that Turks are minority in the island. In 1923, in Lausanne Treaty, Turkey left the island's issue for the British colony³⁶. With this Treaty, the Greek Cypriots thought that this treaty is the beginning of unification to Greece³⁷. Therefore, for several times they suggested this idea to the British Empire to unify the island with Greece since they had been in war with the Ottoman Empire, an Islamic Empire, and they were Christians. Apart from the Treaty of Lausanne, there are several treaties and agreements, which involved Turkey and Greece, prior to the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus. The most significant ones are: Zurich and London Agreements that were signed in 19 February 1959, the Treaty of Establishment, the Treaty of Guarantee, and the Treaty of Alliance.

³⁴ I bid.

³⁵ John Wright. 2002. *The New York Times Almanac 2002*. Routledge. p. 554.

³⁶ Alan W. Ertl. 2008. *Toward an Understanding of Europe: A Political Economic Précis of Continental Integration*. Universal-Publishers. p. 418.

³⁷ Olivier Roy. 2005. *Turkey today: a European country?*. Anthem Press. p. 173.

After the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus, the issue still did not disappear due to the Greek Cypriots' insistence on the "Enosis" and Turkish Cypriots' "Taksim". These unsettlements had negatively affected the Greco-Turkish relations. From time to time, Turkey and Greece were to fight about the developments in Cyprus. For instance, in 1964 the TGNA, Turkish Parliament, decided to intervene in Cyprus³⁸ and this was regarded as a warning to Greece so that Greece would no more think of Enosis. Moreover, in 1974, in a response to the Greek coup, Turkey intervened in Cyprus. According to Turkey's perspective, the invasion was not baseless because according to the Treaty of Guarantee it was Turkey's right to defend the independence of the Republic of Cyprus. The Article II in the Treaty of Guarantee says that:

"Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom, taking note of the undertakings of the Republic of Cyprus set out in Article I of the present Treaty, recognize and guarantee the independence, territorial integrity and security of the Republic of Cyprus, and also the state of affairs established by the Basic Articles of its Constitution. Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom likewise undertake to prohibit, so far as concerns them, any activity aimed at promoting, directly or indirectly, either union of Cyprus with any other State or partition of the Island."³⁹

Turkey's fluctuating and almost bad relations with Greece affected Turkey's membership in the EU in which Turkey made a lot of effort so as to be member in the Union. On the other hand, one of the factors that helped Cyprus to be a member of the EU is the Greece membership⁴⁰. Since each one of Turkey and Greece supported a specific community and accused the other one of breaking international laws and agreements, the issue of Cyprus has enormously extended the bad relations between Turkey and Greece. Nevertheless, Greece had a great influence on Greek Cypriots to refuse the reunification of the Northern and Southern administrations of Cyprus. Through persuading other EU countries especially France and Germany, the Greece membership in the EU accelerated the Greek Cypriots accession in the EU.

The Greek attempts have indirectly antagonized Turkey because since the late 1980s and beginning of 1990s Greece transformed all of its arguments with Turkey about Cyprus to the EU. Thus, Greece tried to banish Turkey from the EU membership. Greece realized that if the TRNC is accepted with the Southern part in the EU then this will be a significant step for Turkey to be a member in the EU. Therefore, Greece tried to oppose the unification of the Northern and Southern parts of Cyprus. Moreover, even if Turkey's accession was taken seriously in the eighties of the twentieth century, Greece would have vetoed Turkey for the historical conflicts between these two countries. Therefore, Cyprus question has negatively affected Turkey's relations with Greece to the extent that sometimes the two countries were about to fight about the Cyprus issue.

³⁸ Umut Uzer. 2011. *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*. I. B. Tauris. pp. 138-140.

³⁹ Hurst Hannum. 1993. *Documents on autonomy and minority rights*. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers. p. 584.

⁴⁰ Wayne C. Thompson. 2015. *Western Europe*. Rowman & Littlefield. p. 313.

4.2 Turkey and Arab countries, Turkey and Israel:

The Arab-Israeli conflict has become strongly related to the Turkish-Greece conflicts about Cyprus. It appears that the policies that each one of Turkey and Arab countries used against each other during the Cold War is different from the one of the post-Cold War. During the Cold-War, although Turkey had a similarity in religion with the Arab countries, the Arab countries have supported Greece and the Greek Cypriots in many cases of Cyprus issue such as recognizing Turkish troops as occupier and no recognition to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. In return, Turkey recognized Israel as a sovereign state rather than occupier of the Palestinian lands. Nonetheless, after the Cold-War the Arab countries and Turkey realized that the systematic structure of the world politics became a unipolar system. Thus, they opened political and economic gates towards each other.

During the Cold-War, many of Arab countries' foreign affairs were oriented by the USSR, while Turkey was one of the allies of the West, the USA. Several issues were overlapped with Cyprus issue concerning the Arab states. The Hatay province chose Turkey in a referendum in 1938 and Syria did not recognize the choice and still claims that the province belongs to her. Moreover, one of the factors that made Arab countries support Greece was Turkey's relations with Israel. In 1949, Turkey recognized Israel and they had good relations with each other. Thus, Arabs looked at Turkey as their enemy and they begun to support Greece. Meanwhile, once Turks saw that the support of Arabs were crucial in the UN, Ankara began to form institutional (membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference) and bilateral relations with those countries from the late 1960s⁴¹. Arab countries continued to back Greece in the Cyprus conflict. Therefore, Turkey became unhappy with the politics of Arab countries for their political and economic supports to the Greeks⁴².

Cyprus question was one of the tests that Turkey could assess the friendship of the Arab countries and Israel as well⁴³. When the Greek junta regime staged the coup in the island and as a response Turkey intervened, the Arab countries backed Greece. Moreover, inside institutions like the UN they recognized Turkey's intervention as occupation. They likened the intervention to the Israel's occupation of Arab lands⁴⁴. On the other hand, Turkey expected the contrast since this intervention was to support legal rights of a Muslim minority of the island. Moreover, the Oil Crisis in the mid seventies might have played a big role in this process. In 1983, when the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was established, none of the Arab countries recognized this Muslim state. Thus, the Arab ignorance about the recognition of this state annoyed Ankara.

Arabs used to accuse Turkey of helping their enemy, Israel. In fact, Turkey had and has good political, military, and economic relations with Israel but Turks explain that these relations were not to defeat the Palestinians or to weaken Arab states. For example Turkey did not let the USA to use the Incirlik military base to support Israel and to attack Arab states in 1967 and 1973 wars⁴⁵. Moreover, Turkey took some relations between Arab states with Israel as an example of the blamelessness of Turkey's relations with Israel. In other words,

⁴¹ IBP, Inc. . 2015. *Turkey Recent Economic and Political Developments Yearbook*. Lulu.com. pp. 57-8.

⁴² Robert Freedman Owen. 1998. *The Middle East and the peace process: the impact of the Oslo Accords*. University Press of Florida. p.177.

⁴³ Idris Bal. 2004. *Turkish Foreign Policy in Post Cold War Era*. Universal-Publishers. pp. 107-8.

⁴⁴ Robert Owen Freedman. 1998. *The Middle East and the peace process: the impact of the Oslo Accords*. University Press of Florida. p.177.

⁴⁵ Nasuh Uslu. 2003. *The Turkish-American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance*. Nova Publishers. p.95.

Turkey tried to concentrate on her economic relations with the West and to get more support on Cyprus issue from her allies, USA, UK, and Israel rather than Arab countries. Furthermore, Turkey wanted to make Israel understand the fact that due to her recognition of Israel, the Arab countries do not recognize Cyprus so that Israel opens her political and economic gates to the TRNC. Nonetheless, Israel like Arab countries did not recognize the independence of the TRNC.

After the collapse of the USSR, the Iraqi attack to Kuwait and the beginning of Arab-Israeli negotiations Arab states changed their policies towards Cyprus dispute. Because Turkey played a good role in the negotiations between Arab states and Israel, Arab countries realized that Turkey can become a good mediator as well as neighbor to their borders. Moreover, the Turkish contractors participated in rebuilding Kuwait after the Gulf Wars. Therefore, it is obvious that Cyprus question was not a big issue between Arabs and Turks after the First Gulf War. Nonetheless, but Arab countries, in the past, used to support Greece as a key to rankle Turkey since Turkey had a good economic, political and even military relations with Israel. Meanwhile, it appears that the Arab countries have not totally changed their pro-Greek Cypriot attitudes but they are not either as anti-Turkish as they used to be⁴⁶, due to the change of Turkish foreign policy back up to the Palestinians and the initiations that Turkey offered to them.

It can be said that Cyprus issue has positively affected Turkish relations with Israel. In terms of military, in the mid 1990s, Turkish-Israeli exercises, the two states that are supported by the USA, were conducted in the Middle-East⁴⁷. In 1996, the two countries signed a defense cooperation treaty. These good relations built a bridge between two countries to cooperate more and more. As a result, Turkish former Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz visited Israel in September 1998⁴⁸. The military cooperations between Turkey and Israel were a message to both of Greece and the Greek Cypriots that Turkey appears to have many allies in the area. On the other hand, Greece and Greek Cypriots increased their relations with Russia and some of Arab countries. The Greek Cypriots bought some of missiles of S-300 to resist against the air attacks. These missiles angered Turkey and Israel; thus, they conducted a military exercise against the Russian missiles. All in all, it is obvious that Cyprus issue had a constructive influence on Turkish-Israeli relations.

5. Conclusion

For centuries, Cyprus was an island that different nations inhabited in, especially the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Both nations do not like each other due to a history of violence and each nation holds a different religion. The Greeks are Christian while the Turkish Cypriots are mostly Muslims. This island was administrated by different empires, kingdoms, and republics. The island was dominated by the Latin Empire until the Ottoman Empire came to the island. Later on, with an agreement, the Ottoman Empire handed the island's administration to the Great Britain. Nonetheless, uprisings and revolutions against Turkish Ottomans and the UK were held by the Greek Cypriots. These revolts led to chaos in the island between Greeks, Turks and the English Administration.

⁴⁶ Idris Bal. I bid. p.127.

⁴⁷ Andrew Borowiec. 2000. *Cyprus: a troubled island*. Greenwood Publishing Group. p.119.

⁴⁸ I bid.

Many agreements and accords have been signed to solve this issue but they were more temporary than a permanent solution. The most important agreements and treaties are the Treaty of Lausanne and the Zürich and London agreements between Turkey, Greece and the UK that led to the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus. In the Lausanne Treaty, Turkey and Greece recognized the British sovereignty on the island. In 1959, the Guarantors (Great Britain, Turkey, and Greece) signed the London Accord, according to this accord the Guarantors agreed to defend the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Cyprus. From the very beginning of 1950s the Greek Cypriots tried to annex the island with Greece by establishing illegal organizations such as EOKA even though the president was a Greek Cypriot. Chaos and violence started to flame out in 1964, when president Makarios proposed 13 unamendable provinces. From that time, the UN took actions to reduce the violences.

After the establishment of the European Union, most of the European countries tended to be members in that union. The Republic Of Turkey had and has this tendency due to economic and political advantages of this supra governmental organization. On the other hand, the Union has always tried to delay and refuse Turkey through different obstacles. Before the entrance of the Cyprus issue into the negotiations, the EU claimed that Turkey was not a developed country; therefore, the Union stated out that it was not time for Turkey to be a member in the EU.

Indeed, the Turkey membership has lots of advantages for Turkey as well as the EU countries. Since Turkey is a big country in terms of population and land. Turkey's population is about 77 million people then this large population can affect the evolution of the EU economy for Turkey owns a young population and this generation is not drug addicted like some European young people. This young generation is very useful to be labor force. Moreover, Turkey is a country that has a very large and fertile land that equals the land of last accepted ten countries in the EU. Meanwhile, Cyprus issue has negatively affected Turkey-EU negotiations. Since Turkey accepts the acceptance of Greek Cypriots into the EU, then Turkey will lose its membership in the EU for the sake of TRNC integration with Greek Cypriots.

United Nations as a powerful international organization succeeded in its duties in maintaining peace and being confident between the two communities. Nonetheless, this entity could not unite the two parts of the island, neither by the resolutions that were adopted by the UN Security Council nor by the UN Secretary General (Kofi Annan)'s plan. There are many reasons for this division. One of them is the out side courage for the Greek Cypriots to refuse any idea which leads to the ununification of the island. Cyprus affected Turkey's reputation in the UN. Moreover, it appears that some of the permanent members of the Security Council like the USA and Russia have had influence in the way that the UN has seen its missions in solving the Cyprus issue.

The Cyprus question sometimes was used a tool by some powerful countries to gain more priority from Turkey. For instance, USA and Russia tried to have Turkey as an ally so as to have more influence in the region. Though the USA is a permanent supporter for Turkey but sometimes the USA did not want to clearly back Turkey due to the existence of another American ally, Greece which is a NATO member. Americans are much interested in the security of Israel that is why they do not want to back one side against the other one. It is taken for granted that in the final analysis the USA understands the importance of Ankara in the territorial integrations in the Middle East. That is why when Obama came to Turkey identified the Greek Cypriots' leader and the Turkish one as "both leaders".

Turkey is not happy when Russia has been supporting the Greek Cypriots in the United Nations Security Council. The main goal of Russia was and is still to drive a wedge between Turkey and Greece within NATO, and therefore to weaken NATO in the Eastern Mediterranean region. Russia appears to think that it can use Cyprus as leverage in its relations with the USA and Turkey. Russians sold the S-300 Surface to Air Missiles to the Greek Cypriots in 1997 and this caused a serious crisis between Turkey and Greece. Turkey warned the Greek Cypriots that if the missiles were deployed, Turkey would strike them. Thus, the Cyprus issue has negatively affected Turkey's relations with Russia to the extent that it brought tensions into their relations.

Unlike any other country, Greece clearly and in front of the international community ignored some treaties and agreements concerning Cyprus issue. Cyprus issue is not the only island that was troubling; the Aegean islands are also in the context of the problems. Turkey tried to solve these issues within the context of Treaty of Lausanne. Turkey knew that these islands have historical and geographical links to Greece. On the other hand, Greece attempted to solve the issue by referendums and historical documents in the international organizations. For decades, lack of negotiation and violations to the agreements from the both countries has been increased. The Cyprus dispute has also increased the tensions from political arguments to, sometimes, military operations and they were about to come to in wars in 1974, 1989, and 1997-8.

The Cyprus issue and Turkish-Greco tension affected Turkey's relations with Arab countries. Turkey is the first Muslim country that recognized Israel and the good relations with Israel made Arabs to have bad perspectives towards Ankara. Apart from strong economic exchanges between Turkey and Arab states, Turkey was not apart of the Arab-Israeli conflicts and for several times rejected to help Israel in her war against Arab states and vice versa. Nevertheless, Arabs became thankful to the attempts that Turkey has taken to solve their conflicts in the beginning of the twenty first century. From the very beginning of the Cyprus dispute, none of the Arab countries recognize the TRNC and they had good relations with Greece. Therefore, Cyprus conflict could influence the Arab-Turkish relations since Cyprus showed Turkey that Arabs do not back Turkey in her conflicts with the Greek Cypriots and Greeks since Turkey was the first Muslim country that started relations with Israel, Arab countries' enemy.

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