

## **Working Session 14**

**September 19, 2018.**

### **Greek Cypriot refugees and internally displaced persons**

**By Uzay Bulut**

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

My name's Uzay Bulut, a writer for the Gatestone Institute, an international policy council.

I recommend that every time the issue of refugees or internally displaced people is discussed, the Greek Cypriot refugees who have lost their homes and lands due to the Turkish occupation should be remembered and the OSCE should enhance its efforts of liberating the Turkish-occupied northern part of the island and help the Greek Cypriot victims return to their lands and retrieve their stolen property.

The Turkish government systematically continues to disregard OSCE's dedication to refugee rights and international law by violating the rights and freedoms of Greek Cypriot refugees and internally displaced persons. Around 200,000 Greek Cypriots became refugees in their own homeland when the Turkish military launched two brutal invasions against Cyprus in the summer of 1974, which resulted in the massive colonization of the northern part of the island.

As a result of the invasion, Turkish forces seized and ethnically cleansed 37 percent of the island in a brutal, aggressive campaign. They terrorized Greek Cypriots living there who were forced to flee for the southern, free part of the island. These 200,000 people constituted almost 90 percent of the north's pre-invasion population and one-third of the entire population of the country. The north

also constituted 70 percent of Cyprus' economy. As a percentage of the country's total population, 200,000 Cypriot refugees corresponds to 110,000,000 Americans.

Turkey has thus forcibly changed the demographic structure of the northern part of the island, which always had a Greek majority until the 1974 invasion. The lands and properties of Greek Cypriots were seized either by the illegal settlers from Turkey or the Turkish Cypriots on the island. The illegal construction on Greek Cypriot land and the sale of property owned by Greek Cypriots, who were forcibly expelled from their homes after the Turkish invasion, are ongoing. By continuing to illegally occupy one-third of Cyprus, Turkey refuses to conform to relevant OSCE commitments and UN resolutions.

Thank you.

More about the Turkish occupation of Cyprus, please read:

“The Ethnic Cleansing of Northern Cyprus - Confessions of a Turkish-Cypriot Mass Murderer” by Uzey Bulut, Gatestone Institute, June 6, 2018:

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/12463/cyprus-ethnic-cleansing>

“Turkey's ‘Peace Operations’,” by Uzey Bulut, Gatestone Institute, February 15, 2018: <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/11870/turkey-peace-operations>