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**Embargoed! Speech to the OSCE members
Victoria Sofitel Hotel, Warsaw
Monday 5th October 2009**

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Embargoed! is again extremely honoured and privileged to address this very important gathering of OSCE members and respected fellow NGOs.

Embargoed! is a multi-ethnic human rights group based in London campaigning to bring an end to the unjust international isolation faced by Turkish Cypriots living in North Cyprus.

Since we were last here 12 months ago, Cyprus has regularly been in the spotlight – particularly in recent months as the political talks between Mehmet Ali Talat and Demetris Christofias are approaching some form of conclusion.

Embargoed! addresses the HDIM meeting today to highlight that since the violent usurpation in 1963 of the Turkish Cypriot rights enshrined within the 1960 Republic of Cyprus Constitution, Turkish Cypriots continue to endure intolerance and discrimination in their own homeland.

This situation - akin to South Africa's Apartheid - is glaringly clear and real to witness. People living, working or studying in North Cyprus are cut off from the rest of the world. They are unable:

- To trade freely;
- To have their democratically elected leaders participate in political forums, even in an observational capacity at the European Parliament;
- To participate in sporting, social and cultural events;
- To travel and communicate directly with the rest of the world.

Following their brave "yes" vote for the 2004 Annan Plan, many countries, some representatives of which are seated around this table today, promised Turkish Cypriots their international isolation would end. It is regrettable to note that five years on, not a single one of these embargoes have been lifted or eased.

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Intolerance and discrimination is not a problem exclusively faced by Turkish Cypriots. However, seldom has the world turned a completely blind eye to the attempted legitimisation of embargoes, intolerance and discrimination against an entire people. We all thought that we had seen the end of Apartheid when Nelson Mandela was freed in February 1990, and the Apartheid laws were repealed by President Botha in 1992. Unfortunately Apartheid is alive and well in Cyprus, a member state of the European Union.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are here to speak candidly. The EU and other international States continue to ignore the ongoing discrimination and intolerance practiced by the Republic of Cyprus practices against Turkish Cypriots. By allowing this to go unchecked the perpetual violation of Turkish Cypriots' basic Human Rights continues.

Contrary to the xenophobic banners displayed in 5 different languages at the Champions League match last week between Apoel Nicosia and Chelsea 'CYPRUS IS NOT GREEK.' Apologies for my pronunciations but if Greek Cypriots want to reconcile with the North, should the sign not have read 'Cyprus for us all'?

- OR in French: 'Chypre pour nous tous'
- OR in German: ' Zypern für uns alles'
- OR in Spanish: 'Chipre para todos nosotros'
- OR in Greek: 'Κύπρος για μας όλοι'
- OR in Russian: 'Кипр для нас всех'
- OR in Turkish: 'Kibris herkes için'

The OSCE should address the constant diplomatic bullying - some would call it diplomatic terrorism - that the Greek Cypriot authorities employ to undermine Turkish Cypriot rights. While Embargoed! could cite many examples, for the sake of brevity we have chosen to list only four:

First, a conference in March 2009 to be held in Kyrenia, North Cyprus on the efforts to rebuild the Iraqi transport infrastructure was cancelled at the last minute after relentless lobbying by both Greek and Greek Cypriot authorities.

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Second, Italian tour operators were bombarded by approximately 9,000 letters protesting their promoting North Cyprus as a holiday destination. These letters were backed by Greek Cypriot authorities lobbying their Italian counterparts.

Third, earlier this summer, the Greek Cyprus Ports Authority threatened Holland America Lines (HAL), a subsidiary of Carnival Corporation – the largest cruise operator in the world – by insisting it change its plans and remove Famagusta as one of its ports of call for its 2010 European cruise season. They falsely claimed that the port was barred to international vessels as it is in North Cyprus. Yet in January 2008 EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn confirmed this was not the case and vessels could use Famagusta.

Finally, the Greek Cypriot authorities' failure during Cyprus' accession process to list Turkish as an official EU language, despite Turkish being an official language of the Republic of Cyprus, as enshrined in the country's Constitution.

These actions and many, many more are a clear indication of the Greek Cypriot administration's ongoing intention to erase the Turkish Cypriot identity. Sadly, for Turkish Cypriots enduring racism and intolerance both inside and outside Cyprus is the norm.

Embargoed! calls upon the HDIM to make the xenophobia and discrimination issues highlighted in this submission a serious focus of its future activities.

I thank you all for listening.