



End discrimination against North Cypriots



HDIM.NGO/0164/11
28 September 2011

Fulfilling the EU's Commitment to Turkish Cypriots

www.embargoed.org





End discrimination against North Cypriots



About Embargoed!

- Formed in September 2004, launched on 4th March 2005
- Our principal aim is to bring **an immediate and unconditional end to the international isolation of North Cyprus**, and the full restoration of political, economic and social rights of the Turkish Cypriot people
- We are a membership based, volunteer managed apolitical group
- We do not prescribe to a particular political solution in Cyprus – that is for the two sides to decide
 - However, any solution must ensure that both the Greek and Turkish Cypriots are treated equally & can enjoy the same fundamental rights





End discrimination against North Cypriots



A few of our previous campaigns

We use peaceful methods & actions to highlight the unjust embargoes & to bring about their end. These include:

- **World Promises Report** (2005) – contains all the promises from world leaders & international bodies such as the EU to end Turkish Cypriot isolation following their 2004 vote in favour of a united Cyprus
- **Gagged in London & Brussels** (2005) – honing in on the lack of political rights/representation & the EU's failed promises to Turkish Cypriots
- **Transport for London Ruling** (2005) – lobbying & supporting the case to overturn TfL's North Cyprus ad ban
- **Balls to Embargoes** (2005-6) – to highlight the 50 year ban on international football
- **Rotting Lemons** (2005) – created by patron Hussein Chalayan MBE & shown at his Paris Fashion Show to highlight the impact of the ban on direct trade
- **Drop the Bloody Map** (2006-7) – we successfully lobbied the National Federation of Cypriots & others to stop using this offensive, hate-filled symbol
- **Go Slow Convoys** in London (2005 & 2008) about the EU's forgotten citizens
- **Operation Pabuc** (2009) – when UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband is given a 2nd hand^d slipped wrapped in a letter from his predecessor Jack Straw to reflect the worthless promises on ending the embargoes





End discrimination against North Cypriots



Past Campaigns



www.embargoed.org



End discrimination against North Cypriots



Efforts to Reconcile Cypriots

We have increasingly sought to help reconcile Greek & Turkish Cypriots, challenging the bigotry and mistrust that exists so we can all live together with respect & dignity:

1. Standing up to Racism – Greek Cypriots have a right to protest but not to incite racial hatred

- Police complaints on iGreek petition – 1/3 of all signatures on a 10,000 strong petition to Arsenal demanding a ban of Mete Ahmed's TRNC flag made racist remarks
- UEFA complaint against APOEL Nicosia FC's racist leaflets & xenophobic pitch-side banners
- Embargoed! seminar to tackle racism on both sides of the border

2. Remembering the Past for a Better Future – both sides have suffered, yet continued efforts to airbrush out atrocities against Turkish Cypriots

- 'Bloody Christmas Vigil' outside the Cyprus High Commission in December 2010
- Embargoed! screened The Elders film about Missing Persons in London followed by a discussion about what needs to be done to reconcile Cypriots

3. Property – a complex issue affecting both sides

- Two seminars on legal developments & their impact on Cypriots & new buy of property in Cyprus.





End discrimination against North Cypriots

You cannot solve Cyprus on a lie or through hate



EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME





End discrimination against North Cypriots



EU and Turkish Cypriots – the downside

- **All of Cyprus was admitted into the EU in 2004, yet**
 - It's admittance as a divided island broke EU rules, and
 - The Turkish Cypriots – founding & equal partners in the Republic of Cyprus – did not give their formal consent
- **The EU only recognises the Greek Cypriot Government**
 - Turkish Cypriots have their own democratically elected officials, but do not even have Observer Status at the EU Parliament
- **The EU discriminates against its own citizens**
 - The '*acquis communautaire*' & full EU benefits only apply to people in South Cyprus
 - The EU essentially maintains apartheid in Cyprus, even though Turkish Cypriots voted for a united island
 - Conditions push Turkish Cypriots further towards Turkey for political & economic aid
- **The EU is not an honest broker in Cyprus**
 - Greek Cypriots have more unfair leverage over Turkish Cypriots, using their EU membership to veto EU promises on direct trade & place other obstacles in their way





End discrimination against North Cypriots



EU and Turkish Cypriots – the upside

- **Ongoing spotlight on Cyprus**

- Having admitted a divided island, the EU is now obliged to act to resolve this decades old conflict

- **Financial Aid**

- €259m invested in essential infrastructure such as roads, water & sewage works, refuse treatment, & rural development, as well as aid for education, border crossing points (e.g. Yesilirmak-Limnitis), de-mining & missing persons, with additional funding of €28.5m & €25m for 2011 and 2012 respectively

- **Harmonisation with EU Laws**

- Turkish Cypriots have the EU Co-ordination Office with a dedicated team seeking to bring laws in North Cyprus in line with the EU
 - EU citizens can arrive at Ercan airport & cross into the South without obstruction

- **Trade between Greek & Turkish Cypriots**

- While the Green Line Regulation is no substitute for direct trade for Turkish Cypriots, its existence has encouraged more trade between the two sides





End discrimination against North Cypriots



Current Issues & Opportunities 1

- **Green Line Regulation - where there's a will...**

- *Trade grows slowly between the two sides*

- €5.5 million annual trade with South Cyprus is 1/10 of total trade. Yet EU should be biggest trading zone for TCs
 - TC exports for first 5 months of 2011 was €2.5m – nowhere near enough to impact on the North Cyprus economy
 - Zero trade in many key sectors such as food & drink due to GLR rules/obstacles
 - Second seed potatoes & olive oil can now be sold into the South, boosting trade. The seeds are vetted by TCs' Agriculture Department & inspected by EU experts – why is this not possible in other food areas?

- *Efforts made to increase trade across the Green Line continue to hit new & silly obstacles*

- For example TC commercial vehicles are frequently prevented from crossing into the South on grounds they are 'not road worthy'. When these are overcome, then the South's commercial vehicle drivers refuse to allow them to cross, we assume for fear of competition
 - Also, Turkish Cypriot goods & services cannot be advertised in Greek Cypriot media, while their products are rarely seen on shelves in South Cyprus – those stocking/buying 'Turkish' goods are branded 'traitors'

- *The EU needs to help break down these psychological & political barriers in the South, or else how can unification be realised?*





End discrimination against North Cypriots



Current Issues & Opportunities 2



- **Direct trade will bring economic convergence & overcome polarisation**

- Trading with Turkish Cypriots (TCs) should not be politicised. The Green Line Regulation was intended as a temporary measure & as illustrated above, it is failing to make major inroads. Direct trade is an essential part of the EU's commitment to help the TC economy improve & create the right conditions for convergence with the South
- Decades of handouts from Turkey have not helped Turkish Cypriots, neither will aid from the EU; it merely encourages a culture of dependence instead of creating a strong sustainable economy
- Operating under free market conditions will allow Turkish Cypriots to improve their competitiveness & economy, thereby smoothing the way for unification of the island without Greek Cypriots fearing they must bear the burden of propping up & restructuring the weaker North Cyprus economy



Current Issues & Opportunities 3

• Political Landscape

– *Democracy & human rights*

- From the Arab Spring, to Kosovans & Palestinians pushing for statehood, TCs inspired to demand their human & political rights
- Negotiations cannot be used to deny TC rights indefinitely

– *Politically, sides drifting apart*

- Christofias failed Talat twice, climate now very different with Eroglu
- Erdogan-Eroglu comments on 20th July about conflict e.g. territory
- Oil-gas drilling by South Cyprus

– *Cyprus takes over EU Presidency in 2012*

- July next year could be a new watershed in Cyprus politics

• EU needs to be bolder on Cyprus

– *EU must stop hiding behind its issues with Turkey & address the root causes of the conflict in Cyprus & its fallout*

– *If EU nations can overcome WWII, Cypriots can overcome 1963/1974*





End discrimination against North Cypriots



Ways Forward

• **High Level Contact Group**

– Play a more pro-active role by championing TC rights; many TC feel their issues are ignored & we see little evidence of this group challenging the EU over the obstacles placed before TCs

• **Love Cyprus Hate Racism**

– The politics of peace must dominate over the language & mindset of conflict. The EU should initiate a comprehensive campaign to tackle historical untruths & racism on both sides of the island, in particular the hatred of Turks regularly witnessed in schools, sport & by the Church. These create strong psychologically barriers that, for example, prevent the sale of goods from North Cyprus & hampers efforts for Cypriots to live together peacefully. Politicians, the media, schools & religious leaders all have important roles to play, while EU race hate & discrimination laws must be enforced

• **Trade not Aid!**

– Follow up the European Commission's Direct Trade proposal of July 2004 to allow North Cyprus originated products within the EU without preconditions. The proposed DTR would provide a preferential trade arrangement until unification, enabling free entry & circulation of North Cyprus origin goods within the EU

– Apply procedures used for GLR fish & potatoes to husbandry & dairy sectors

– Give greater support to TC SMEs so they become more robust & competitive

– Enable more KEVE & KTTO trade initiatives e.g. bi-communal business director.





End discrimination against North Cypriots



Contact Us

- Emel Djevdet, Chairperson, Embargoed!
 - E: emel@embargoed.org
 - T: +44 (0)7806 932 966
 - A: Embargoed! , PO Box 100, Morden, Surrey, SM4 9DH, UK

www.embargoed.org

