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Republic of Cyprus
Reply delivered during working session 7,
Tolerance and Non-discrimination I
6 October 2010

Thank you Mr. Moderator,

I would like to respond to comments made earlier in this session.

No sanctions or embargoes have ever been imposed on the Turkish Cypriot community, either by the United Nations Security Council, by the Government of Cyprus or by any other State. The lack of sufficient economic development of this community was the result of the invasion, occupation and constant attempt by the occupying power to set up an illegal separatist regime in occupied Cypriot territory, an attempt that has been condemned by the UN Security Council.

The myth of the "isolation" of the Turkish Cypriot community has been in recent years the main channel of efforts to partition Cyprus through the establishment of a separate state in the area of Cyprus that has been occupied since 1974. This of course would violate the fundamental rule of the modern legal order that forbids the establishment of purported "states" that are the fruit of aggression.

The Government of Cyprus is committed to addressing the self-inflicted economic underdevelopment of the Turkish Cypriot community, notwithstanding the continuing occupation and its consequences or the fact that most Turkish Cypriots reside in the occupied area of Cyprus. It has thus implemented a plethora of measures¹ that fully comply with international

¹Specifically, since 2004:

1. The Republic of Cyprus consented to the release of a 259 million Euro grant (EU Regulation 389/2006) for the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community. This grant had originally been destined to aid the seamless re-unification of Cyprus and would have been released only when a settlement was reached. At present, 99% of these funds have been allocated to 880 separate contracts.

2. EU Regulation 866/2004 - the "Green Line Regulation" - has provided the necessary legal framework for inter-communal trade and Turkish Cypriot

norms as well as EU and Cyprus law, which have proven very effective. Hundreds of millions of Euros have been injected into the Turkish Cypriot economy in recent years and Turkish Cypriots now enjoy an annual per capita income of 18,000 USD.

Turkish Cypriots are citizens of the Republic of Cyprus and enjoy equal access to all the benefits available to all other Cypriot and EU citizens. They are entitled to freely travel abroad and to acquire Cyprus passports, something the great majority of Turkish Cypriots have availed themselves of. They are able to freely engage in trade through the lawful ports and airports of the Republic. They have a standing invitation to participate in Cyprus national sports teams, which they have thus far refused. There is no discriminatory practice vis-à-vis any group of Cypriot citizens; should any segment of the population feel that they are denied any rights, they can have recourse to independent courts.

The single factor that would most help enhance the living standards of all Cypriots would be a genuine effort to reunify Cyprus and its economy and abandon pretexts to politically upgrade a regime established through the illegal use of force.

I shall now turn to the allegations of Greek-Cypriot nationalism and of racism and xenophobia against Turkish Cypriots. Greek Cypriots do not confuse Turkish Cypriots with the regime that invaded Cyprus and do not hold their Turkish Cypriot compatriots responsible for this act of aggression. The alienation of the two communities imposed by their forced segregation after the invasion will be reversed through the re-unification of the island and its people. In fact, since the easing of movement restrictions across the ceasefire line in 2003, millions of crossings have been recorded without any incident. Thousands of Turkish Cypriots cross daily to the Government-controlled areas, where they are employed, also without any incident.

trade with EU and third States through legitimate ports of the Republic. A proposal by the Cyprus Government to further increase the trading capacity of the Turkish Cypriot community by re-opening the port of Famagusta following the return of the fenced and derelict city of Famagusta to its lawful inhabitants, as demanded by UNSCR 550, continues to be rejected by the party that stands to benefit from this.

3. The Cyprus Government has allocated 169 million Euro through several packages aimed particularly at providing social benefits. These include benefits in the field of health, social security, education, various social benefits, restoration of Muslim places of worship, agriculture and energy.

The Republic of Cyprus takes very seriously the respect of all the human rights of all its citizens. We urge that all allegations of discrimination and/or human rights violations be reported to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution. Unfortunately, the Cyprus Government continues to be unable to ensure respect for the rights of its citizens in its occupied territory where the occupying power exercises effective control (see relevant ECHR judgments).

Concerning the incidents mentioned here today, I wish to note that the first was in fact an indiscriminate attack by football hooligans that is the subject of an ongoing police investigation. Secondly, incitement of ethnic hatred over social networking sites on the internet is directed against many groups and my Government supports that countermeasures be elaborated globally and that cyber crime legislation be made more comprehensive. We also encourage reporting any hate propaganda through the mechanisms provided by the social networks themselves. Slogans that may appear on such sites reflect personal views and not broader social attitudes or Government policy. Thirdly, concerning the extensive destruction of Cypriot cultural and religious heritage in occupied Cyprus, everyone is welcome to witness first hand the pillaged and desecrated churches in the occupied area and the restored, well-maintained and functioning Muslim places of worship in the Government-controlled area.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.