

LIBERATE CYPRUS



FREE WEST ASIA & NORTH AFRICA
END IMPERIALISM

Liberate Cyprus: Free West Asia & North Africa, End Imperialism

Union of Cypriots - Ένωσις Κυπρίων - Kıbrıslılar Birliđi

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WHY CYPRUS MATTERS

In a debate in the United Kingdom Parliament on Cyprus held on 28 July 1954, the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, **Henry Hopkinson**, stated repeatedly that the question of independence did not arise in the case of Cyprus. He explained that "nothing less than continued sovereignty over this island can enable Britain to carry out her strategic obligations to Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East."

The island Hopkinson referred to is also known as the "**unsinkable aircraft carrier**" by colonialists. It is located just 45 miles from Turkey, 65 miles from Syria, 125 miles from Palestine, and 230 miles from Egypt. Despite being a member state of the European Union and occupied by NATO today, Cyprus was one of the founding members of the **Non-Aligned Movement** after gaining independence in 1960. It stood with nations fighting for liberation in the era of anti-colonial struggles.

Like many other places around the world, Cyprus has a complex and painful history shaped by colonialism and imperialism. However, what sets this island apart is the uninterrupted foreign military occupations it has endured for centuries, because of its geopolitical and strategic importance.

Today, less than 60 percent of the island is controlled by the legitimate government of Cyprus. The rest is occupied by Turkey since 1974 after a **NATO-planned operation**, by the United Kingdom as its major military base in the region, and by the United Nations' demilitarized buffer zone that was established after foreign-backed ethnicist paramilitary activities on the island.

In his historic speech at the General Assembly of the United Nations held on 11 December 1964, **Che Guevara** spoke about some of these activities, saying "**peaceful coexistence has also been brutally put to the test in Cyprus, due to pressures from the Turkish Government and NATO.**"

However, mainstream political actors continue to present what is happening in Cyprus merely as a "division" between Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking Cypriots, instead of an imperialist occupation. The creation of this false perception began with the **divide-and-rule** strategy of the British and continued with their systematic war against the anti-imperialist and progressive movement of Cypriot nationalism, or Cypriotism, from the 1930s. Today, the war against people who fight for a free Cyprus without separation or segregation continues by imperialists and their "bicomunal bizonal federationist" and "two-statist" fronts on the island.

In just a few decades, this small land has witnessed colonialism, liberation struggles, independence, coup d'état, occupation, forced displacements, settler colonialism, crimes against humanity, and apartheidist "solution" proposals dictated by imperialists. The intense efforts to distract the international community from what is happening on this island show that the "Cyprus issue" is not an issue of Cypriots. Because when we talk about the liberation of Cyprus, we are actually talking about the freedom of all **West Asia and North Africa**, as well as cutting off the windpipe of imperialism in the whole region.



Some of the bases in Cyprus that are used by the NATO countries

- Akrotiri military base 
- Dhekelia military base 
- Turkish Force in Cyprus 
- Gecitkale air base 
- Bogaz naval base 
- Greek Force in Cyprus 
- Evangelos Florakis naval base 
- Andreas Papandreou air base 



STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AND HISTORY OF CYPRUS

"Aircraft carriers are the most effective tool to project power," states an article published by the U.S. Navy on the 100th anniversary of the first American-built aircraft carrier. However, today, there is something even more effective than these man-made platforms - unsinkable aircraft carriers, such as geostrategic islands that extend the power projection.

Situated at the junction of three continents - Europe, Asia, and Africa - the island of Cyprus has historically been ruled by various foreign powers, including Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Romans, Arabs, Knights Templar, Lusignans, Venetians, Ottomans, and British, all with the goal of dominating the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

The historical period that affects the island today began with the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus from the Venetians in 1571. As in many other places they conquered, the Ottomans aimed to create a "loyal minority" in Cyprus. The Orthodox population, which was oppressed under the Catholic Venetian rule, was granted privileges by the Ottomans, while the Catholic population was forced to convert to Islam. This, along with additional taxes imposed on non-Muslims, created the crypto-Christian community of Linobambaki, the biggest sociocultural element of today's ultra-secular Turkish-speaking Cypriots.

The **first significant Cypriot national liberation movement** occurred in 1833 with the rise of national consciousness after the **French Revolution**. The largest independence struggle against the Ottoman Empire was led by a Turkish-speaking

Cypriot, Ibrahim Agha of Polis, also known as Gavur Imam, who united the Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking Cypriots, mostly peasants, in order to liberate Cyprus. Although the Cypriots put up a heroic fight, the Ottomans won the war with the help of the Orthodox Church. The **Gavur Imam Revolt** has been considered an important part of history for Marxists and revolutionaries because it was a movement of peasants and the oppressed against colonialism and its lackeys.

During its decline, the Ottoman Empire leased Cyprus to Great Britain under the Cyprus Convention in **1878**. Cyprus was particularly important to Britain at that time because of its strategic location for controlling the **Suez Canal**. After the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers in the First World War, the British Empire formally annexed Cyprus in **1914**. Unlike the Ottomans, who did not use ethnic terminology to divide Cypriots in censuses and administrative purposes, the British implemented a divide-and-rule policy among Cypriots, to counter the rise of **Cypriot nationalism**. During this time, while Orthodox Christians were considered Greeks, all Muslims were categorized as Turks - a term introduced to Cypriot society for the first time. The British also brought teachers from Greece and newly-established Turkey to promote ethnicist ideas among Cypriots, such as **Enosis** (annexation of Cyprus to Greece) and **Taksim** (partition of Cyprus).

Having been impacted by the **Great Depression of 1929**, groups among the Greek-speaking Cypriots revolted in 1931

with the motive of Enosis. The later-banned Communist Party of Cyprus participated in this revolt with the demand for autonomy, opposing the Enosis which they deemed "counter-revolutionary." Subsequently, in 1933, the United Kingdom appointed **Richmond Palmer**, leading to a period of autocratic British colonial rule known as "Palmerocracy." On 23 October 1936, the British colonial governor, Richmond Palmer, wrote in his report to London:

"In order to have ease in the future on the island, we have to continue the administration on the basis of *exceptis excipiendis* (opening the way to exceptions), on the basis of districts. Thus the concept of Cypriot nationalism - which will be emerging as a new concept after Enosis becomes an eroded value- should be pushed away as much as possible and left in the dark."

Despite the unity of the Cypriots, as seen in the **1948 miners' strike**, the divide-and-rule tactics employed by the British resulted in a different outcome for Cyprus compared to other anti-colonial struggles. Unlike in other parts of the world, the major armed struggle in Cyprus during the 1950s did not aim for independence but for Enosis. In 1952, NATO accepted Turkey and Greece into the alliance as a result of the **Truman Doctrine** and the crises between Turkey and the Soviet Union over the Turkish Straits, which connect the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. With this first NATO expansion, the United States ensured the safety of its **Sixth Fleet** in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. In **1955**, the **EOKA** organization initiated an armed struggle against the British for Enosis. This was also

the year that Archbishop Makarios, the future President of Cyprus, attended the anti-colonial Bandung Conference. As the armed struggle of EOKA, composed mainly of Greek-speaking Cypriots, continued, the British colonial administration hired Turkish-speaking Cypriots for its police force to create tension within the Cypriot society. Meanwhile, the British also helped establish TMT, a paramilitary organization composed of Turkish-speaking Cypriots, to oppress the Turkish-speaking Cypriots who fought for independence. During this period, TMT was responsible for assassinating progressives and socialists, including Fazıl Önder, the owner and editor of *İnkılâpçı* (Revolutionary) newspaper.

By the late 1950s, the British were unable to suppress the armed struggle, so they wanted to find a solution that would not destabilize NATO. Therefore, Greece and Turkey were included in the London and Zurich Agreements that made Cyprus a unitary and **consociational** republic, with power-sharing between Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking Cypriots. Also, the United Kingdom retained control of two areas in Cyprus and was granted the right to intervene militarily on the island, alongside Greece and Turkey.

The **Republic of Cyprus** was established on 16 August 1960, with Greek-speaking Cypriot Archbishop Makarios serving as the President and Turkish-speaking Cypriot Fazıl Küçük as the Vice-President. The new leaders of the republic chose the designs by İsmet Güney, a Turkish-speaking Cypriot artist, as the **national flag** and **coat of arms of Cyprus** to symbolize Cypriot unity.

One year later, the Republic of Cyprus became a founding member of the **Non-Aligned Movement**. The respect that Makarios had in the anti-imperialist world earned him the nickname the "Castro of the Mediterranean" by American politicians.

In **1963**, Makarios wanted to unilaterally change the consociational constitution, but this was opposed by the Turkish-speaking Cypriot leadership who subsequently left the government. The government of Turkey that was under the left-leaning military movement of the 27 May Revolution, opposed the decision of the Turkish-speaking Cypriot leadership. The anti-imperialist Turkish-speaking Cypriot prominent figures who supported the existence of the Republic of Cyprus or opposed the decision to leave the government, such as **Ayhan Hikmet, Ahmet Muzaffer Gürkan, Derviş Ali Kavazoğlu and İhsan Ali**, were targeted by TMT. In August 1964, Turkish government also changed its progressive Cyprus policy parallel to decreasing the impact of the 27 May Revolution within Turkey and organized a failed landing operation with the logistical help of the British army in the Tillyria region of Cyprus. This operation was similar to the US-organized **"Bay of Pigs Invasion"** in Cuba. Anti-imperialist world leaders and revolutionaries, including Che Guevara, condemned the operation.

In **1967**, the US-backed military junta seized power in Greece. This right-wing military dictatorship helped create the **EOKA-B** organization in Cyprus against the Makarios leadership that was perceived as a problem for the West. In 1971, Greece and Turkey

formulated and agreed upon a plan against non-aligned Cyprus at the **NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting in Lisbon**. The plan made in Lisbon was put into action in 1974. On **15 July 1974**, Greece organized a coup d'état in Cyprus with the help of the EOKA-B organization. Right after the coup, Turkey started its first invasion of Cyprus on **20 July 1974**, using the excuse of "protecting the constitutional order in Cyprus" according to the London and Zurich Agreements. Within a few days, the military junta collapsed, the coup was over, and the leaders met in Geneva. During the Geneva conferences that aimed at resolving the situation in Cyprus, Turkey demanded that the Cypriot government accept its plan for a federal state and population transfer. According to White House records, during his meeting with President Gerald Ford regarding the developments in Cyprus on 13 August 1974, **Henry Kissinger** said, **"there is no American reason why the Turks should not have one-third of Cyprus."** Unable to get positive feedback for its demand in Geneva, Turkey started a second invasion on 14 August 1974.

Today, the Turkish occupation still continues and NATO countries insist on an **ethnically divided "bicomunal bizonal federation"** as a "solution" in Cyprus. But from the ABC (American-British-Canadian) plan in 1979 to the UN's Annan Plan in 2004, Cypriots rejected such an apartheid state. Over time, Turkish politicians have admitted to using the "federation" idea to conceal their colonial activities. While the natural gas resources have been discovered off Cyprus, Turkey also recently declared its aim to create 'two states' in the island.



1833: Cypriots, under the leadership of Gavur Imam, revolt against the Ottomans to liberate Cyprus

1878: British rule of Cyprus begins

1920: The British start promoting ethnic extremist education in Cyprus in the interest of their divide-and-rule policy for Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking Cypriots by bringing teachers from Greece and Turkey

1931: Cypriots revolt for demands such as Enosis (annexation to Greece) and autonomy for Cyprus

1936: British Colonial Governor Richmond Palmer adopts a strategy of giving space for ethnic extremism and demands like Enosis, to prevent the rise of anti-imperialist Cypriot nationalism

1952: Greece and Turkey become the first members of NATO

1955: The armed struggle against the British begins, and the future president of Cyprus, Makarios, attends the Bandung Conference with leaders of the nonaligned world

1960: Cyprus gains independence as a unitary and consociational republic

1961: Cyprus becomes a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement

1963: Beginning of a constitutional crisis that leads Turkish-speaking Cypriot leadership to leave the government

1964: Che Guevara talks about Cyprus in his UN speech after Turkey organizes the "Battle of Tylliria," an operation similar to the US-organized "Bay of Pigs Invasion" in Cuba

1971: Greece and Turkey agree on the partition of the island of Cyprus at the meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon





1974: Greece orchestrates a coup using Enosis supporters in Cyprus against Makarios, giving Turkey the chance to invade the north of the island and propose a NATO-supported ethnic segregation for Cypriots through the "bicomunal bizonal federation"

1975: Turkey begins its official settler-colonial project in the occupied Cyprus

2004: Cypriots reject the ethnicist federation plan dictated by the West

2019: Turkey introduces its "two-state" plan for Cyprus



- Areas occupied by Turkey 
- Areas under control of United Kingdom 
- United Nations demilitarized Buffer Zone 
- Free areas of Cyprus 

AGAINST SEGREGATIONISM AND SETTLER COLONIALISM

Cyprus is the only European Union member state that is under occupation. In addition, Nicosia is the only capital, alongside Jerusalem, that still has parts under occupation. Currently, the Republic of Cyprus controls less than 60% of the island since its occupation in 1974.

Approximately 36% is still occupied by the Turkish military, which currently has over 40,000 personnel in army, air, and naval bases in this area.

In between the free and occupied areas, the United Nations demilitarized Buffer Zone occupies 4% of the island, and Cypriots have to cross military checkpoints in order to travel through the island.

Apart from Turkey, the **United Kingdom also still controls Akrotiri and Dhekelia areas**, which make up roughly 3% of the island. This territory is the most important military presence and a station for signals intelligence for the United Kingdom in the Middle East and Mediterranean. The areas are also used by the **United States** forces. It's worth highlighting that in total, five militaries of NATO member countries are currently using air and naval bases on the island, including Greece and France.

The protection of the status quo, namely the **NATO occupation of Cyprus**, continues to be crucial for Western imperialism. To ensure this, two policies have been applied by the West in Cyprus since 1974. The first policy involves the proposal of apartheidist "solutions," similar to those implemented in Eastern Europe, and funding for civil society to promote separatist and segregationist

"bicomunal bizonal federation" or "two-state" ideas. The second policy is to allow **settler colonialism** in the occupied areas.

Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking Cypriots were previously living together in the same towns and villages. However, foreign-sponsored paramilitary actions, followed by the occupation, led to **forced displacements** to segregate Cypriots. In 1974, nearly half the population of Cyprus was forcibly displaced. Immediately after, Turkey began transferring the Turkish population from Anatolia to the occupied area and settling them in the properties of Greek-speaking Cypriots in order to change the demographic structure of the island.

Turkey continues to use **illegal Turkish settlers** as a means of oppressing Turkish-speaking Cypriots and preventing Greek-speaking Cypriots from returning to their homes. These **settlers** are used to control the political will of Turkish-speaking Cypriots, whom they already outnumber, and to create illegal faits accomplis. Since 1974, Turkey has used illegal settlers to carry out terror activities against Turkish-speaking Cypriots, including assassinations of political leaders and journalists, and lynching attacks against media outlets.

In the eyes of the international community and international law, settler colonialism in Cyprus and Palestine is considered identical. Both cases are currently under review by the International Criminal Court. The flags of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" and "Israel," which inspired each other, continue to symbolize the same **crimes against humanity**.

CYPRITISM

The **united struggle of Cypriots** against oppression is an important part of the island's history, from the Gavur Imam Revolt against the Ottoman occupation in 1833 to the movement of the Cypriot miners against the American-owned Cyprus Mines Corporation under the British occupation in 1948. In Cyprus, the class and national struggle of Cypriots are rooted in the anti-imperialist ideology of Cypriot nationalism, or **Cypriotism**.

Since Cyprus came under the control of the United Kingdom in 1878, British colonizers allowed the promotion of Hellenism and Turkism in Cyprus for the success of their divide-and-rule strategy. However, they also had to suppress Cypriot nationalism as much as possible, as Colonial Governor Richmond Palmer believed it was necessary to continue exploiting the island.

After gaining independence from Britain, many prominent Cypriot progressives and socialists began advocating for Cypriotism to protect the integrity of the land and its people. However, they continued to be targeted by imperialists and their collaborators, just as in the colonial period. The Cumhuriyet (Republic) newspaper of Ayhan Hikmet and Ahmet Muzaffer Gürkan published a manifesto-like article entitled "**Cyprus belongs to Cypriots**" before they were assassinated. In their article on 2 January 1961, they wrote:

"Our country, our beautiful Cyprus, after complicated, long-lasting, and harsh fights that were the result of conflicting interests, following the natural course of history, was liberated from the yoke of colonialism

and joined the community of free nations.... Therefore, the duty of every Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot who loves their country and nation is to respect each other's rights, to sustain and develop independent Cyprus, and to work with all their effort to provide their community with a more democratic, prosperous, happy, and peaceful life.... In brief, Cyprus's independence is not its being annexed to another nation or state but to be governed by Cypriots."

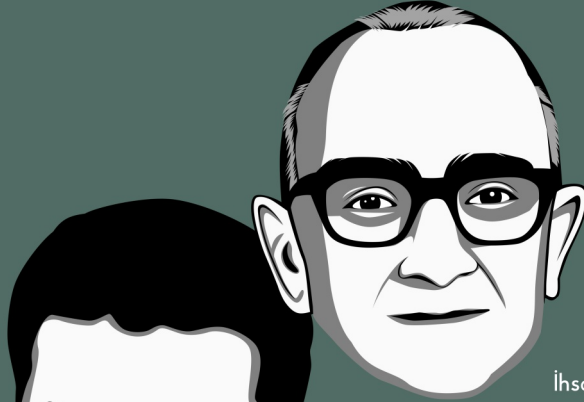
The common culture, history, identity, and most importantly, the belief in the common destiny of Cypriots form the foundation of progressive Cypriot nationalism. Cypriotism opposes any form of segregation or separation on the island, rejects any ethnicist agenda that would allow foreign powers to rule the island and maintain their hold on Cyprus indefinitely. Hence, the phrase "**One nation, one flag, one homeland, and one state**" encapsulates the central principle of Cypriot nationalism.

Cypriotism advocates for the **democratic unity** of Cypriots, not only for a unitary homeland without barricades and foreign military bases but also as the cornerstone of a **secular, progressive, and pluralist** society. Cypriot nationalists oppose "ethnic quotas" and believe in the political equality of all Cypriots through "one person, one vote" principle and a "single electoral roll." The idea of Cypriot nationalism emphasizes the importance of a unifying national upper identity that transcends institutionalized ethnocentrism, for the existence of an independent state, and against the neo-colonial divisive ambitions of the West.



Ένωσις Κυπρίων
Kıbrıslılar Birliđi

UNITE AGAINST IMPERIALISM: CYPRUS BELONGS TO CYPRIOTS!
ΕΝΩΘΕΙΤΕ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΙΜΠΕΡΙΑΛΙΣΜΟΥ: Η ΚΥΠΡΟΣ ΑΝΗΚΕΙ ΣΤΟΥΣ ΚΥΠΡΙΟΥΣ!
EMPERYALİZME KARŞI BİRLES: KIBRIS KIBRİSLİLARINDIR!



İhsan Ali



Ayhan Hikmet



Ahmet Muzaffer Gürkan



Dervis Ali Kavazođlu

CYPRIOTS' RESISTANCE AGAINST OCCUPATION AND NATO

The Women Walk Home movement, which marched towards the occupied area and faced the Turkish occupation army in the 1980s, is a symbol of resistance, as the Avrupa newspaper exposes Turkish occupation and settler colonialism from the frontlines today. It is important to highlight that the liberation struggle of the Cypriots did not end with the 1974 invasion.

The struggle continues today for the relatives of missing persons, children of those forcibly displaced, and every Cypriot who is kept apart from half of their country.

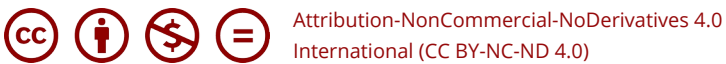
The **Union of Cypriots** is the largest anti-imperialist, progressive, and Cypriotist movement with Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking Cypriot supporters, leading the fight for a fully independent and unitary Cyprus, free from foreign occupation and NATO bases. The three humanitarian and righteous principles that the Union of Cypriots campaigns for are the removal of Turkish troops, the repatriation of Turkish illegal settlers, and the return of forcibly displaced Cypriots to their homes.

The movement says "no" to NATO occupation, as it also says "no" to becoming another victim of NATO's divide-and-rule plan of "bicomunal bizonal federation" which incorporates ethnicity-defined group measures that will turn Cyprus into a semi-colony with the existence of artificial conflicts and neo-imperialist presence.

The demands for freedom, justice, and democracy of Cypriot children are the same as the demands of the children of Ireland, Palestine, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and every land that is still being colonized.

Cyprus is just another example that shows how peoples' struggles and national liberation are interconnected worldwide, and **international solidarity** is the most powerful weapon to break the chains of oppression. In conclusion, the "unsinkable aircraft carrier" of NATO, **Cyprus**, must be liberated to ensure a free West Asia and North Africa, effectively block the United States Sixth Fleet from accessing the Eastern Mediterranean, and ultimately put an end to imperialism in all its forms.





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Ένωσις Κυπρίων
Kıbrıslılar Birliđi

Union of Cypriots is an anti-imperialist movement which campaigns for a fully independent and unitary Cyprus free from foreign occupations and NATO bases.

www.cypriots.org

Η Ένωσις Κυπρίων είναι ένα αντιιμπεριαλιστικό κίνημα που αγωνίζεται για μια πλήρως ανεξάρτητη και ενιαία Κύπρο απαλλαγμένη από ξένες κατοχές και βάσεις του NATO.

www.cypriots.org/el

Kıbrıslılar Birliđi, yabancı işgallerden ve NATO üslerinden arınmış, tamamen bağımsız ve üniter bir Kıbrıs için mücadele eden anti-emperyalist bir harekettir.

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