

Recent Developments in the Cyprus Issue

(Translated)

Question: The talks on Cyprus were concluded on Friday, 20/01/2017, after they were resumed on 18/1/2017. These negotiations staggered since the beginning of 2013 and stalled since November 2014, but were re-launched in May 2015 and continued to stop and start until late 2016. Then it was powerfully and strikingly set off on 09/01/2017 in Geneva to re-unite Cyprus with the participation of Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci, and his Greek Cypriot counterpart Nicos Anastasiades. The negotiations were joined by the three guarantors states of the security of Cyprus namely Turkey, Greece and Britain along with the European Union ... So what is the latest on the issue of Cyprus that led to its resumption in this active way? What is the solution expected for the Cyprus issue? May Allah reward you with goodness.

Answer: To answer these questions we must review this issue from its different aspects: local, regional, and international, and then the overlapping aspects: locally, regionally and internationally; and the developments that caused this active movement will be clear, followed by the expected solution to this issue, Allah willing.

First, local aspects:

The background of the Cyprus crisis locally is a power struggle between the Turkish Cypriot Muslims and Greek (Roman) Cypriots. In order to monopolize power and the expulsion of the Muslim Turks from the state apparatus, some nationalists of the Greek Cypriots developed what was known at the time the Akritas plan in 1963, that stipulates the removal of the Turks from their positions in preparation for union with Greece, and the process of bloody revenge from Muslims started. There were massacres, and displacement and deprivation of property, which was the policy of the Greek Cypriots for the union with Greece; the British hands were not far from this. It is worth noting that Britain was the actual ruler of the island at the time and had the largest two military bases there. Cyprus was granted independence in 1960, provided the Greek Cypriots give up on the idea of union with Greece that was called Enosis in return for the Turks to abandon the idea of union with Turkey the so-called taksim. By 1967 the actual division was the situation on the island, and a state of hostility between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots Muslims have surfaced.

Second, regional aspects:

Greece was behind the Greek Cypriots and provided them with support and plans to annex the island to it, and in return Turkey had provided some support for Turkish Muslims. The two countries were the two regional powers that feed the state of the local division of Cyprus. On 15/7/1974 the Greek military junta supported, with the behest of America, the military coup in Cyprus to seal the question of accession to Greece. The process of the actual annexation of Cyprus to Greece was to assume if it wasn't for the intervention of the Turkish army after five days of the Cypriot coup and the invasion of the north part of the island at the behest of the British, then the Turkish army transferred the small havens sometimes isolated of Turkish Muslims into one continuous geographical area with an estimated area of 3335 kilometers squares, i.e. one-third of the territory of the island, but with only 210 thousand people, i.e. a fifth of the island's population. These two forces, namely Turkey and Greece are two influential regional powers in Cyprus, but also the Jewish entity has a great influence there, but it is hidden, in the security and economic aspects particularly the gas agreements.

Third, international aspects:

Since Britain annexed it officially in 1914, at the beginning of the First World War, and until recently, Britain is therefore the most powerful international player in Cyprus, and when it

granted its independence in 1960. Britain officially remained, in accordance with the treaties, the only international force guarantors of the situation of Cyprus after it had included two regional powers Turkey and Greece 1955 as guarantor powers of Cyprus. By involving these regional powers, Britain wanted to prevent the exploitation of America through its influence in Greece to annex Cyprus to Greece. Britain has placed the Turkish stick that was formerly loyal to it in the spokes of Greece, and maintained two military bases in Cyprus, of the greatest British military bases in world. They include 24 thousand troops and huge navy and air forces, today they are a great mark of British colonialism, both launched forces in the Suez war in 1956, and both participated with aircrafts with the Jewish state in the 1967 war, and the wars of Britain alongside America in the invasion of Iraq in 1991 and 2003, and from them it spies and monitors the region. Therefore, the security of Cyprus means Britain's security until today,

Economically it is used by Britain as well as a tax haven within the remote island chain to attract rulers' looted funds and funds of companies fleeing tax laws and money of criminal "mafia" gangs especially Russian ones. Therefore, for all of the above, the island of Cyprus is a special place to the British. Thus, Britain has been able cunningly to overcome all US interventions to inherit this vital colony of Britain. Greece was the American winning card to access Cyprus, but Britain was able to overcome it through Turkey and its agents in Cyprus, we can say that the issue of Cyprus internationally was over the past few decades the issue of heated conflict between the followers of America and followers of Britain. America's main goal is to remove British military bases in Cyprus and take its place, and it was taking advantage of the efforts of the United Nations and using it as means to achieve its goals. Britain was capable through its cunningness to overcome the American obstacles and it succeeded in maintaining a divided Cyprus to justify the presence of its military bases, and prevented the full implementation of America's plans in Cyprus... Britain nearly achieved its goals once and for all in maintaining its bases through the coup attempt to create a regime in Turkey, that is loyal to it, instead of the current pro-American regime... Although the attempt failed, but it sounded a warning bell to both the American and British sides regarding the Turkish regime and its impact on the Cyprus issue.

Fourth, overlapping aspects:

1- Influential Islamic movements in the region:

The Syrian revolution was the problem of the decade for the US policy in the region, because it was not able to eliminate its danger, despite the length of the years, and despite the many American tools used: from Iran and its supporters and followers, and Russia and its military power, Turkey and the Gulf States and their contacts and financial support, and Geneva and international envoys. America was certainly aware that they are fighting Islam in Syria, which is a new experience for the US policy on this scale. It gave it grey hairs as stated in Obama's statement on 04/08/2016 in a press conference after his meeting with the National Security Council and military leaders in the Pentagon, "I am pretty confident that a big chunk of my grey hair comes out of my Syria meetings." (Russia Today, 05/08/2016)

America and the West have taken Islamic movements in the region seriously, and that the success of Muslims in establishing their state has become a concern to America and the West, and the Turkish army stationed in Cyprus, "about 30 thousand" would be dangerous for them. They take Islamic movements to establish a Khilafah seriously, and the presence of the Turkish Muslim army on the island at that time will be the spearhead of sending it back to its origin, an Islamic country since it was opened during the era of the righteous Khaleefah Othman, may Allah be pleased with him ... That is why they see the need to take out this army and to speed up negotiations to achieve this purpose.

2- A new energy factor: Since the discovery of natural gas on the coast of occupied Palestine in 2009 and the start of its exploitation for business by the Jewish state in 2013 ... Greece, Turkey and Cyprus recently aspired to extract energy there too ... all this made the energy factor one of the new engines of the crisis in Cyprus, it gave it a greater momentum, as follows:

A- The technical data of the gas fields discovered off the coast of the eastern Mediterranean show that they provide a reasonable amount of gas, enough to form the diversification of gas imports to Europe, thus significantly alleviating their dependence on Russian gas. The Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades, and the Ministers of Communications and Business, and Agricultural Resources and Environment have said, publicly on various occasions "that the Cypriot gas reserves may allow Europe to diversify their sources away from Russia." (Noon Post, 11/11/2014), "and the Greek authorities explore for oil and gas in Levitan field to the south-east of Nicosia, that field that contains 1.7 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 122 billion cubic feet of natural gas. To counter step the Greek move, Ankara signed an agreement with the Turkish Cypriot authorities to explore for oil in the northern coast ..." (dot Egypt, 27/04/2015)

B- Both Greece and Greek Cyprus are suffering from severe economic crises and hope to replenish their treasury with gas revenues from the coast of Cyprus, through the Greek transport route to Europe, and Greece becomes a transit country for Cyprus's gas and the Jewish entity to Europe.

C- But these Greek Cypriot dreams as well as the Europe's are nearly shattered by Turkey, as it is directly hindering the exploration operations for oil and gas off the coast of Cyprus. Since Greek Cypriot cooperation with the Jewish entity began in the exploration and exploitation of energy in the eastern Mediterranean, Turkey stood against Greece and Cyprus in the drilling operations and has enhanced its marine control. And in direct response to energy exploration operations, Turkey signed an agreement to explore for energy with Turkish Cyprus, not only in the sea area between the two countries but in the south near the southern Cypriot Aphrodite field, Turkey has threatened to dig there, which will ignite a dispute between them. Turkey does not see a way to explore without solving the Cyprus issue in accordance with the American project of negotiations, and the Cypriot exploration does not go ahead only after the end of the negotiations... This Turkish position also confirms what was announced by Turkish President Erdogan that "the insistence of the Greek Cypriot authorities on oil exploration, aims not only to sabotage the negotiating process between Cypriots..." (dot Egypt, 27/4/2015) i.e. Turkey wants to make gas exploration and its investment linked to the final solution, i.e. pushing the parties to resolve the issue, especially in the recent period where there was a mounting interest in the exploration by the parties. All this accelerates the subject of negotiations to reach a solution that would make exploration possible without disputes.

Fifth: From the above it is clear to see the new developments that led to the road of the Cyprus negotiations in a stronger pace and more speed, and they are as follows:

1- The military coup attempt in Turkey: the enormity of the threat posed by this attempt to the US influence in Turkey and the region made US President Obama hold an emergency meeting on 16/07/2016 of the American National Security Council following the coup attempt. This meeting was an indication of the great importance attached by the United States for its influence in Turkey, due to Turkey's broad impact on its surroundings. Since the failure of the military coup of President Erdogan announced a state of emergency in the country, and began cleansing, and still is, the army and the state of the followers of Britain. Such purges weaken England's position in Turkey, lose their grip over the army leaders in Turkey, who stopped the United States moves to discredit them in Cyprus... Thus the American way to resolve the Cyprus crisis in accordance with the plan, the so-called "Annan" plan to unite Cyprus, the road has become smoother after the pursuing of the British men in the army who crippled the American solution in Cyprus and supported Britain to maintain their bases in Cyprus ... and the greater the pursuing of the British men the more feasible are the American negotiations.

2- **The Islamic movements in the region:** As mentioned above, America and the West are taking the Islamic movements to establish The Khilafah seriously, and the presence of the Turkish Muslim army on the island at that time will be the spearhead of sending it back to its origin, an Islamic country since it was opened during the reign of the righteous Khaleefah Othman, may Allah be pleased with him ... That's why they see the need to take out this army and speed up negotiations for this purpose.

3- A New energy factor: Looking at this new rising factor shows that it constitutes an economically influential factor in speeding up the solution to the crisis in Cyprus, and removes what hinders this promising economic project, and therefore it has become in the interest of all parties to the Cyprus crisis to find a solution to the crisis there, and to agree on maritime economic quotas and gas transfer lines, and speed up the negotiations more seriously...

Sixth: Due to the impact of these factors the parties were pushed actively at the end of last year and beginning of this year 2017 as follows:

A- The first round of Cyprus negotiations was held in the Swiss Mont Pelerin from 7-11 of November 2016, the second round was conducted in the same city in the same month from 20-21 November 2016. Both rounds did not succeed in achieving anything.

B- The third round of negotiations was conducted with efforts to find a political solution to the island of Cyprus, in Geneva, Switzerland, on 9th January under the United Nations' sponsorship. The negotiations centered on six titles: "the economic problem of Cyprus, the European Union, ownership, immigration and power-sharing, land and security, and guarantees".

C- On 10/1/2017 another meeting of the parties concerned was held regarding Cyprus in Geneva, it was at a high diplomatic level, with the presence of the President of the Turkish Cypriot republic, Mustafa Akinci, and the President of the Greek Republic of Cyprus Nicos Anastasiades

D- On 12/1/2017, the Cyprus negotiations were concluded at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, between Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci and his Greek Cypriot counterpart Nicos Anastasiades. The UN envoy to Cyprus Espen Barth Eide said, "We've had constructive talks over the past three days, and added that a lot of problems were resolved that have remained unresolved for a long time and that progress has become faster, according to him.

E- The Cypriot President said: "President of Cyprus, in turn, said at a news conference on Friday that the political dialogue for the first time achieved a serious progress, as the discussion began to revolve around the core really matters ..." (Russia Today, 13/01/2017)

F- Then two rounds were held on 18-20/1/2017 after which a final statement was issued, it stated:

"According to the Special Adviser on Cyprus to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Espen Barth Eide, that the workshop groups completed its work that discussed the subject of the guarantees successfully. It is reported that workshop groups discussed security and guarantees in all dimensions ... and we can say that the issue of security and guarantees were perceived as preparatory technical acts for the next stage after four meetings lasted for two days ... it is worth noting that the parties had agreed to hold a summit that will be represent the parties in higher levels in the next phase, which means that the third phase will continue from the Geneva negotiations to a summit that will involve the prime ministers of five countries. It is expected that the President of the Northern Cyprus Turkish Republic Mustafa Akinci and Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades to discuss issues related to the political conference quintet hearing, through a meeting on the 26th of the current month of January in Nicosia...

A delegation headed by Deputy Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Ahmed Mukhtar Gun represented Turkey in the conference, while a delegation headed by the negotiator Ozdil Nami, the Turkish part of the island. The Deputy Prime Minister Tugrul Turkes left to Geneva to gain information about the work of the Geneva-based working group within the framework of Cyprus negotiations. The Cyprus negotiations consist of the six main headings: the economy, the European Union and the ownership and management and the sharing of power and territory and security and guarantees ..." (Arabic TRT, 20/1/2017)

Seventh: As for the expected solution sought by America and the Turkish regime loyal to it, the most probable one is a form of a federal state in Cyprus as a first step, so that this state through the United Nations and the United States' backing can the two British bases in Cyprus, which is the main objective for the wave of the Cyprus negotiations, which began effectively with the beginning of this year. This solution requires the abolition of guarantor states (Britain, Turkey and Greece) and the consequent withdrawal of the Turkish army and soldiers of Greece, and of course the most important the British bases.

But there are some obstacles to this solution, there are real influencing impediments not easy to overcome in a short time, and there are minor obstacles with less effects intended as justification for specific purposes and then they can be overcome.

- The basic influencing obstacles basic is the withdrawal of Britain's from its two bases on the island:(Akrotiri and Dhekelia), Akrotiri base is situated in the southwest of Cyprus, while Dhekelia base is in the east, they are both very important to Britain like a pivot to a spoke. It will seek every effort to disable the solution that prevent its presence there... It may try to postpone or impede the solution through dodgy means, like putting its presence in the bases as a condition to accept the American solution. No doubt it is aware of the extreme difficulty that will make America accept this, especially that Britain has lost a lot of tools of influence inside Turkey, and from Cyprus as a result of the recent purges carried out by Erdogan in the army and other state apparatus.

The other obstacles are the morale for the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Cyprus, because the US solution stipulates this withdrawal, as a preliminary step to embarrass Britain and make it remove its bases on the grounds that the new state of Cyprus cannot have separate forces from the structure of the state, because the two British bases in Cyprus are practically outside the Cypriot state power, even if the reports were saying that Cyprus is composed of four regions: (North Cyprus, and the neutral zone in the middle, and South Cyprus, and the two British bases), and Britain at the moment want this tense divided situation to continue and serve as a justification for the continuation of the bases, so finding one state in Cyprus or a federal state as the project of the US solution is a preliminary step to remove the military bases. Hence the eye-catching statements about the cancellation of the guarantor States and their influence at the beginning of the current year's negotiations, the Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades said, "It is necessary to the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Cyprus, to reach a solution to end decades of division on the island." Anastasiades told reporters in Geneva that "we agree on the Turkish army's withdrawal which numbers about 30 thousand troops in Cyprus"" (BBC, 13/1/2017).

As for the statements of Erdogan as a response to him after Friday prayer, on January 13: "Greece must not expect a solution to the issue of the island without a Turkish role, as a guarantor state. Turkey will remain in Cyprus. The possibility of the Turkish military leaving Cyprus is out of the question." (Russia Today, 13/1/2017) This Turkish position is not a sincere one, but it is a matter of "refusal to accept"! His subsequent statement on the same day invalidates the earlier statement, Reuters quoted him as saying on the same day: "Erdogan said "it is impossible to completely withdrawal the Turkish soldiers and we previously discussed this. If such a thing is a subject of discussion then both sides should withdraw their soldiers from there. "Greece has a battalion of about 1,100 troops in Cyprus. Erdogan said that there is a plan to keep the 650 Turkish soldiers and 950 Greek soldiers on the island after a settlement ..." (13/01/2017). Therefore he agreed to withdraw for this uneven settlement! This is confirmed by the words of the Turkish Cypriot leader, who was quoted by Reuters on the same day, i.e. 01/13/2017: (The Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci said on Friday: "There should be no taboos in the talks hosted by the United Nations for the reunification of Cyprus," he added, "If we say that these issues are a taboo and we cannot even discuss it, and that everything should remain as it is, then this will not lead to success." Therefore, these statements are not real, but to create an atmosphere in the negotiations that will allow the discussion of subject of military forces withdrawal from the island as an entry point to discuss the two bases.

In conclusion: The negotiations this time are more serious than the previous ones, and America wants to create as a result a federal state on the island that leads to the removal of the bases from British sovereignty. Britain on the other hand wants to maintain the status quo to remain in control of the bases, and is not damaged by any other solution if it is to keep the two bases

Eighth: The right Islamic solution to the Cyprus issue: it is that it is completely annexed to Turkey, Cyprus is an Islamic country, and must be attached to its origins, Turkey, the island of Cyprus is an Islamic island, and was opened by the Muslims at the time of the third righteous Khaleefah Uthman (ra). The European Crusaders occupied it in the first Crusader wars waged on the Islamic countries, but it was liberated by Muslims later and it was returned back to the origin as a Muslim land. It was under the rule of the Ottoman State like all other Muslim countries because it was the Khilafah. The British declared official control over it in the First World War and declared its annexation to Britain, which is false and is a brutal aggression that has no value or weight. Muslims in Turkey and outside Turkey consider Cyprus as part of their land that must be a fully returned to the lands of Islam... This is the right solution for Cyprus, i.e. to go back to its origin an Islamic country. It was opened by the Wali of Ash-Sham Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan, after being authorized by the Khaleefah Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, in the year 28 AH, and it was one of the first marine invasions of the Muslims. Many companions of the Prophet (saw) took part in the invasion, including Abu Dhar and Ubada bin As-Samit with his wife Umm Haram and Abu Ad-Darda and Shaddad ibn Aws, Allah bless them all, the tomb of the noble companion Umm Haram is one of the attractions in Cyprus. When it was opened it was a decisive defeat for the State of the Byzantine and its emperor on the one hand, and on the other hand it was the beginning of the era of the Islamic maritime fleet that grew after that triumphant conquest.

This is the solution and it is the Truth:

﴿فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ فَأَنَّى تُصْرِفُونَ﴾

“And what can be beyond truth except error? So how are you averted?” [Yunus: 32]

And the solution is not what is planned by the United States or Britain, in other words the solution is not splitting Cyprus into two states, whether one part was annexed to Turkey and the other to Greece or if they are not annexed at all. Also the solution is not becoming a federal state ruled by the Greeks, nor to be a single state ruled by the Greeks as well, It is wrong to allow any Islamic country to be under the authority of the Kuffar:

﴿وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا﴾

“...and never will Allah give the disbelievers over the believers a way [to overcome them]” [An-Nisa': 141]

Cyprus will return, Allah willing, as it was an Islamic country, days are in changing state, many hands controlled Cyprus, but the end will always be with the righteous ones.

﴿وَاللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَى أَمْرِهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And Allah is predominant over His affair, but most of the people do not know” [Yusuf: 21]

24 Rabii' II 1438 AH

22/1/2017 CE