

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 10, 1977

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

This report is the seventh in a series of messages pursuant to Public Law 94-104 through which I have informed the Congress of my Administration's efforts to encourage progress toward a resolution of the problems of Cyprus. In addition to reviewing those efforts, this report will offer several conclusions with regard to the role the United States can and should play in settlement of the Cyprus dispute.

I know the Congress shares my views that a just and early settlement of the Cyprus issue is essential both for humanitarian reasons and to preserve peace in an area of great importance to the United States. For more than two years my Administration has actively sought to help the Cypriot communities find the basis for substantive and sustained negotiations. We have given the UN Secretary General our full and active support in the negotiations conducted under his auspices, negotiations which I believe continue to offer the best possible forum for progress.

I also know the Congress shares my deep regret that progress in the negotiations has been extremely slow. Inconclusive procedural disputes have diverted the parties from pressing issues of substance. Domestic pressures and international rivalries have detracted from the will and commitment that are essential to progress.

In an effort to break this impasse, my Administration has sought over the past several months to develop a set of basic principles that might provide a framework for continued and fruitful intercommunal negotiation. These principles are based on the concepts which I set forth in my sixth report to the Congress and which Secretary of State Kissinger expressed in his September 1976 UN General Assembly address. These concepts rest on a fundamental premise which I believe all concerned parties continue to share -- that any settlement must preserve the independence, sovereignty, and the territorial integrity of Cyprus. These concepts emphasize the importance of territorial adjustments to reduce the area controlled by the Turkish side, while taking into account the economic requirements and humanitarian concerns of the two Cypriot communities, including the plight of those who remain refugees. Constitutional arrangements are of equal importance in providing conditions under which the two communities can live in freedom and have a large voice in their own affairs. Finally, security arrangements which would permit the withdrawal of foreign military forces other than those present under international agreement are essential for a lasting settlement.

Based upon these concepts, the United States has engaged over the past several months in extensive consultations on the Cyprus issue with the nine-member states of the European Community, seeking their support for a new and accelerated

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approach. Through these consultations we are jointly developing the basic principles which we hope will stimulate the negotiations. We have been greatly impressed and encouraged by the extent to which there is a consensus in these consultations on both the principles and the urgent need to reopen substantive intercommunal negotiations.

I remain convinced, however, that neither the United States nor any other outside country or group of countries should seek to impose a settlement on Cyprus. The principles we are developing should serve only as a basis for negotiation. It is the Cypriot communities themselves who must ultimately decide their relationship and final territorial arrangements.

In addition it is clear that a final solution must also have the support of the Greek and Turkish governments. It is my firm conviction that we must seek to maintain the trust and friendship of both these NATO allies. Thus my Administration has sought to strengthen through negotiation our security ties with both Greece and Turkey. We have consistently sought to follow a balanced course in strengthening our relations throughout the area. We therefore welcomed the steps taken by the Congress to relax the arms embargo on Turkey so that Turkey can better meet its NATO obligations. We have demonstrated through tangible assistance our support for Greece. We have worked actively, both directly and through the United Nations Security Council, to defuse recent tensions between Greece and Turkey over the Aegean. These two countries have now agreed to a negotiating process called for in the U.S. sponsored Security Council Resolution which I hope will lead to a settlement of their dispute.

It is essential to the success of an equitable and lasting Cyprus settlement that the United States maintain a balanced relationship among all concerned parties. It would be a mistake to place undue pressure on any one party for the sake of what appears to be a quick settlement. I believe the Congress would agree that such a path would neither promote lasting progress on Cyprus nor serve the cause of stability in the Mediterranean.

I am not pessimistic about the future of the Cyprus negotiations. I continue to believe that a way can and will be found to achieve a just and equitable settlement which will enable all of the people of Cyprus to shape a harmonious and prosperous future.

GERALD R. FORD

THE WHITE HOUSE,
January 10, 1977

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