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## The UN in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cyprus: Meditration, Mediation-Lite and Beyond

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### ABSTRACT

For decades, the UN has failed to mediate a settlement in Cyprus because of a general and profound weakness: it is unable, outside of unity and resolve on the Security Council, to offer direct incentives to parties in conflict that would shape their calculus towards conflict resolution, or to control the actions of third parties in ways that would incentivize conflict resolution or prevent disincentives. Within this vacuum, the UN has alternated its mediation strategy during the past two decades in Cyprus between two different forms, meditration (Annan Plan, 2002-04) and mediation-lite (2008-2015), before reverting to a more conventional mediating role in the lead-up to the Crans-Montana conference in 2017. Meditration and Mediation-lite both failed, with the fortunes of the peace process during each of these periods being shaped importantly by domestic politics within the contesting camps and the balance of power between them. The article elaborates on the conceptual distinction between meditration and mediation-lite. It makes the case for a conventional mediation between these two extremes, but argues that even this has limitations that stem from the UN's general weaknesses.

### *Introduction:*

The UN has been present in its peacekeeping role in Cyprus since early 1964, and Cyprus is one of its longest standing missions, alongside Kashmir. Since the island was partitioned in 1974, and particularly since the 1980s, the UN has also become increasingly involved, through the Secretary-General's Good Offices, in negotiations aimed at a resolution of the Cyprus dispute. Indeed, all UN Secretary-Generals from Perez de Cuellar on have been personally and actively involved in the Cyprus talks, as suggested by the "de Cuellar Draft Framework Agreement", the "Ghali Set of Ideas", the "Annan Plan", the "Guterres Framework", and so on. None of these initiatives have succeeded in resolving the Cyprus problem, and Cyprus has become known as a 'diplomats graveyard' (Lindahl 2019). The UN's lack of success in Cyprus can be attributed to its general inability, in the absence of unity and resolve in the Security Council, to exercise either 'coercive power' or 'reward power' (Rubin 1992). This has meant that it is unable to offer direct incentives to the parties in conflict, impose a settlement, or control or coordinate the actions of other (third) parties in a way that would incentivize agreement. In the resulting vacuum, the prospects for agreement have come to rest largely on domestic politics within each party, and on the balance of power between them (realpolitik).

The UN's weaknesses were clearly on display during its most ambitious attempt to achieve a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus: the Annan Plan (2004). During the negotiations that preceded the presentation of the plan, the UN was unable to control the actions of the EU in particular, which decided to admit Cyprus (meaning the government-controlled or Greek Cypriot part of Cyprus) to the EU before a solution. This removed an important incentive for Greek Cypriots to compromise. Local politics on the Greek Cypriot side then led to the election, in 2003, of a rejectionist leader, Tassos Papadopoulos, although his opposition to a settlement was relatively muted at first. In these distinctly non-ideal conditions, the UN chose to 'meditate' a settlement (Ker-Lindsay 2009), i.e. fill in key provisions on issues the sides could not agree on, even though the two communities were to have the final say through twin referendums. On the key issue of security, the UN opted for provisions that leaned towards Turkey, reflecting its inability to push Turkey, a strong regional power, to compromise more (Palley 2005). The result was unsurprising: a massive rejection by Greek Cypriots.

When negotiations resumed in 2008, the UN switched from "meditation" to "mediation-lite", doing little more than chairing a process that was "Cypriot-owned and Cypriot-led" (Michalis 2013). This made it more likely that any resulting deal would be legitimate, but progress continued to be subject largely to the will of the parties, and this continued to be shaped by domestic politics and by the balance of power between the sides. The result was a long drift in negotiations, with progress intermittent and tied to the fortunes of moderates in local politics.

In the lead-up to the Crans-Montana conference in June 2017, the UN shifted back to a more conventional and assertive mediation, although not going as far as meditation. At Crans-Montana, the new Secretary-General, Guterres, proposed a framework agreement that integrated and permitted trade-offs among the different elements of a comprehensive settlement, including the vital issue of security. This represented a move away from the flawed 'sequential' process of the 'mediation-lite' period. While Guterres helped bring the sides closer to an agreement than ever before, the conference collapsed, and the UN's inability to drive the parties to compromise was again on display. While the UN has not succeeded on the Track 1 level, the article discusses some of its unsung contributions beyond this.

### **Conceptual Framework: Meditation, Mediation-lite and Beyond**

Few studies have attempted to provide a comparative conceptual framework for understanding UN peace mediations.<sup>1</sup> While some quantitative comparisons have investigated the relationship between mediation styles and crisis outcomes (Beardsley et al. 2006, Savun, 2008), the current literature does not offer the context-specific background for understanding the impact and most importantly the choice of specific mediation styles in the first place. Moreover, to address broader questions of intractability (Ibid, Zartman 2001, Halperin & Bar-Tal 2011), most of these studies have compared mediation styles along alternative dimensions such as power asymmetries and incentives, openness to information and information biases, as well as the engagement of peacekeepers (ibid; see also Fisher 2001). While important, these studies have often missed a critical element of mediation theory, i.e. that of the latitude assumed by, or given to, external mediating parties such as the United Nations.

To address this gap, this article draws on the concept of ‘meditation’ introduced and criticized by Ker-Lindsay (2009),<sup>2</sup> which is juxtaposed here with our alternative concept of ‘mediation-lite’ as well as conventional mediation. Meditation is a “hybrid form of peacemaking that combines elements of mediation and arbitration”. Conventional mediation involves external actors in a facilitating role that allows the contesting sides to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Outsiders are able to offer proposals (with respect to process and substance), assistance and support, but the key emphasis is on facilitating agreement *between the parties*. Meditrators, in contrast, are ‘robust’ mediators who may insist on time-frames for negotiations, and then, if the sides cannot reach agreement, present one themselves or, at least, ‘bridge’ whatever gaps remain between the parties. As this suggests, meditrators may move from being mediators at one stage of a process to being arbitrators at another, later, stage: ‘a mediator seeks to facilitate agreement between the parties, until such times as it is clear that the parties cannot reach an agreement, at which point the mediator ‘switches hats’ and takes on the role of arbitration” (cited, Ker-Lindsay 2009 225). Alternatively, meditrators may be mediators on some issues but arbiters, or quasi-arbiters, on others. In his reply to Ker-Lindsay, Noel (2009) suggests, for example, that Senator George Mitchell, who chaired the negotiations that produced peace in Northern Ireland, employed something akin to mediation and arbitration at different times. In addition, the British and Irish governments allowed much of the negotiations, including on the political institutions, to be negotiated between the sides, but they also applied significant arms-twisting on the unionist side in particular (McGarry 2019). Meditation may be triggered by the UN if there is a consensus in the security council (Bosnia), by a third country following a humanitarian emergency (Nagorno-Karabakh) or the sides themselves might accept a process that combines international mediation and (binding) arbitration as suggested below by the cases of Belize-Guatemala or Ethiopia-Eritrea (Duijzentkunst and Dawkins, 2015). As implied in these examples, a consensus on the Security Council or critical historical junctures can help convert mediation with a ‘lite’ footprint into a more assertive meditation, or, as in Cyprus after 2008, vice-versa.

In contrast, mediation-lite, as implied in the experience of Cyprus between 2008 and 2015, restricts external mediators to chairing meetings normally on neutral territory, conveying proposals from one side to the other in proximity talks or through shuttle diplomacy, maintaining a record of disagreements and convergences, offering international expertise to the sides through its consultants and those from other international organizations as well as promoting Track II activities and confidence-building measures. Both the process and agenda of negotiations are controlled by the sides and unlike conventional forms of mediation (Fisher, 2001), creative-problem solving is driven primarily by the internal actors themselves rather than by the external mediators.

Table 1 below summarizes the pros and cons of meditation and mediation-lite, and offers indicative examples of each. Meditation and Mediation-lite are ideal categories, and there is a space between the two that may combine elements of each.

**Table 1: Which role for external mediators? Meditration vs. Mediation-lite**

Types of Mediation	Meditration	Mediation-lite
<b>Main Features</b>	External actor(s) play a key role in determining both the process and the agenda in negotiations. They may initiate proposals for progress on various issues or even present conflicted sides with solutions on issues, or a comprehensive peace plan. Meditration might be voluntary or include strong incentives and coercive diplomatic, legal or military elements. It may also involve time frames and strict deadlines tied to specific incentives and sanctions.	External actor(s) chair a process that is owned and led by the domestic parties i.e., the latter control both process and content of negotiations. Mediation-lite aims for peace settlements that are seen as legitimate and beneficial by the opposing parties themselves. There are no externally-mandated deadlines or arms-twisting. External mediators are restricted regarding their capacity to introduce new ideas.
<b>Pros and Cons</b>	Meditration may be seen as biased by at least one of the sides and may fail to produce mutually acceptable outcomes. It may also infringe on state sovereignty. However, meditration may be beneficial if it helps parties to avoid a prolonged stalemate and protects civilian lives. It may also involve external implementation guarantees and legal supervision against the wishes of one or more parties. Meditration can be effective if the external parties are able to impose their preferences or domestic parties endorse the arbitration mechanisms themselves.	Mediation-lite is more likely to be perceived as impartial and legitimate. Progress in the negotiations is determined by indigenous capacity, willingness and knowledge. The main limitation is that progress is conditional on the political agendas and objectives of the conflicting parties whose preferences might be shaped by domestic politics or <i>realpolitik</i> . Mediation-lite may be the only alternative if external mediators lack the willingness and resources for a robust intervention or, in the case of the UN, if there is no consensus among the permanent members of the Security Council.
<b>Indicative Examples</b>	Lebanon Taif Accords 1989 (S. Arabia/Syria) Bosnia Dayton Peace Accords 1995 (US) Western Sahara Baker plan 1997 (UN)* Cyprus Annan Plan 2002-04 (UN)* Kosovo Ahtisaari Plan 2009 (UN)* Guatemala-Belize 2018-19 (OAS/ICJ) Ethiopia-Eritrea 2018 (PCA/S. Arabia) Nagorno-Karabakh 2020 (Russia)	Nagorno-Karabakh Minsk 1992- (OSCE)* Indonesia Aceh Agreement 2005 (Finland) Syrian Peace Talks 2011- (UN)* Colombia Peace Accords 2016 (Norway, Cuba) Cyprus talks 2008-2015 (UN)* Ukraine Minsk Protocol 2014- (OSCE)* Macedonia naming dispute 2018 (UN, EU) Sudan’s Juba agreement 2020 (UN, AU, Qatar)

\*peace initiatives in these cases have not been agreed/ratified.

## **1. UN mediation in Cyprus: The Annan Plan (2002-04)**

The Annan Plan (2002-04) was a comprehensive proposal for the settlement of the Cyprus problem proposed by the United Nations aiming to align the reunification of Cyprus with the 2004 eastern enlargement of the European Union. The Plan required the support of both Cypriot communities in referendums, but was massively rejected by 76 per cent of Greek Cypriots while being backed by sixty-five per cent of Turkish Cypriots. The plan failed because the UN was unable to directly incentivize the Greek Cypriots to accept it, or Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots to make concessions of the order that might have won over the Greek Cypriots. Even though the United Nations came to be vested with mediation powers, it was also unable to control the actions of external parties that were in a position to directly incentivize a settlement.

The most important of these external parties was the European Union (EU). It had decided in 1993 that Cyprus was eligible for membership in spite of objections from Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership.<sup>3</sup> On December 13, 1997, at the Luxembourg European Council, the EU member states decided Cyprus could begin the formal process of negotiating the conditions of its membership but rejected Turkey's application for membership (Eralp and Beriker 2005). Two years later, Greece lifted its veto of Turkey's European Union (EU) candidacy at the European Council meeting in Helsinki in December 1999 following the rapid improvement of relations with Turkey after the August 1999 earthquakes. The positive climate between Greece and Turkey as well as the prospect of European enlargement in the Eastern Mediterranean including Turkey came to be widely seen as potential catalysts for a settlement in Cyprus and provided the background that gave rise to the UN's (Annan Plan) initiative that began in 2001 (Rumelili 2007).

EU accession promised clear benefits for both communities on the island. For the Turkish Cypriots, it offered access to a huge market and other economic opportunities that were unimaginable under their status quo of diplomatic, legal and economic isolation. The inclusion of a united Cyprus in European institutions also offered protections against Greek Cypriot majoritarianism, including by shifting significant responsibilities from Nicosia to Brussels, although this benefit was perceived more clearly by political elites than the public. The result was a re-alignment of political cleavages amongst Turkish Cypriots that weakened the veteran rejectionist Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş and the main right-wing political party UBP (National Unity Party). Pro-EU Turkish Cypriots led by Mehmet Ali Talat's CTP (Republican Turkish Party) put forward a successful pro-unification campaign that produced, taking into consideration the size of the Turkish Cypriot community, some of the most impressive pro-EU rallies in modern European history. As a result, in December 2003, the CTP became the main coalition party in the North with DP (Democratic Party) as its junior partner. While the latter was associated with Denktaş's legacy, it significantly moderated its position during this period.

Accession was also a long-term demand of Greek Cypriots who saw it not just as economically beneficial, but as strengthening Cyprus's political and diplomatic clout, providing protection from Turkey, and strengthening links with Greece, which was already a member. Greek Cypriot political elites also saw a shift of responsibilities to Brussels as reducing the risks of Turkish Cypriot obstructionism within Cyprus's common government. When the UN initiative started, the largest Greek Cypriot party, DISY (Democratic Rally), representing one-third or more of

Greek Cypriots, supported the settlement process under its leader Nicos Anastasiades, in spite of its links to the Greek ethno-nationalist tradition and the *enosis* movement. DISY's founder, and President of Cyprus (1993-2003), Glafkos Clerides, was committed to the prospect of Europeanization and campaigned successfully among right-wing voters for a "federal Cyprus within a federal Europe" (Fokaides, 2014). The second largest Greek Cypriot party, AKEL (Progressive Party of Working People), also roughly representing one-third of voters, was also pro-settlement. The remaining third of Greek Cypriot voters supported two smaller parties, DIKO (Democratic Party) and EDEK (Movement for Social Democracy). Hardliners traditionally voted for these last two parties, but in the period preceding EU accession both of them had moderated their positions. The first version of the plan in 2002 was endorsed by all Greek Cypriot parties as the basis for negotiations (at a minimum), a surprising development given what happened subsequently.

Although it was not immediately apparent, this promising domestic situation changed substantially after the EU's decision at the Copenhagen summit of 2002 to allow the Greek Cypriots (i.e., the Republic of Cyprus) but not the Turkish Cypriots, to accede to the EU without a settlement. This decision came after Greece threatened to veto the entire eastern enlargement of the EU unless it happened. Athens and Nicosia also argued that making Cyprus's accession (i.e. the accession of the government-controlled areas) dependent on a settlement would effectively provide Turkey (which, in the Greek narrative, had invaded and occupied Cyprus) with a veto over that accession, as it could insist on its positions being met if there was to be a settlement. The EU's decision meant that Greek Cypriots were guaranteed EU membership regardless of which way they voted on the UN's plan. Its actions did not just remove a substantial incentive for the Greek Cypriots to vote 'yes', but as negotiations continued in 2003-4, provided an incentive to vote 'no'. This was because post-accession, the Republic of Cyprus would acquire a veto over Turkey's accession as well as that of the Turkish Cypriots. This, it was thought, would strengthen Cyprus's position in subsequent negotiations.

In the wake of the decision, AKEL, fearing that the decision would allow DISY to once more win the presidency of Cyprus in elections in 2003, formed a coalition with the traditionally anti-settlement leader, Tassos Papadopoulos, for president. The victorious President Papadopoulos initially kept negotiating on the basis of the UN's plan for a year but concealed the intensity of his opposition to it. He eventually emerged to reject a settlement, leading the 'no' campaign in the referendum. In a tearful televised pre-referendum speech, he laid out the significance of the EU's decision for Greek Cypriot voters in the referendum:

"If the sovereign people reject the Plan by their vote, the Republic of Cyprus will become a full and equal member of the European Union. We would have achieved the strategic goal we have jointly set, i.e. to upgrade and shield politically the Republic of Cyprus... Shall we do away with our internationally recognized state [a reference to his argument that the Annan Plan had abolished the Republic of Cyprus] exactly at the very moment it strengthens its political weight, with its accession to the European Union?" (Papadopoulos 2004).

AKEL at first hesitated to join Papadopoulos, but followed him in a last-minute decision, which helped to shape the referendum's devastating outcome (Trimikliniotis, 2006).<sup>4</sup> The UN's inability to control the EU's accession process meant that: i) an opportunity to incentivize the Greek Cypriots to vote "yes" to a settlement was lost; ii) Greek Cypriots were instead provided

with an incentive to vote “no”, and; iii) the politics surrounding the European Council’s decision in 2002 contributed to a political environment in the Greek Cypriot community, with a rejectionist elected President, that made an affirmative vote much less likely. This set of developments was primarily the EU’s responsibility, but the UN was unable to prevent it, or to co-ordinate its actions with the EU,<sup>5</sup> and it insisted on going ahead with referendums in spite of this.

The EU’s decision strengthened the Greek Cypriots’ position in the negotiations and vis-à-vis Turkey. But the UN made a Greek Cypriot rejection of the plan more likely by shifting post-Copenhagen to versions of the Annan plan that arguably leaned more towards Turkey (Palley 2005).<sup>6</sup> In particular, the version of the UN’s plan that was put to referendum fell short of Greek Cypriot objectives, and, arguably, evenhandedness, on security, perhaps the most fundamental of all the issues in the negotiations (Faustmann 2004; McGarry 2020a). A core objective of the Greek Cypriot public and their political leadership related to the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Cyprus and an end to Turkey’s intervention rights under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. The latter had been opposed by Greek Cypriots from the time of independence because it was inconsistent with any normal conception of state sovereignty. Their opposition to it was reinforced by the fact that it was used as the legal basis for what Turkey described as its ‘intervention’ or ‘peace operation’ in 1974, but which Greek Cypriots saw as an invasion and occupation that had partitioned their homeland and produced the expulsion of a third of their community from the north. The version of the UN’s plan that was put to referendum allowed the Treaty of Guarantee to remain in place without significant changes. Provisions that applied the Treaty to both constituent states, as well as to Cyprus as a whole, were seen on the Greek Cypriot side as an extension of its provisions (Annan Plan, 2004, Art. 8.1 (a)).<sup>7</sup> While Turkey compromised by agreeing to reduce the number of troops it had introduced in 1974, this was to take place over fourteen years. In contrast, the plan’s power-sharing and federal institutions were to come into place right away.<sup>8</sup> A 650-strong Turkish troop contingent permitted under the 1960 Treaty of Alliance was to be allowed to remain until Turkey decided otherwise, along with 950 Greek troops (Annan Plan, 2004, Art. 8.1. (b) (iii)).<sup>9</sup> The plan also lacked a credible security implementation framework. There was to be no robust impartial overseer. The guarantor powers themselves (Turkey, Greece and the UK) were to be involved in the monitoring of the plan’s implementation, including its demilitarization provisions, while strong mechanisms for securing compliance, or even verification, were lacking (Coufoudakis and Kyriakides 2004: pp.38-40).<sup>10</sup> This problem was fully exploited by the rejectionist Papadopoulos, who warned the Greek Cypriots that Turkey was bound to renege on demilitarisation and other commitments (Loizides 2004). Just as the EU’s decision at Copenhagen suggested the limits of the UN’s ability to control it, the security provisions of the plan suggested the limits of its ability to influence or incentivize Turkey, a major regional power that was a member of NATO and a close ally of two permanent members of the UN Security Council, the United States and United Kingdom. Both of these latter countries were actively involved in the background of the Cyprus talks via envoys, Thomas Weston and David Hannay, respectively, and the UN’s position may have been affected by their influence (Palley 2005).

The UN’s inability to shape the incentives of local parties or control the actions of externals was then exacerbated by a decision to go beyond its role as a mediator and to act as a “mediator”,



i.e. in a manner between mediation and arbitration (Ker-Lindsay 2009). This decision was taken on 13 February 2004 in the face of the inability of the sides to agree on important questions, including on security. The UN Secretary-General agreed to use his “discretion” to finalize the text in the event of “a continuing and persistent deadlock” (S/2004/437 Annex I). A decision to meditate would have made more sense if the UN had been in a position to impose its preferences, but it was not. The Greek Cypriots were now, because of the EU’s decision in Copenhagen, in a stronger position to reject UN terms they did not like. The decision to finalize the text, moreover, was taken in a political culture where Greek Cypriot elites had long railed against external interference in their affairs, including during the process that led to the 1960 Constitution, which they saw as imposed on them by outsiders, primarily the United Kingdom, Turkey and Greece, and, of course, during the events of 1974. The UN’s decision to meditate also happened while the Greek Cypriots were led by a rejectionist president, Papadopoulos, although the extent of his opposition was not completely clear at the time the decision was made. It allowed Papadopoulos the strong political ground of posing as a patriot against outside organizations in hock to great powers.<sup>11</sup> The final decision on the plan was to be made by the two communities, voting in twin referendums, and the Greek Cypriot leadership was in a much better position to sway its people than the UN was. During the referendum campaign, the UN SASG, Alvaro de Soto, requested air time on Greek Cypriot television to counter what he saw as distortions by the Greek Cypriot leadership. His request was turned down, but it is doubtful it would have made any difference.<sup>12</sup>

The UN’s handling of the negotiations was far from unreasonable overall. In particular, while the plan’s provisions on security were arguably not even-handed, its provisions on the core issue of governance (power-sharing) were balanced and useful, though not entirely without weaknesses.<sup>13</sup> The plan called for a Swiss-style, six person (4 GC/2 TC) presidential council in which a representative of the larger constituent state (likely a Greek Cypriot) would serve as a symbolic president for two-thirds of each term, with a representative of the smaller constituent state (likely a Turkish Cypriot) serving for the remaining one third. This solution neatly split the difference between the Greek Cypriot demand for a single president elected by the majority and the Turkish Cypriot demand for co-presidents. The council also provided for the possibility of politically diverse representation within each community, which could enable cross-communal alliances, particularly likely on the left.<sup>14</sup> This had potentially significant advantages over the 1960 constitution in which each community was represented as a political monolith, with a Greek Cypriot President and Turkish Cypriot Vice-president.

Unlike its security proposals, the UN’s power-sharing proposals, which resulted from bringing international expertise to bear on a difficult problem, were accepted by both sides.<sup>15</sup> This suggests that UN mediation can be useful, in spite of the overall failure of the Annan plan. It also suggests the feasibility of an overarching compromise that combines power-sharing (and federalism), with provisions that address Greek Cypriot concerns on other matters, particularly on security. Such a compromise would bring Cyprus more into line with other peace processes such as in Northern Ireland (the Good Friday Agreement) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (the Dayton Peace Accords). In both of these latter cases, the largest communities (unionists and Bosniaks) were asked to accept power-sharing (and federalism in Bosnia), in return for internationally-backed security guarantees, and in the Bosnian case, concessions on property restitution and the return of refugees (McGarry 2020b).

## 2. 'Mediation-lite' and the resumption of the Cyprus talks in 2008

The negative outcome of the Annan Plan referendum was decisive for the foreseeable future of Cyprus mediations. The UN was chastened and became determined to avoid 'mediation'. It moved reactively towards what can be described as 'mediation-lite', a form of mediation that was, in any case, insisted on by the leaders of both communities. Mediation-lite involved the UN chairing meetings on neutral territory (the UN compound in Cyprus's "Buffer Zone"), conveying proposals from one side to the other, orally commenting on each sides' proposals, maintaining a record of the sides' positions and convergences, offering international expertise to the sides through its consultants and those from other international organizations, including the European Union and World Bank, as well as promoting Track II activities and suggesting confidence-building measures. It did not include the UN offering its own written proposals on either substance or process.<sup>16</sup> This formula had the advantage of ruling out the approach that had backfired in 2004 and it added legitimacy to the talks. On the other hand, it was far from a panacea, as progress continued to require agreement among the parties, and this remained dependent on local politics and the balance of power between the sides.

Local politics eventually permitted the resumption of negotiations in September 2008 after moderate leaders were elected in each community - CTP leader Mehmet Ali Talat as the TRNC's president in 2006 and AKEL leader Demetris Christofias as president of the Republic of Cyprus in 2008. The negotiations were again held under the UN's auspices, but with a clear understanding that this time the process would be "Cypriot-led and Cypriot-owned" (Michalis 2013; Xypolia 2017). During the first phase of the talks (2008-11), and indeed right up until 2015-16, the sides opted for a negotiations process that might reasonably be described as "sequential", i.e. some matters were to be discussed initially while others, particularly the issue of territorial adjustment between the two zones and the key issue of security (which would include the guarantor powers in the negotiations for the first time), were to be left until towards the end. To facilitate progress along these lines, the talks were also governed by the overriding principle that "nothing was agreed until everything was agreed". The thinking behind sequentialism was that progress on matters discussed at the beginning would facilitate the resolution of issues discussed subsequently, but this process came to suffer from two problems. First, progress on the early matters was slow, with a focus on details. There was insufficient awareness of the unusual opportunity presented by the presence of moderate leaders on both sides (the first time this had happened in Cyprus's history) and the need to take advantage of this. Second and relatedly, instead of facilitating compromise, the sequential process created obstacles. This was because the side that compromised first had to do so visibly in return for a *later* trade-off, but without that trade-off being guaranteed or visible to the compromising side's supporters.<sup>17</sup>

The post-2008 talks were broken down into six "chapters" on governance (power-sharing, federalism, citizenship, and sovereignty-related constitutional provisions), security, property, territorial adjustment, the economy, and the EU. But the talks initially focused more or less exclusively on governance and the relatively uncontroversial matters of the EU and economy (S/2010/238 para. 12). Christofias courageously committed early on to the compromise of a

“rotating” dual executive presidency in which the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot members would serve for two-thirds and one third of each term, respectively. This abandoned the Annan Plan’s promising proposal for a parliamentary and collegial executive (the ‘presidential council’), which, unfortunately, was seriously tainted by its association with “meditation”. In January of 2010, the two leaders made an important breakthrough on how to elect a rotating presidency. This was to involve direct elections, as in the 1960 Constitution but unlike the Annan Plan. While the 1960 Constitution had stipulated direct elections based on separate communal rolls (i.e. with Greek Cypriots electing the president and Turkish Cypriots the vice-president), the new agreement called for partly integrated elections based on “weighted cross-voting”. Each Cypriot was to have two votes. The Greek Cypriot member of the presidency would be elected by a constituency that was 80% Greek Cypriot and 20% Turkish Cypriot (approximately the actual demographic ratio on the island), while the Turkish Cypriot member would be elected by a constituency that was 80% Turkish Cypriot and 20% Greek Cypriot.<sup>18</sup> By incentivizing rival candidates in each community to reach out for some votes in the other community, this electoral system had what political scientists call a “centripetal” dimension.<sup>19</sup> It provided an obvious advantage to moderate politicians, as they would be most likely to be willing and able to make plausible cross-community appeals. The Cyprus “weighted cross-voting” formula had been pioneered by Costa Carras and the Friends of Cyprus as early as the 1970s.<sup>20</sup> It was not a UN initiative.

Under the Christofias-Talat agreement, the Greek Cypriot member of the presidency would serve as president for two thirds of each term and the Turkish Cypriot for one third, with each serving as vice-president when not president. This was similar to the Annan Plan, which had provided for a rotating two-person presidency to be drawn from its presidential council, although the presidency in the Annan Plan was symbolic. While the agreement on rotation represented a major concession from Christofias in advance of reciprocal concessions from the Turkish Cypriot side, the integrated electoral formula was more in keeping with traditional Greek Cypriot thinking. Communal elections, in the Greek Cypriots’ view, played to the advantage of Turkish Cypriot partitionists by suggesting two separate peoples.

The Achilles heel of the 2010 power-sharing (executive) agreement, which led to the end of the Christofias-Talat negotiations, was something endemic to centripetal electoral institutions. As these advantage moderate politicians, they require moderate politicians to occupy key positions in negotiations if they are to be agreed to, or even tabled (McGarry and Loizides 2015). This condition was satisfied by the presence of Christofias and Talat atop their respective communities. The problem, though, was that Talat faced re-election in early 2011. His opponents in the Turkish Cypriot community were hardline nationalists. These were opposed to a settlement to begin with, but their opposition to “weighted cross-voting” was particularly intense given that it was designed to marginalize them politically in a reunited Cyprus. Talat’s two leading opponents in the Turkish Cypriot community, Dervis Eroglu of the UBP and Serdar Denktash of the Democratic party, formed an electoral pact to defeat him, and in an election campaign that was dominated by weighted cross voting, Talat lost to Eroglu. Weighted cross-voting was also criticized in the Greek Cypriot community, but mainly from the right wing and because it seemed from its perspective to suggest political opportunism on Christofias’s part. Averoff Neophytou, the deputy head of DISY, claimed that the electoral arrangement was designed to “keep the left in power forever.”<sup>21</sup>

Talat's defeat and the effective end of this phase of the negotiations was arguably also contributed to by the "sequential" process that governed the negotiations from 2008, coupled with the slow, "Cyprus-led, Cyprus-owned" nature of progress. Christofias had been criticized from the right within his community for conceding the key prize (for Turkish Cypriots) of a rotating presidency without receiving commensurate concessions on issues of importance to Greek Cypriots, such as property and refugees, territorial adjustment, and, particularly, security.<sup>22</sup> When, during his election campaign, Talat called for Christofias to indicate they could achieve a settlement, his interlocutor felt unable to oblige because of his own political exposure.<sup>23</sup> As a result the opportunity provided by having two moderate leaders each representing constituencies committed to a settlement was squandered. Described by Talat as 'ambivalent', Christofias opted to prioritize his own alliance with two Greek Cypriot hardline parties, DIKO and EDEK. Following Papadopoulos' failure to qualify for the second round in 2008, these two parties had offered conditional support for AKEL's leader. Christofias was the first ever leader of the communist party to be elected to the presidency of the Republic and he knew that in the absence of allies, DISY could dominate Greek Cypriot politics.

The election of the hardliner Eroglu did not stop the negotiations but it effectively stopped progress during his tenure (2011-15), apart from a "Joint Declaration" in February 2014 that resolved a number of important sovereignty issues.<sup>24</sup> The Joint Declaration was driven on the Turkish/Turkish Cypriot side by Ankara, not by Eroglu.<sup>25</sup> Otherwise, the talks between Eroglu and Christofias, and then between Eroglu and Christofias's successor, Nicos Anastasiades, involved little but unproductive conflicts over the 'sequential' process. Eroglu wanted to prioritise issues where the Turkish Cypriots stood to gain, and wanted in particular to avoid discussions on territorial adjustment until the end of the process, on the argument that this would traumatize the affected residents (likely to be Turkish Cypriots) and should only be engaged in when an end was in sight. Security was to be left to the very end. Anastasiades, in contrast, pressed to prioritise issues where the Greek Cypriots were expected to make gains, including property, territorial adjustment, and security. In line with his criticism of Christofias's premature offer of a rotating presidency, Anastasiades withdrew that concession. There was no progress until local politics intervened once more and Eroglu was defeated in April of 2015 by the independent moderate, Mustafa Akinci. Akinci was a politician who seemed completely committed to a balanced settlement of the Cyprus conflict, at least as much as Talat.

### **3. Back to Conventional Mediation: The Road to Crans Montana and Beyond**

The obvious limitations of both meditation and mediation-lite eventually forced the sides in the Cyprus peace talks to seek a more balanced approach in the involvement of third parties in the negotiations. The UN Good Offices Team, under a new Special Adviser, Espen Barth Eide, pushed from 2015 for the sequential process to be replaced by a more integrated one, involving negotiations across chapters (S/2016/15 para. 2). The Greek Cypriots, it was clear, were not prepared to consider substantive compromises on governance, unless they knew what they were going to receive on property, territorial adjustment, and, particularly, on security. The remainder of 2015 and 2016 was taken up with increasingly intensive discussions involving the chapters on governance and property, but also the less controversial chapters of the EU and the Economy. Progress on the latter two was facilitated by the UN's ability to call in other international

organizations, particularly the EU, International Monetary Fund and World Bank to lend expert assistance to the sides (S/2017/814 para. 34). By late 2016 and early 2017, negotiations were taking place on all chapters, including preliminary discussions on territory and security (S/2017/814 para. 11-13).

Substantive negotiations on security necessarily included the guarantor powers (in addition to the two sides), as they were signatories to the treaties that were being discussed (The Treaty of Guarantee and the Treaty of Alliance). Talks at Geneva in January 2017, under the auspices of UN Secretary General Guterres, and involving the guarantors and leaders of the two communities, reached agreement on the need to find “mutually acceptable solutions on security and guarantees that address the concerns of both communities” with all parties recognizing that “the security of one community cannot come at the expense of the security of the other” (S/2017/814 para.14).<sup>26</sup> Arguably, this was not an understanding that had informed the Annan Plan. It paved the way for a ‘final’ Conference on Cyprus, held at Crans-Montana in June-July 2017. To facilitate the novel “cross-chapter” approach to the talks, the parties, including the guarantors, were to meet, alternately, in a “two table” format (S/2017/814 para.18). One of these tables, involving the leaders of the two communities, would discuss the core outstanding domestic issues - primarily governance, property, and territorial adjustment territory – while the other, which included the community leaders and the guarantors, would discuss security. This format allowed for trade-offs between the issues discussed at each of the tables.

The Crans-Montana Conference was also guided by UN Secretary General Guterres who used his personality and the prestige of his office to engage in a more robust mediation than had been attempted by his predecessor, Ban Ki-moon, while also carefully steering clear of “meditation”. At the outset of the conference, Guterres announced that in his view the parties needed to reach a *strategic* (framework) agreement across the core issues. This was intended to skip discussions on minutiae, which could be left until later, thus avoiding the difficulties that had pervaded the negotiations from 2008 to 2015, when matters had become bogged down. Guterres also structured the conference by issuing the “Guterres Framework”, a short list of key issues, agreement on which would pave the way for a comprehensive settlement, and put the parties on a “path of no return”. All aspects of Guterres’s framework were important, but the key implied trade-off involved concessions from the Greek Cypriots on “political equality” (a key part of the governance chapter that included a rotating presidency and “effective participation” by both communities) in return for Turkish and Turkish Cypriot concessions on security (the Treaty of Guarantee, presence of the Turkish army, and a robust implementation mechanism). Guterres’s framework, in other words, was aimed at retaining the most positive part of the Annan Plan for Turkish Cypriots (its balanced compromise on governance, though not its exact details) while substantially improving on its security dimension for Greek Cypriots (through a balanced resolution on security). Towards this latter end, the Secretary-General importantly proposed that the current system of guarantees, and in particular Article 4 of the Treaty of Guarantee containing the unilateral right of intervention, was “unsustainable”, and also that there needed to be a “credible framework for monitoring implementation of the agreement” (S/2017/814 para 24). To facilitate discussion, he introduced a UN-produced blueprint – an implementation monitoring mechanism – that would replace the Treaty of Guarantee. Unlike under meditation, Guterres’s blueprint needed buy in from the parties – like the Guterres Package as a whole – but in the event it was not negotiated in the necessary depth.

Despite Guterres's skilful mediation, agreement on his package proved to be elusive, with the conference breaking down acrimoniously in the early morning of July 7.<sup>27</sup> In his report on the Crans-Montana Conference to the Security Council, Guterres correctly ascribed the breakdown to a lack of will, and specifically to a lack of "trust and determination necessary to seek common ground through mutual accommodation" (S/2017/814 para 26). He declared that the parties had missed an "historic opportunity". By the end of the Conference, there had been "practically full agreement" on the federal executive and effective participation (S/2017/814 para 21); the sides had went further "than ever before" on the territory chapter, agreeing on a rough territorial demarcation, with only details left (S/2017/814 para 10); they also "left little outstanding with respect to an overarching property settlement framework" (S/2017/814 para 22). There had also been significant progress on the security file, as noted. The Secretary-General concluded overall that "the essence of a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus problem is practically there" (S/2017/814 para 45).

The period since Crans-Montana has produced further tensions, primarily around exploration for hydrocarbons, and then the closing of crossings related to the Covid-19 crisis. In spite of this, Akinci and Anastasiades agreed in a meeting with Guterres in Berlin in November 2019 that they remained committed to resuming negotiations based on the Guterres Framework,<sup>28</sup> implying a conditional/tentative endorsement of it. This resumption was held up by the Covid-19 crisis, which forced the cancellation of the election for the Turkish Cypriot leadership, originally scheduled for April 2020, until October 2020. At that election, however, local politics again intervened to erect possible obstacles to progress. Akinci was defeated by a hardliner, Ersin Tatar, the leader of Eroglu's party, and his heir in the Cyprus negotiations. Tatar's public positions, which, like Eroglu's, include support for a two state solution, and the maintenance of the Treaty of Guarantee, seem incompatible with progress in negotiations.

As this article has made clear, UN mediation in Cyprus over the past two decades has often been hostage to local politics within each community, with the UN able to make progress when political moderates are ascendant, but not when hardliners are. But local politics within the communities take place alongside a broader power-relationship between the sides. A rough balance of power independently helps to account for the limited progress of UN mediation over the years, including when both communities had moderate leaders. While Greek Cypriots have had clear incentives to compromise with Turkish Cypriots and Turkey since 1974 (e.g. they would be able to reunite their homeland and reduce or eliminate Turkey's armed presence), they are quite clearly in a position where they have not felt compelled to accept the terms that were offered to them. This bargaining strength, in which the status quo is seen as preferable to the deal on offer, derives from the fact that Greek Cypriots control the state of Cyprus, which has helped them to prevent the recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, simply by opposing it. Statehood was also a prerequisite for the accession of the government- (i.e., Greek-Cypriot-) controlled part of Cyprus to the EU in 2004, which increased the ability of Greek Cypriots to reject the Annan Plan and continues to enable them to resist positions seen as inimical to their interests. Although the EU would like the Greek Cypriots to reach an agreement, and to remove Turkey's troops from a part of the EU's territory, it has limited ability to pressure the Greek Cypriots to settle, given that Cyprus, and Greece, are members. Greek Cypriot-controlled Cyprus has also prospered economically, and by 2018 ranked fifteenth in GDP per capita among the EU's 28 states (IMF 2019). While Turkey's partition and stationing

of a large number of troops in northern Cyprus has introduced a profound security threat, the partition has also, ironically, helped to maintain peace between the two communities by sealing them off from each other. There is no realistic threat of Turkey's army moving further against the Greek Cypriots, not just because UN peacekeepers stand in its way, but because such an action would be extraordinarily difficult to justify.

The status quo is not quite as comfortable for Turkish Cypriots, who remain relatively deprived and internationally isolated. But the Turkish Cypriots also benefit from the absence of violent conflict and are protected economically by significant subsidies from Ankara. Even if Turkish Cypriots were prepared to accept terms that the Greek Cypriots are prepared to offer, a settlement, and particularly its security aspects, also requires the assent of Turkey. The difficulty here is that Turkey is the regional hegemon, an important economic power with the second-largest army in NATO and in a complex relationship with two veto-wielding allies on the UN Security Council (the U.S. and the U.K.). Turkey also hosts the largest refugee population in the world and has been involved in numerous crises in the region that makes in its eyes any confrontation very costly for the EU and other external actors; therefore it does not seem to feel that it has to give Greek Cypriots what they want. At the same time, the Republic of Cyprus and Greece are both members of the EU and given the strength of their legal case and political position, the UN cannot enter into a confrontation with them, risking its own interests within the EU system.

This rough balance of power – or stand-off - between the two sides has made UN mediation extraordinarily difficult, regardless of whether it is meditation, mediation-lite, or conventional mediation that is employed. It has meant that the motivation to settle on the terms available from the other side is not there (Susskind and Babbitt 1996), and the UN has been unable to change either side's calculus. Under these circumstances, meditation, particularly strict deadlines, coercive diplomacy and threats of sanctions can backfire, while a return to mediation-lite interventions in the post-Crans Montana period would appear pointless. Conventional mediation under Guterres's leadership seems the most sensible option, but is no panacea.

### ***Conclusion:***

Regardless of their shortcomings, the two archetypes analysed here - meditation vs. mediation-lite - offer an analytically important distinction on how third parties engage in protracted conflict mediations. At a minimum, the distinction suggests options that mediators and domestic parties can discuss and plan for ahead of future peace talks. Mediation can be made more effective if the merits and de-merits of the different approaches are discussed beforehand, and the expectations and concerns of the different parties are addressed. The case of Cyprus offers a blueprint where in a single case study, each approach has been employed back to back making their rationale and limitations clearer.

In spite of its lack of success in Cyprus to date, the UN's role has also brought some important benefits. The engagement of the UN's Good Offices and its peacekeepers have helped to maintain peace in the island while in the negotiations, the UN has often used its limited capacity in productive ways. Even without the ability to 'force' or 'reward', the UN has used its

‘expertise’ and ‘legitimacy’ to encourage progress (Rubin 1992; Iji 2017: 92-93). UN experts have helped construct important advances, including the governance proposals in the Annan Plan and the sovereignty proposals in the Joint Declaration of February 2014. UN Secretary-General Guterres shrewdly used the legitimacy of his office, and his grasp of the need for balance across a basket of core issues, to help bring the sides closer to an agreement in Crans-Montana in 2017 than ever before, even if the effort ultimately failed.

The UN has also contributed in Cyprus in other ways that are mostly unsung. This includes its role in developing a number of proto-federal structures through various (largely) bicomunal projects, associations and committees actively working to end the long stalemate. The most notable of these include the Committee for Missing Persons responsible for exhuming the missing from the 1963-1974 violence, the Committee on Cultural Heritage for the restoration of ancient monuments including mosques, churches and monasteries, as well as committees on gender, education, policing and crisis management that aim for, and provide the basis for, cooperation during emergencies.<sup>29</sup> Other key initiatives are supported by embassies and foreign governments but in close partnership with the UN, e.g., the religious track of the Cyprus peace process (Sweden), the PRIO Cyprus Centre (Norway), the Cyprus Academic Dialogue (Australia) and the Cypriot political parties bicomunal forum (Slovakia). Finally, the UN is the custodian of the Green Line and through its Cyprus mission enables contacts between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Since the opening of the checkpoints in 2003 more than 40 million crossings have taken place and despite the division those contacts have been peaceful. Related surveys have shown that intergroup contact in Cyprus reduces prejudice and is associated with increased willingness for cohabitation and opposition to partition (see for instance, Psaltis et al. 2019). There is more that can be done on this front.

While capable of alternating its mediation and facilitation roles, the UN is not in a position, outside of resolve and unity on the Security Council, to force parties to settle their differences or even to induce them to do so through direct incentives. It is also not able to control the actions of third parties who may be in a position to compel or induce a settlement, or prevent one. It depends for progress not just on its legitimacy and expertise, but on the balance of power between the sides (realpolitik) and, just as importantly, on supportive local politics.

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<sup>1</sup> For exceptions see Rubin 1992 and Iji 2017

<sup>2</sup> See also special symposium contributions on the emergence of meditation in international peacekeeping by Belloni (2009), Yiakinthou (2009), Noel (2009) and Weller (2009)

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the main milestones leading to EU accession see James Ker-Lindsay 2012.

<sup>4</sup> There is an argument put forward by Greece that it was entirely appropriate to allow the Republic of Cyprus accession prior to a settlement, because if this did not happen, it would effectively hand an unfair veto over Cyprus's accession to the invader, Turkey. In this view, Turkey, either independently given its status as a signatory of the Treaties of Guarantee and Alliance, or because of its influence over Turkish Cypriots, would be in a position to insist on its terms for a settlement before Cyprus's accession to the EU could be obtained. Our argument makes no judgement on Greece's position but merely points out that the incentive structure it created facilitated rejection of the Plan by Greek Cypriots.

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of the difficulties caused by the failure of multiple intermediaries to coordinate their approaches to peacemaking, see Kriesberg 1996.

<sup>6</sup> Palley's is a Hellenophile account that focuses exclusively on the argument that the UN, influenced by the U.S. and U.K., was biased towards Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots. She omits any consideration of the responsibility of the Greek Cypriot leader, Papadopoulos, for the plan's defeat, or of the role played by the EU in making failure more likely.

<sup>7</sup> This claim was made by, among others, Coufoudakis and Kyriakides 2004: p.32.

<sup>8</sup> Had the Plan been approved, the first elections would have taken place on 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2004

[http://www.hri.org/docs/annan/Annan\\_Plan\\_April2004.pdf](http://www.hri.org/docs/annan/Annan_Plan_April2004.pdf) p:11. In the meantime, the two sides had to "provide to the Secretary-General no later than two days after successful referenda the names of the transitional Co-Presidents, the transitional Council of Ministers, and the Cypriot members of the Supreme Court, and otherwise accept any indispensable suggestions of the Secretary-General or his representative."

[http://www.hri.org/docs/annan/AppendixF/MEASURES\\_TO\\_BE\\_TAKEN\\_DURING\\_APRIL\\_2004.pdf](http://www.hri.org/docs/annan/AppendixF/MEASURES_TO_BE_TAKEN_DURING_APRIL_2004.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> The 950 Greek troops were also to be permitted to stay.

<sup>10</sup> Nathalie Tocci reports that 80 per cent of Greek Cypriot "no" voters rejected the plan "out of fear that Turkey would not deliver on its commitments" but does not provide a reference to the poll cited, nor any details of the

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questions asked (Were the respondents given certain choices, or asked to state their own reasons for voting no?), size of the survey, and so on (Tocci, 2004, p. 42).

<sup>11</sup> This was a position spread by one of his advisers. See Palley 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Makarios Drousiotis, "Accusations for Inspections and Pressure in Favor of 'No', Politis 18/02/2004 available at <http://www.makarios.eu/cgi-bin/hweb?-A=216,printer.html&-V=makarios>. According to Drousiotis both Alvaro De Seto and his legal Didier Pfirter were censored by the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CYBC).

<sup>13</sup> The council was to be elected from a single list by a "special majority", i.e. a majority in the House of Representatives and a majority in the Senate that included at least two-fifths of Senators from each constituent state. These provisions for a special majority were designed to help political moderates but opened up the possibility of long haggling on executive formation such as that which took place in Belgium in 2010-11, when it took 589 days to form a government. It also raised the possibility that no list would surpass the special majority threshold (e.g. one list might satisfy the 2/5 support threshold among Turkish Cypriot Senators but not Greek Cypriot Senators, or vice-versa), which would mean that a default rule would be necessary.

<sup>14</sup> By moving away from a directly elected presidential executive towards a parliamentary version, the plan was more closely in line with what is recommended by consociationalists (see Lijphart, 1994 and esp. Linz 1990 as well as Mainwaring and Shugart, 1997; McGarry, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> Annan reported to the Security Council that the presidential council was "broadly accepted" by the parties to the negotiations, and was "one of the least contentious issues in the discussions which followed the presentation of the plan" (United Nations, 2003, para 23). Lordos found that these provisions on power-sharing had no influence on the Greek Cypriots' rejection of the plan: "it was the only aspect of the Annan Plan that did not contribute to the No vote." Personal email correspondence with Alexandros Lordos with the first author. Similarly, a 2019-2020 conjoint experiment confirms this observation. Alternative power-sharing arrangements made little difference in changing public support compared to security, territory or compensation (Loizides et al. 2020).

<sup>16</sup> The first author was a consultant to the UN Secretary General's Good Offices in Cyprus throughout this period.

<sup>17</sup> While the talks were in principle confidential, in practice they were not.

<sup>18</sup> While the details were not worked out, presumably a mathematical formula would have been applied to adjust the 'minority' vote in each constituency to a weight of 20 per cent.

<sup>19</sup> Centripetalism is the term given to the approach associated with the eminent political scientist, Donald Horowitz, in which electoral systems are designed to favour moderate politicians and which have, in his view, a "centripetal" effect on the political system (Horowitz 1985; 1991). The basic idea is that ethnic politicians will moderate if, to get elected in a divided society, they need to depend on votes of communities rival to their own. Horowitz himself did not endorse the Cypriot version of centripetalism pointing instead to the Indonesian alternative.

<sup>20</sup> Cross-voting or weighted-voting has a long history in the island and is arguably the most innovative idea produced in bicomunal workshops in recent decades. Costa Carras and the London-based Friends of Cyprus have lobbied for such arrangements since the late 1970s. References to cross-voting were also included in the Greek Cypriot proposals of 1989. See also Loizides & Keskiner (2004)

<sup>21</sup> 'Resigning is Christofias's Only Option', Phileleftheros, 4 September, 2011. AKEL regularly defended rotating presidency with cross-voting. DISY generally refrained from discussing the issue but DIKO rejected political equality and clearly drew 'a red line on the issue' Minutes of the House of Representatives IA Parliamentary Period, Session A, Special Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2016

<sup>22</sup> Savvas Ioacovides "The Minutes for Rotating Presidency and a Secret Agreement". Simerini 28/2/2020 available at <http://christofias-watch.blogspot.com/2010/02/>. As the name of Christofias-Watch implies the Greek Cypriot leader had to face a vicious opposition to any new deal with the Turkish Cypriot leader.

<sup>23</sup> "Talks failed due to Christofias, Talat says" *Hurriyet* September 25 2012.

<https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/talks-failed-due-to-christofias-talat-says-30892>

<sup>24</sup> This was the Joint Declaration of February 11 2014.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.parikiaki.com/2014/02/eroglu-there-is-no-agreement-on-the-cyprus-joint-declaration-the-process-continues/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2017-01-12/note-correspondents-statement-conference-cyprus>

<sup>27</sup> While Guterres was more assertive than his predecessor Ban had ever been, he arguably made two mistakes. First, he left the Conference on June 30, shortly after it started and just after he presented the "Guterres Package"

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and did not return until July 6. Second, he declared the talks over on the morning of July 7, shortly after he returned. His presence during the talks, or greater persistence after July 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> 'may' have helped to prevent such a negative outcome.

<sup>28</sup> Accordingly "The Greek Cypriot leader and the Turkish Cypriot leader affirmed their commitment to the Joint Declaration of 11 February 2014, the prior convergences, and the six point framework I presented on 30 June 2017 with a view to achieve a strategic agreement paving the way forward for a comprehensive settlement."  
<http://www.uncyprustalks.org/secretary-generals-statement-on-cyprus-25-november-2019/>

<sup>29</sup> Some of these initiatives are supported by the United Nations directly (e.g. the technical committees operate under the UN peace talks while the CMP consists of two members appointed by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities respectively and a third Member selected by the International Committee of the Red Cross and appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General). See CMP webpage at <http://www.cmp-cyprus.org/content/about-cmp-0>