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Foreign Affairs Committee

Visit to Turkey and Cyprus

Fifth Report of Session 2006–07

Report, together with formal minutes

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Foreign Affairs Committee

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Introduction

1. The Committee undertakes visits in connection with its continuing Inquiry into Developments in the European Union each January and July. In January 2007, we judged that Turkey and Cyprus were priority destinations for such a visit. Turkey's accession process was partially stalled following a decision by the European Council to suspend work on 8 key chapters of the *acquis*. This step had been taken after Turkey's failure to implement the Ankara Protocol on a customs union with existing member states—including Cyprus. Ratification of the Protocol is a necessary step for Turkey's accession to the EU. Turkey also continues to station about 30,000 troops in Cyprus.

About this Report

2. It is not our standard practice to produce a Report on the Committee's visits. The discussions we hold with senior figures in governments, parliaments, business and civil society are confidential, and we respect that confidentiality. On this occasion, however, we felt that it was important to acquaint the House with what we heard during the visit to Turkey and Cyprus, and to bring to wider attention a summary of the issues we discussed and the opinions we encountered. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the exchanges, we have arranged the material by theme, rather than by interlocutor. We wish to make it clear that none of the comments or opinions reproduced in the Annex to this Report either represents the view of the Committee or is to be ascribed to any individual or organisation we met in the course of our visit. They are listed in the Appendix.

3. We are grateful to the Turkish and Cypriot governments, to the Turkish Cypriot authorities, and to the United Nations in Cyprus for their assistance with the visit. Our thanks are also due to the staff of the British Embassy in Ankara, the Consulate General in Istanbul and the High Commission in Nicosia, all of whom demonstrated the professionalism we have come to expect from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Annex: Notes of the Committee's visit to Turkey

Bilateral

1. Our interlocutors felt that UK–Turkey relations are in good shape. There is much investment in Turkey by British companies. For example Vodafone has invested heavily in the country, and Tesco is the biggest supermarket chain in Turkey.
2. Turkey is a major route for drug trafficking, and there is close co-operation between the UK and Turkey on counter-narcotics measures.
3. Turkey is also a major actual and potential conduit for energy supplies to Europe, including the UK. A new post has recently been created at the Embassy, dealing with energy and environment issues.

Consular activity

4. The Consular side is also busy. Turkey receives 2 million UK visitors a year, and many British people are now buying property in Turkey. The Consulate-General at Istanbul remains one of the FCO's busier subordinate Posts.¹

Consular Enquiries			Consular Assistance			
Personal Callers	Telephone Enquiries	Post, E:mail and fax	Advice and Self Help	New Detainee Cases Contacted	Deaths requiring Consular Action	Other cases
3,183	6,420	1,095	250	2	3	23

5. Istanbul issued 759 passports and 80 emergency passports during 2005–06. It registered 47 births and 3 deaths, achieving a 100% success rate against the FCO's Public Service Agreement targets.

6. After the bombing of the Consulate-General in November 2003, when two members of staff were killed, the Consular Section operated from the Hilton Hotel. Consular staff moved back to Pera House in January 2005. The Committee visited Pera House to view the restoration work and the visa issuing section.

Turkish politics

7. Turkey is modernising quickly. 2007 is an election year, with Presidential elections in April and Parliamentary elections in November. The AKP (Justice and Development Party) has a large majority. The current Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, is widely expected to run for President.

¹ Figures taken from Istanbul's 2005–06 Consular Annual Return

8. The AKP administration has achieved impressive economic growth, brought inflation under control and reduced unemployment. It is popular in business circles.

9. The Turkish government is hoping to reduce the threshold for representation of political parties in the Turkish parliament from 10% to 7% of the vote. This will allow representation of a wider range of opinion in Parliament.

Political and economic reform in Turkey

10. The present government has been in office for 4 years and 2 months. In that time it has introduced many political, social, economic and financial reforms. This has led to a sustained period of economic growth. A tight fiscal policy and a prudent monetary policy have produced annual growth of 7 to 8%, with low interest rates. The EU accession process has been beneficial for the economy, providing investors with predictability.

11. The period 2002–04 was one of intensive reform to enable Turkey to meet the Copenhagen criteria. Since 2004, Turkey has sent many high-level teams to the United Kingdom to gain information on the *acquis*. The scale of the task of adjusting its laws to the requirements of the *acquis* should be completed within no more than 4 years.

12. Turkey's *per capita* income is now comparable to those of Romania and Bulgaria. Within a few years, Turkey expects to have overtaken several existing member states on this measure.

13. The number of educational exchanges between Turkey and EU countries is high and Turkey is increasingly a destination of choice for EU citizens. Many countries in the Middle East and in North Africa are following Turkey's progress with close interest. There is an intense interest among Islamic countries in the Turkish reform model. Turkey sees itself as an example to Islamic countries of how they could develop successfully. Its accession will have a very positive effect on perceptions of the EU throughout the Islamic world.

14. In late 2004, Prime Minister Erdogan visited 14 of the longer-standing member states to underline his commitment to real change in Turkey. Since then, Turkey has been working hard not only to reform its laws but to implement change on the ground. The Minister and his team have powers to investigate shortcomings and to recommend changes. Erdogan himself was imprisoned for reading out a short poem which was held to offend against Turkey's secular status; Turkish officials assured us that his government's commitment to reform cannot be in doubt.

15. The European Commission's progress report on Turkey reported a slowing-down in the pace of reform in 2006, but Turkish authorities say that this is because the focus now is on implementation rather than on legislative change. Implementation takes time: attitudes among prosecutors, the judiciary and other groups have to be changed.

Islam in Turkey

16. Turkey remains a generally secular state. British tourists holidaying on the coast can behave as they would in any European resort. However, Turkey is urbanising. Istanbul is expanding and there is a new generation of urban poor, who may be susceptible to the

attractions of radical Islam. There is little evidence of this happening so far, but it is an area of potential concern.

17. There are Islamist political parties in Turkey, but they have to be careful not to undermine the secular state. Turkish accession to the EU would be unlikely to affect this, although some see accession as a potential guarantee of religious freedoms. Some Islamists have brought cases before the European Court of Human Rights, but so far none has succeeded.

18. Islamic fundamentalism poses a threat to Turkey and to the entire region. It is likely to increase in severity over the next ten years. Not only al Qaeda but the Taliban and the continuing conflict between the Shia and Sunni factions of Islam contribute to this threat. There are strong concerns in Turkey about the growing strength of Shia militias in Iraq and elsewhere.

Human rights in Turkey

Reform

19. Some Turkish groups feel that the situation has not improved much in the last 2 years. For example, the number of reports of torture being made to the Human Rights Foundation in 2006 was no lower than 2005. Large numbers of protestors were arrested following the riots in the South East. Many claimed that they were tortured.

20. There is some evidence that attitudes in Turkey are changing. For example, more people are prepared to report human rights violations. And in rural areas, people used to talk about the 'father state', in the expectation that the state would assist them. The phrase is no longer used—people know they have to try to solve their problems themselves.

21. The global human rights situation has affected the reform process in Turkey. The war against terror has led to a restriction of human rights worldwide and this has reduced the incentive for the Turkish government to improve its own record.

22. Reform in Turkey is made more difficult by the violence and instability in Iraq. Some Turkish politicians support direct intervention in northern Iraq in order to disrupt the PKK. This and the Cyprus issue foment growing nationalism in Turkey, which is increasingly likely to be a factor in Turkish politics as the elections approach.

Minority rights

23. Minority rights have improved slightly, but the general view is that they still have a very long way to go. There is now a free Kurdish press, but very limited broadcasting in the Kurdish language, and very little teaching. The state does not fund any Kurdish language activities. Curious anomalies exist: for example, it is permitted to use Kurdish in a court of law, but not to use it in political discourse.

24. Five to six years ago, the Kurdish language was effectively banned. Materials in Kurdish are now freely available. However, the medium for all education remains the Turkish language. It is suggested that some Kurds prefer this as it improves their employment prospects.

25. Turkish public opinion was strongly against the US-led intervention in Iraq. They suspect that the US is working towards an independent Kurdish state based on Iraqi Kurdistan. They conflate this theory with the minority rights issue and in particular they see any move towards devolution as a step towards such a state.

Freedom of expression

26. Article 301 of the penal code, which criminalises ‘insults against Turkishness’, was passed in 2005. It is not in essence all that dissimilar to laws in some EU member states. The problem is not so much to do with the law as with the way it is enforced. The judiciary takes a hard line on this. There is no consensus in Turkey on how Article 301 should be amended, but the message is getting through that it needs to be used in a more sensitive way.

27. However, the European Council’s Decision of December 2006 to suspend action on parts of the *acquis* has hardened the mood in parliament, which will now be even more unlikely to be willing to amend the law than it would anyway have been, 2007 being an election year.

Women’s rights

28. The legal framework for women’s rights has recently been improved. The problem is implementation. For example, it is compulsory for girls to attend school to eighth grade (13/14 years old) and it is a criminal offence for parents who fail to allow this. But in practice, many do not go and their parents go unpunished.

29. The EU reform process has strengthened the hand of women’s groups in Turkey. Turkish women’s groups have worked hard to get their concerns onto the agenda and to ensure that the EU gives sufficient weight to the importance of women’s rights.

Turkey’s EU accession process

30. The decision of the December 2006 European Council to suspend talks on 8 of the accession chapters and to freeze the closing of others was deeply disappointing for Turkey. There is bewilderment that the decision allows most chapters to be opened but not closed; this has been portrayed as gratuitous ill will. Turkey nonetheless hopes to open several chapters in the coming months and to make substantial progress. As for the 8 chapters on which all progress is suspended, it was suggested that the delay could work to Turkey’s advantage. By linking the 8 chapters to full implementation by Turkey of its obligations towards Cyprus under the Ankara Protocol, the EU has effectively created a package of measures to be implemented on accession; there is now no real incentive for Turkey to ratify the Protocol before then.

31. The Republic of Cyprus has raised ‘technical objections’ to the opening of 3 chapters, including those on economic policy and financial controls. The education and culture chapter is blocked by France. The statistics chapter is under negotiation. The chapter on industrial policy is ready to open. All these chapters have been cleared for opening by the Commission but are held up by member states.

32. The *acquis* is huge, but Turkey believes that it can harmonise all its laws with it. Much of Turkey's law—about 80 to 85%—is already compliant. On the foreign, security and defence policy chapter (chapter 31), Turkey is 94% compliant. The main areas in which further work is required are agriculture and the environment. The 2012 date for full compliance is realistic, if the EU shows goodwill. Turkey has very well-established structures for implementing EU law; it has been working on this since 2000 and it knows what it has to do.

33. Foreign Minister Gul's recent speech has underlined Turkey's commitment to reform and has shown it is willing to set the pace, even if the EU drags its feet. Turkey will certainly be ready to move swiftly if the climate improves. It was suggested that in fact Turkey may be ready for the EU before the EU is ready for Turkey.

34. There were expectations that Turkey would struggle to harmonise with the *acquis*; its better-than-expected progress has meant that Turkey's opponents have had to find other reasons to frustrate accession.

35. Turkey believes that the decision on its accession will be political, rather than objective. Turkey needs to convince the sceptics that it will make a positive contribution to the EU. Turkey is concerned that, even if the Cyprus problem is dealt with in the next 3 to 4 years, its detractors will find other reasons to oppose accession.

36. Turkey is aware that on accession to the EU, it will lose some of its autonomy. This will be a big step for Turkey, but not an entirely unfamiliar one as it already pools resources as a member of NATO.

37. Turkey thought it would open and close a few more chapters than it did in 2006, and expected more from the Finnish Presidency. However, from June 2006, Turkey's accession became an overtly political issue. Turkey feels that it has been treated differently from other candidate countries. No other Member state has gone through a suspension of the accession process such as that now faced by Turkey.

The European Union: Turkish public opinion

38. Turkey feels that existing member states should play their part to improve popular understanding of what Turkey could bring to the EU. The political landscape could be quite different by 2014, when Turkey's role in relation to countries such as Syria and Iran could be crucial for Europe. But it is also difficult to predict where public opinion in Turkey itself will be by 2014. The trend is increasingly towards Euroscepticism, as people come to know more details about the obligations of EU membership, rather than vague notions of economic prosperity. The prospect of EU membership may become less attractive to people as they look more closely at the issues.

39. Turkey was bruised by the events of the last couple of months of 2006. There is a growing belief in Turkey that the country will be prevented from joining the European Union through, for example, referendums in existing member states such as France. This may happen however hard Turkey strives to meet the criteria for accession. However, there are generational and geographic differences. Younger people are more pro-EU, as are the Kurds in the South East who believe it will improve job creation and cultural rights. The main opposition to the EU comes from Nationalist groups.

40. Turkish business is very pro-Europe and very vocal. The Turkish military is torn both ways; on the one hand, the military sees EU membership as a positive factor in resisting Islamisation, but on the other it fears that EU membership will reduce its influence.

41. People in Turkey think of joining the EU principally in terms of economic prosperity and becoming part of the 'European Club.' Turkey is not Euro-sceptic as such, but if joining means 'giving in' on Cyprus then most people would not be in favour. Turkey wants to join the EU, but not at any cost. At the moment, Turkey is not thinking of a 'middle way' like Switzerland, and the concept of a privileged partnership would be seen as an insult.

42. Turkey's economy is being transformed and in 8 to 10 years it could be the 'dynamo' of Europe. Its energy role will expand greatly, in part reflecting its status as the bridge between East and West.

43. Turkey feels the main reason it is not welcome in Europe is religious or cultural, not political. The public statements of some politicians in France, Germany and other EU member states have fuelled these attitudes. European coolness towards Turkey has provoked anger. Some in Turkey see the EU's championing of minorities as an attempt to undermine the Turkish state.

44. Turkey would not have reformed at the pace it has over the last couple of years without the prospect of EU accession. When the time of accession comes, Turkey may have its own referendum. The outcome of such a referendum would not necessarily be a 'yes'.

45. There is considerable scepticism about opposition in existing member states to Turkey's EU membership. Some say that human rights issues are being used as an excuse for opposing Turkey's accession and that in fact, EU countries don't want to accept Turkey because it is a large, poor, Muslim country, but prefer not to say so. But whether or not Turkey eventually joins the EU, it will have gained many benefits from the accession process.

Turkish perspective on Cyprus

46. Turkey would like to get a UN process started again over the Cyprus problem and believes that the Republic of Cyprus is stalling on this. Turkey feels that the EU has failed to meet a commitment to 'end the isolation' of the Turkish Cypriots because it has still not implemented the Regulation on trade with northern Cyprus. Direct flights to northern Cyprus are seen as the key issue, but there are other aspects of isolation as well: for example, sporting and educational links with the European Union.

47. Turkey's lack of trade with the Republic of Cyprus does not represent a lack of respect for another EU country. But Turkey resents the continued isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, who are unable even to hold an international football match.

48. Turkey is fed up with the proposal that it should take the first step in the Cyprus problem and withdraw some of its troops from the island as a goodwill gesture. Both sides need to take steps and to get round the negotiating table.

49. With 2007 being an election year in Turkey, there is unlikely to be early movement on the opening of ports in northern Cyprus and, therefore, on ending the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots.

50. Turkey expects the UN to take the lead once again regarding Cyprus when the new Secretary General has settled down in his new role. Cyprus is a commitment of the UN and has been on the UN's agenda for years and it is in the interests of everyone to solve this issue. It would be a mistake to move the issue entirely into the realm of the EU. Turkey believes that the Greek Cypriots want to move the Cyprus issue away from New York to Brussels. Turkey counts on its friends, for example the UK, to support it in finding a solution through the United Nations.

51. Turkey is taking steps to ease tensions; for example, by relaxing visa restrictions for Greek Cypriots visiting Turkey. However, Turkey finds it difficult to trust the Greek Cypriots and their intentions.

The Cyprus problem as a factor in Turkey's accession process

52. Turkey is frustrated by the way the Cyprus problem has held up its own accession process. Turkey believes it has done the right thing with Cyprus, for example encouraging Turkish Cypriots to vote 'yes' to the Annan Plan, which Greek Cypriots rejected.

53. Turkey is concerned that the Greek Cypriots will exercise their veto on Turkey's accession to the EU. If this happens and Turkey does not enter the EU, Greek Cypriots and Greece itself will suffer, because a solution to the Cyprus problem will be more difficult with Turkey out of the European Union.

54. It appears to Turkey that the Cyprus question is being used as an excuse by some member states who are looking for ways to frustrate Turkey's accession process. Turkey is responding by developing its own 'roadmap' for accession. Turkey will continue its work on the *acquis*—including on the 8 suspended chapters—regardless of obstructions placed in its path. Turkey appreciates the UK's support for accession. The UK is seen as taking a strategic view; it understands Turkey.

Turkish forces on Cyprus

55. Turkey does not believe it would help to solve the Cyprus problem if Turkey unilaterally reduced its forces on the island. The reduction of troop numbers has to be made as part of a comprehensive settlement; it is not possible just to take out one piece of the problem and to leave the others. The Turkish troops would have been withdrawn if the Annan Plan had been adopted. The Greek Cypriots will have to accept that if they want a comprehensive settlement it will look something like the Annan Plan. Turkey is prepared to move forward so long as it can see good intentions from the Greek Cypriot side.

Turkish Military

56. The military remains influential, particularly on the Cyprus question and in relation to the Kurdish South East. The current constitution was written by the military and embeds a role for it in society that it intends to preserve. Turkey still has conscription and senior

members of the ruling party have served in the military and retain links with it. Also, much of the senior hierarchy in the Turkish military was involved in the 1974 intervention in Cyprus. People in Turkey expect the military to have views and to express those views.

57. The role of the military is regarded by many as a guarantee of a secular society, and this can be seen as in the interests of the EU and its existing member states. If the role of the army is seen as a major block on EU membership, a balance can be found.

58. Reform of the role of the military in society was seen by one senior Turkish interlocutor as the most important question before Turkey's political classes.

Turkey's strategic value

59. Turkey feels it will be able to make a positive contribution to the EU. For example, Turkey is in a geographic area that controls the Black Sea passage from Ukraine and Georgia to the European Union. Pipelines are being constructed via Turkey to Austria, and Russia may also pump gas through Turkey. Turkey receives gas from Iran and will start to receive gas from Egypt in 2007. Oil pipelines are also being constructed. In addition, by cooperating with Turkey, it could be easier for the EU to have a presence in, for example, Iraq.

60. There is felt to be good cooperation between the UK and Turkey on strategic issues.

Turkey's external borders

61. Turkey has long borders with countries that pose significant challenges for the EU, for example in terms of illegal immigration and drug trafficking. It would be an enormous task to police those borders. The borders are porous at the moment; for example there is no visa arrangement between Turkey and Iran.

62. Turkey has a well-established border with Iran and there is much trade between the countries, also large numbers of border crossings by visitors. Turkey also has a dialogue with Iran and has told the Iranian government that it does not support Tehran's nuclear weapons programme.

63. Turkey has learned to live with an autonomous Kurdish region (of Iraq) on its doorstep, but it is very worried by the prospect of the disintegration of Iraq. A fully independent Kurdish state in Iraqi Kurdistan would be very difficult for Turkey to tolerate and it is working hard to avoid such an outcome.

64. Turkey has a strong interest in Central Asia, with much of which it has close cultural ties. It cannot afford to give the region as much aid as it would wish, but relationships with most countries are good. Turkey sees itself as a counterweight to Russia in the region. It is potentially able to provide alternative energy supply routes from the 'Stans to the West—for example, through the Transcaspian pipeline. Greater prosperity from energy exports to the West would enable the 'Stans to resist Russian influence. Turkey is also hopeful that higher standards of democracy will soon come to the region.

Cyprus

Bilateral

65. The British High Commission in Cyprus promotes the United Kingdom's strategic objectives, particularly its EU agenda, and supports British nationals in Cyprus and the 1.5 million British tourists who visit Cyprus every year. It also has a public diplomacy role. The High Commission maintains seven buildings on three sites, one of which is in the Turkish Cypriot area.

66. The UK gives £500,000–£600,000 a year in aid to help northern Cyprus bring itself up to EU standards, with a focus on judicial and civil service reform.

67. There is a warm relationship between British and Cypriot nationals. At a political level, however, the UK's relationship with the government of the Republic of Cyprus is mixed, and is strongly affected by Greek Cypriot perceptions of the UK's role in efforts to solve the Cyprus problem and by the UK's firm support for Turkey's EU accession.

Cultural relations

68. The British Council, from its new premises in central Nicosia, works on education reform and promotion. It works with both communities and administrations on the island. Since 2004, there has been an increase in Cypriots studying in the UK, with 5,500–6,000 people studying there at the moment. There are four times as many students going to the UK as to America from Cyprus. Greece is the only country that takes more students from the island.

69. There are 55,000 British examinations sat on Cyprus each year, half of which are school exams, ie GCSEs and A levels, and half of which are professional or vocational exams. Cypriots are interested in these exams as they are considered to be prestigious. They can open doors in Cyprus and are perceived as a badge of quality. They run parallel to the education system that exists in Cyprus, with the majority of people studying for them at private institutions at afternoon sessions. These exams are self-funded and do not cost the British taxpayer anything.

70. The Council does not teach English to walk-in customers as this is offered by the state. The provision for English language classes on Cyprus is already good and there are English language teachers in both communities.

The Sovereign Base Areas

71. There is now a light permanent military presence in the UK's Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs). The main role of the SBAs is communications, but it is also a valuable 'forward mounting base' for operations in the region and a stopover for aircraft supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some theatre reserves are held in the SBAs.

72. Cypriot civilians resident in the SBAs find that their day-to-day lives are no different from those of their fellow Cypriots. They are able to vote in local, national and European

elections. Although the 1972 Treaty of Accession specifically excluded the SBAs from the territory of the EU and this did not change when Cyprus acceded, a protocol provides for application of some EU programmes within the SBAs.

73. There is occasional friction with elements of the Greek Cypriot population who are opposed to the bases, but in general relations are good. The SBAs are dependent for their day-to-day power, water and other supplies on the Republic of Cyprus.

74. The UK's offer to cede sovereignty over a large part of the SBAs—mostly in the East and predominantly to Greek Cypriot administration—was made in the context of the Annan Plan and it is thought that it would only be resurrected as part of an overall settlement of the Cyprus problem.

The UK perspective on the Cyprus problem

75. Since the Committee's last visit in 2005, Cyprus has seen no real progress towards a settlement to the Cyprus problem. On the Greek Cypriot side, there has been a demonisation of the Annan Plan and those who supported it, especially the UK and the United States.

76. President Papadopoulos met Tony Blair in July 2005, during the UK's EU Presidency. The Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw have all visited Cyprus. However, Jack Straw received a hostile reception and President Papadopoulos asked him not to meet the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr Talat, in his 'presidential' office. When Mr Straw did meet Mr Talat, President Papadopoulos then refused to see Mr Straw.

77. With the passage of time, the division of the island becomes more permanent. The property ownership issue is an example of one that is becoming more difficult to resolve as time passes. The increasing number of settlers in the north is another: after 5 years' residence in the 'TRNC', Turkish immigrants may qualify for 'citizenship'. This affects the political climate in the north as the settlers, unlike Turkish Cypriots, feel they have nothing in common with Greek Cypriots.

78. Opinion surveys on the island show bicomunal majority support for at least one possible solution to each of the outstanding issues identified by one community or the other as a barrier to a settlement. There has to be compromise in order to make progress. This will be painful, but less painful than a permanent division of the island.

79. The Turkish Cypriots were desperate for a solution in the run-up to Cyprus's accession to the EU in 2004. They are less desperate now, and in time the settlers from the mainland may become a majority in the north, which could dramatically affect its outlook. Such is the pace of change in the north that no-one can really predict what will happen there. There is also a risk that Turkey may become more assertive in relation to Cyprus, especially if its hopes of EU accession are dashed.

80. Turkey could withdraw thousands of troops without compromising the security of the Turkish Cypriots. But the Turkish military has a strong attachment to Cyprus. Withdrawal of Turkish forces is bound up with wider questions of reform of Turkish society and governance.

Greek Cypriots on the Cyprus problem

81. Some Greek Cypriots feel their leadership needs to articulate their concerns and their goals more clearly, using the Annan Plan as the basis for further progress on the Cyprus problem. Opposition politicians in particular feel that President Papadopoulos needs to take the initiative. Instead of playing to the public gallery, he should present specific proposals to the UN, to the EU and to the Turkish Cypriot leadership.

82. However, Greek Cypriots are unlikely to support a solution unless it is recommended by their government. To be sure of success, both the government and other political groups will have to campaign in favour of any proposal that is put to a referendum. Public opinion in Cyprus is led by the political parties, and especially by whoever holds the office of President. The parties presently in government control most of the newspapers in the south.

83. Cyprus as a full member of the EU could use its present leverage over Turkey to achieve an acceptable solution. It could also ask the EU to guarantee implementation of such a solution. This could allay one of the Greek Cypriots' greatest concerns—that Turkey will not honour its obligations. It should be possible to agree a solution and to obtain binding commitments from Turkey, but this cannot happen until after this year's elections in Turkey.

84. Greek Cypriots do not expect any significant steps on a solution to the Cyprus Problem during 2007 because of the Turkish elections this year and the elections in Cyprus in 2008. But progress could be made on confidence building measures and discussions on the detail, based on the 8 July agreement between the two leaders. On the day of the Committee's visit, the leader of AKEL—the main Greek Cypriot political party—Dimitris Christofias (who is also Speaker of the Cyprus House of Representatives), and his Turkish Cypriot counterpart, CTP leader Ferdi Soyer (who is also 'Prime Minister of the TRNC'), met and reached agreement on 3 principles:

- Implementation of the agreement of 8 July
- Demilitarisation of the Green Line, including of the Ledra Street area, on the same basis as existing crossings. Doubts remain as to the willingness of the Turkish army to facilitate this, but it can take place only with their consent.
- Regular meetings and an end to the war of words on both sides; an end to public attacks and the resumption of direct contacts.

85. Opening the Ledra Street pedestrian crossing in central Nicosia would be of mainly symbolic value, but was seen as none the less important for that.²

86. Some Greek Cypriots feel their political leadership needs to take a longer term view. There are all sorts of dangerous possibilities for the future of Cyprus—including imposition by the international community of a Kosovo-type solution. They felt that the possibility of a precedent being set in Kosovo would be a major mistake, but Greek Cypriots also know that time is against them.

2 The crossing was eventually opened in March 2007

87. Greek Cypriots want more pressure to be put on Turkey. The greatest barrier to progress is seen as the deep state in Turkey, and particularly the army. Not even Erdogan can face down the army and there is no way Talat can defy them. Although the Turkish establishment is opening up and even to some extent changing as part of the EU accession process, the prospects for success are not seen as good.

88. Asked about the possibility of dialogue between the two military forces and the possibility that the UN might one day withdraw, Greek Cypriots were prepared to consider suggestions for confidence building measures provided there was no step towards recognition or granting status to the 'TRNC'. Withdrawal of UNFICYP would be seen by Greek Cypriots as part of an Anglo-American conspiracy to undermine them.

89. There is a lack of trust between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots. But trust will not be achieved while the communities live separately. The Cyprus Government feels it has helped the Turkish Cypriots in various substantive ways, for example by providing free treatment in hospitals and by opening crossing points in the Green Line. However, in return Greek Cypriots have to show their passports to cross into the north of their own country.

90. Some Turkish Cypriots have sold Greek Cypriot land in the north to foreign investors. When Greek Cypriot refugees see this development of their land, they conclude that the Turkish Cypriots do not want a solution to the Cyprus dispute. It does not give a Greek Cypriot hope that one day he will be able to return to his house.

91. Greek Cypriots believe that the solution to the Cyprus problem is the reunification of the island; to have two separate communities is against the interest of the Cypriots. It is also anachronistic to have one of the smallest states in the EU divided into two. No solution would be without its problems but the new state should be flexible enough to absorb any shocks.

92. It sometimes seems to Greek Cypriots that for the UK Turkish accession to the EU takes priority over the need for a solution to the Cyprus problem. Some suggest that the effect of the UK's policies is to perpetuate the division of the island, and that this therefore make Turkey's accession less likely.

93. Most Greek Cypriots recognise that there is only one way to solve the Cyprus problem and that is through dialogue and mutual respect and compromise. The Greek Cypriots do not want to abandon the United Nations as the institution through which negotiations should occur. However, the experience of the Europeans will be useful to Cyprus, setting a good example of how a country can give up part of its sovereignty without the use of military force, rather by re-building after a tragic past, by faith. Cyprus could also be an example for Europe as it would be the first example of a country with two communities with two religions.

Turkish Cypriots on the Cyprus problem

94. There is still a pro-solution leadership in northern Cyprus but their support should not be taken for granted. There are worrying trends as most Turkish Cypriots feel they have not been rewarded for the 'yes' vote and that the EU has not delivered on its promises, particularly on direct trade. Turkish Cypriots feel sandwiched between the EU and Turkey

and want to see early progress on the Cyprus problem using the United Nations, not the European Union. Turkish Cypriots want to make an honest living and develop their own economy, particularly in the area of tourism, rather than to rely on aid. They also want direct trade with the EU.

95. The two sides are at a stalemate. The Greek Cypriots are very comfortable with the *status quo* and have little incentive to move things along. This is unacceptable to the Turkish Cypriots, whose fate depends on a solution to the Cyprus problem. Recognition and full legitimacy as part of a unified state of Cyprus is their goal.

96. Holders of passports issued by the 'TRNC' may enter the US, UK, France Pakistan and a few other countries, but are otherwise severely restricted in where they can travel.³ Ending the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots would be an important step towards a comprehensive solution, but it is not an alternative to such a solution. It is nonetheless a very important issue in its own right. Ending isolation is not just about trade and direct flights, it is also about other issues such as sporting links, membership of international organisations, postal addresses and telephone codes. The 'TRNC' attaches importance to achieving Turkish Cypriot participation in the Bologna process.⁴

97. President Papadopoulos has still not set out his demands. It is not clear to Turkish Cypriots what he wants, and therefore Turkish Cypriots say they do not know what they need to do in order to meet Greek Cypriot concerns. The 'areas of concern' presented by Papadopoulos to Sir Kieran Prendergast in 2004 were too broad and too vague. He needs to be more specific.

98. Turkish Cypriots feel that the dynamic on the island is very negative. They do not think the Greek Cypriots really want a solution. It is therefore important for the international community to lift the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots, particularly through direct flights. Turkish Cypriots feel they did the right thing in approving the Annan Plan, but they have not benefited. Turkish Cypriots are being blocked on trade to Europe, the Middle East and within the island. Only direct flights and trade will change Greek Cypriot attitudes. These issues have to be negotiated and discussed with the Turkish Cypriot community, not with Turkey.

99. Turkish Cypriots would not feel comfortable about the possibility of UNFICYP withdrawal, because they do not trust the Greek Cypriots. Nonetheless, there is no recent history of violence on the Green Line. The Turkish army should continue to provide guarantees for the Turkish Cypriot community while both communities work towards an

3 Note by the Clerk: So far as entry to the UK is concerned, Official Home Office guidance states that "The "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (TRNC) is not recognised as a state by the United Kingdom Government and its passports must not, therefore, be endorsed by immigration officers. Holders of such documents should not be refused entry. Leave to enter, if granted, should be endorsed on another document, eg. a Declaration of Identity for Visa Purposes (also known as a GV3). If the person otherwise qualifies for entry, leave to enter should be given by endorsing that document.

4 Note by the Clerk: The purpose of the Bologna process is to create the "European higher education area" by making academic degree standards and quality assurance standards more comparable and compatible throughout Europe. The Bologna declaration was made by ministers of education from Council of Europe countries in the Italian city of Bologna in 1999. It has since been opened up to other countries, but the 'TRNC' remains excluded (the 'TRNC' has only observer status at the Council of Europe). The next inter-governmental meeting of the process will take place in London in Spring 2007.

agreed settlement. Any permanent reduction in Turkish troop numbers should take place as part of an overall settlement of the Cyprus problem. The National Guard in the south includes a substantial mainland Greek component. In all, 80,000 Greek Cypriots have weapons, and all men in the south receive military training. The Turkish army presence in Cyprus is seen by 90% of Turkish Cypriots as essential for their security. For the army to leave, other guarantees will have to be in place.

100. There are 6 universities in northern Cyprus. Most of the students are from Muslim countries. Many of them are Palestinians, and there is also a large group from the Balkans. The exclusion of these universities from the Bologna process, and therefore from pan-European programmes such as Erasmus, is making them uncompetitive in the higher education market.

101. There is a lack of incentives for the two sides to cooperate—this is especially true in the case of the Greek Cypriots. A referendum now on the Annan Plan would be pointless as the Greek Cypriots would vote ‘No’. A referendum should only be held when there is a strong probability that both sides will vote ‘Yes’. In the north, support is growing for independence, but public opinion could still be won round for reunification on the right terms.

102. One Turkish Cypriot interlocutor suggested that President Papadopoulos’ preferred outcomes to the Cyprus problem can be ranked as follows:

- ‘Osmosis’ (Greek Cyprus absorbs Turkish Cyprus)
- The status quo
- Negotiated partition
- A truly federal state

103. He said that most Turkish Cypriots, on the other hand, would rank their preferences thus:

- A truly federal state
- Partition (ie, an independent Turkish Cypriot state)
- The *status quo*

The ‘settler’ issue

104. There are at least 200,000 permanent residents in northern Cyprus, of whom 50,000 are of Turkish mainland origin. Most of the latter are economic migrants from poor areas of Turkey. There are also about another 100,000 short-term residents, mostly from Turkey, but some from the UK. Many of these (30,000) are students; others are labourers, or families of the military stationed on the island. A census was recently held in the north, but it was not internationally supervised and at the time of the visit publication of the full results had been delayed.

105. There is intermarriage between Turkish Cypriots and immigrants from Turkey. Under the Annan Plan, Turks married to Turkish Cypriots would have remained on the island, but a further 42,000 ‘TRNC’ citizens who were not married to Turkish Cypriots would have been liable to leave. The recent census should produce a more accurate, up-to-date figure for this category of people.

106. Before 2004, it was very easy for settlers to gain citizenship of the ‘TRNC’. Now, it is more difficult for this to happen. Most mainland Turks who come to northern Cyprus now do so on work permits and they are not eligible for citizenship.

107. Many of the settlers in the north have not integrated fully into Turkish Cypriot society. Many of them would probably be content to return to Turkey, given appropriate incentives. However, the settler issue is acknowledged to be one of those most in need of further discussion.

North–South contacts

108. There is no direct Greek Cypriot–Turkish Cypriot official dialogue to follow up the Annan Plan, but UN Special Representative Michael Møller does meet with officials from both sides to discuss implementation of last July’s Gambari initiative. Politicians from both sides have occasional contact, but normally in their party capacities, not in their official capacities.

109. There is no direct liaison between the police forces either side of the Green Line; this meant in one recent case that the Turkish Cypriot killers of a man in the Greek Cypriot administered south, who fled north and were arrested, could not be prosecuted as the Turkish Cypriot police refused to hand them over to the Greek Cypriot police, and the Greek Cypriot Police refused to share their evidence with Turkish Cypriot prosecutors.

110. There is some liaison between the two communities on public health, although this did not extend to measures to protect against avian flu.

111. There has never been a company registered jointly by Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Legally there is nothing stopping a Turkish Cypriot setting up a company in the south with a Greek Cypriot, but it was suggested that this has not happened yet for psychological reasons. It was also alleged that, if Greek Cypriots try to do business with the north, pressure is put on them not to do so.

112. There is a Greek Cypriot Chamber of Commerce in the south and a Turkish Cypriot equivalent in the north. Although there is no dialogue between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot companies, the Chairmen of the two Chambers of Commerce are personal friends. They meet once a month and have attended each other’s annual general meetings.

113. About 6,000 Turkish Cypriots commute daily across the Green Line to jobs in the south. Free movement across the Line would be a feature of an overall settlement but is increasingly becoming a reality on the ground. About 80 to 90 thousand Turkish Cypriots have Republic of Cyprus identity cards (those Turkish Cypriots who lived in Cyprus before 1974 and their children are eligible; children of a mixed marriage between a Turkish Cypriot and a mainland Turk are not). The ‘TRNC’ leadership does not advocate Turkish Cypriots obtaining these, but neither does it try to prevent them.

114. At the time of the visit, the technical committees established under the July 2006 Gambari agreement were still not functioning properly. The lack of dialogue between the two sides is disappointing. The working relationship between the two sides at official level is largely non-existent, but even where it does function such as on the Committee on Missing Persons it is difficult. For example, for the purposes of official meetings the Committee has to find, or create from scratch, an English name for each place in Cyprus, as neither side will agree to use the other's place names.

115. President Papadopoulos is known to have strong reservations about meeting Mr Talat. The ground has to be prepared well—the meeting has to succeed, or it would be better for it not to happen at all. Official contacts between the two leaders cannot start yet, but they are an inevitable step in due course. If a first meeting goes well, others will follow.

116. There is dialogue between the two communities on a political level, between trade unions, and also on a social level. However, Greek Cypriots say that the Turkish Cypriots do not want official meetings between institutions and the Government. Turkish Cypriots will use meetings to try to 'upgrade' themselves and convince the Republic of Cyprus that there is a separate state in the north. The Turkish Cypriot 'government' represents the Turkish Cypriot community, but there is only one official government in Cyprus, and so the two sides have had informal meetings without using titles .

117. There is a big gap between the Greek Cypriots' and the Turkish Cypriots' ideas for a solution to the Cyprus problem. If there were to be a meeting today without any preparation at the technical level, then that meeting would result in failure. People in Cyprus would lose hope and it would give the wrong message to the international community. So any future meeting should be very well prepared.

118. The Turkish Cypriot view is that President Papadopoulos' refusal to meet Mr Talat is all part and parcel of Papadopoulos' contention that the Cyprus problem is actually a problem between the Republic of Cyprus and Turkey, not between the island's two communities. Papadopoulos would therefore prefer to speak to Erdogan, not to Talat. However, the UN-brokered agreement of 8 July 2006 was signed by Papadopoulos and Talat, not by Erdogan, although that only happened under strong UN pressure.

119. Papadopoulos and Talat are from different generations (Talat is 54, Papadopoulos is 72) and from completely different backgrounds; they have no history of contact. Last June, the UN decided to force the issue and Under Secretary-General Gambari was despatched to the island. He managed to get the two leaders together 3 times in a week and talks between officials were restarted.

120. Both sides actually seek a broadly similar outcome. However, the talks so far have been mainly talks about talks. On several occasions, they have come close to talking about more substantive issues, and both sides understand that time is against them. The UN is increasing the pressure, and together with the EU is bringing new momentum to the process.

The economies of Cyprus

121. The economy in the north is growing by about 10% annually and this removes some of the incentive from Turkish Cypriots to seek a settlement. As their prosperity improves,

Turkish Cypriots are increasingly inclined to assert their separate identity. International institutions cannot invest in north Cyprus as it is not recognised as a state. This means that the Turkish Cypriots are dependent on local banks who charge high interest rates.

122. Financial and economic aid from Turkey is all that keeps the 'TRNC' solvent. Turkey is the 'TRNC's only significant trading partner. This gives Ankara great leverage over the Turkish Cypriot leadership. However, Turkish Cypriot leaders claim that, if it were a full member of the EU, an independent Turkish Cypriot state would be viable and less susceptible to Turkish influence.

123. The Republic of Cyprus is not dependent on Greece in the same way, but Greek politicians have to respect public sentiment, which is strongly pro-Greek Cypriot.

124. The economy is doing extremely well in the Republic of Cyprus and has grown by 4 per cent over the last year and the country is on track to join the Eurozone in January 2008. The economy is likely to do well over the next couple of years but there are questions about whether this growth is sustainable, for example with tourism looking like it is in trouble. There is improved tax collection which has improved the fiscal deficit but there is only so much tax that can be paid.

125. Some feel that the key to progress is economic cooperation between the two communities. The two sides' chambers of commerce meet monthly, but the technical committees also need to get to work. Joint business ventures could be set up in the buffer zone, which in places is several kilometres wide. The EU's Green Line Regulation on cross-border trade is not enough, but EU involvement in inter-communal trade and joint ventures is important.

The EU dimension

126. Under the 1999 Helsinki formula, a settlement of the Cyprus problem was not a precondition of entry into the EU for the Republic of Cyprus. When the Turkish Cypriots walked away from negotiations on Annan IV, and Turkey withdrew its cooperation in December 2002, Cyprus' accession became inevitable. The parliament of Greece would have vetoed the entire enlargement process if Cyprus had not been included among the ten countries due to accede in 2004.

127. Cyprus joined the EU in 2004 for political, not economic, reasons, but now there is a feeling among many Greek Cypriots that the EU is not what they thought it would be. The government will have an uphill battle persuading people that Cyprus should join the Eurozone, although there is no choice in the matter as Cyprus signed up to the Euro in its Treaty of Accession.

128. Since the 2004 referendums, the EU has proposed three regulations: the Green Line Regulation, the Direct Trade Regulation and the Financial Aid Regulation. Of these, the Direct Trade Regulation is still outstanding. The Financial Aid Regulation was passed but there have been difficulties in its implementation, which Turkish Cypriots blame the Greek Cypriots for. Turkish Cypriots allege that the Republic of Cyprus has sought to link the Direct Trade Regulation to unrelated issues such as the future of Varosha. The Cypriot Foreign Minister has offered to facilitate trade between the north of the island and the rest

of the European Union through Greek Cypriot ports, but the Direct Trade Regulation itself does not include this provision and it is in any case unacceptable to Turkish Cypriots.

129. Turkish Cypriots say unification means political parity between the two communities. In order to achieve this, they say, northern Cyprus must be able to trade in the same way as everybody else in Europe. The 'TRNC's soil is in Europe, but its economy is not. The Turkish Cypriots say they have every right to claim direct access to European markets and to bring European tourists direct into the north of the country. The Turkish Cypriot economy is based on services, eg tourism and education, but the lack of direct flights to the north causes problems for them, especially regarding tourism. Turkish Cypriots consider themselves to be citizens of Europe and feel they should benefit in the same way as other European citizens.

130. The Republic of Cyprus wants Turkey's EU accession process to continue. This gives the Greek Cypriots potentially huge leverage over Turkey—Cyprus has at least 72 opportunities to veto Turkey's accession. The UK's support for Turkish accession is seen by many Greek Cypriots as a hostile attitude.

131. The EU counter-declaration of 21 September 2005 explicitly required Turkey to ratify the Ankara Protocol and stated that progress would be reviewed in 2006. That review confirmed there had been no progress towards ratification. There is no set-down timetable either for ratification of the Protocol or for agreement of the Regulation on direct trade with northern Cyprus. Most EU member states take a hard line on Turkey, but the Greek Cypriots feel that December's European Council let Turkey off the hook by agreeing to suspend work on only 8 chapters of the *acquis*.

132. It is not that Greek Cypriots feel the UK's support for the principle of Turkish accession to the EU is the problem. Cyprus supports Turkey's accession to the EU as it is in their interests to have an EU neighbour. If Turkey concludes it will never be able to join, it will not reform. So from Greek Cypriots' point of view, Turkey's full compliance with the EU's criteria for entry could only be a good thing. However, the UK is seen as bending over backwards to help Turkey more than Turkey deserves to be helped. If the UK were willing to bend the rules in order to get Turkey in, that would certainly be a problem.

Trade

133. Europe was the 'TRNC's main trading partner until the European Court ruling of 1994 made direct trade difficult. Now 80% of goods leaving northern Cyprus do so through Turkey. This is creating economic dependency on Turkey. It also imposes high costs on Turkish Cypriot businesses, harming their competitiveness.

134. Trade over the Green Line has not developed to the level the Greek Cypriots had hoped for. Turkish Cypriots can sell their products to Greek Cypriots or export from legal ports. The Greek Cypriots have suggested ideas that would make trade between the two communities easier but they feel Mr Talat has taken measures that do not allow Turkish Cypriots to trade with Greek Cypriots.

135. The Trade Regulation does not specify any particular port. There was talk of opening Famagusta but that was linked with returning Varosha to the Greek Cypriots. The Finns put in a lot of effort to make progress on this front but they did not succeed.

136. Turkish Cypriots do not want to be obliged to export via Greek Cypriot ports like Limassol. Turkish Cypriots feel they should be able to use the ports in the north. They ask why the same documentation that is used to export goods across the Green Line cannot also be used to export direct to Europe from the north.

137. There is a report to Brussels each month detailing how many goods have moved across the Green Line. The Green Line Regulation has given the Turkish Cypriots the facility to export to the south and this has provided the north with some economic benefit. However, the amount of money that Turkish Cypriots are making from trading over the Green Line is not enough for their economy to develop.

138. Nevertheless, Turkish Cypriots would like Cyprus' sea-ports and airports to be used by everybody on the island. For example, if Limassol were more competitive the Turkish Cypriots should be able to use that, and Greek Cypriots should be able to use Famagusta. The Greek and Turkish Cypriots should cooperate with each other, rather than blocking each other. A united island would have been a win-win situation because the Greek Cypriots would have been able to benefit from proximity to Turkish ports, and the Turkish Cypriot economy would have been in a better position.

Direct flights to the north

139. The Republic of Cyprus does not exercise direct control over Ercan airport in the north of the island.⁵ The Turkish Cypriots have obtained a QC's opinion to the effect that the legal position under the Chicago Convention on civil air movements is therefore unclear, but most experts have taken the view that direct flights to Ercan would run counter to the Convention.

140. It is for individual EU member states as signatories to the Chicago Convention to decide if they are able to authorise direct flights to north Cyprus; it is not a matter for the EU as a whole. It would also be for the Republic of Cyprus to identify an airport in the north under the Convention. An application for permission to schedule direct flights to north Cyprus from London has not yet been determined by the Department of Transport in the UK. If the Department does agree to such flights, the Greek Cypriots will challenge this and take the matter to judicial review. If the Department does not agree to the flights, the Turkish Cypriots will do the same.

141. The UK's support in principle for direct flights to northern Cyprus goes down very badly in the south. Greek Cypriots feel that direct flights would remove one of the most important incentives for Turkish Cypriots to support an overall settlement. It might even drive them towards independence.

142. Turkish Cypriots claim that allowing direct flights to Ercan airport will not mean that the Greek Cypriots are recognising the 'TRNC' as a separate state. There are direct flights to Taiwan, for example, even though it is not recognised as a state in its own right. If they cannot achieve direct flights, Turkish Cypriots claim they will be forced to become closer and closer to Turkey. If the north cannot compete on the same footing as the south, it cannot improve its economy and so will become more dependent on Turkey.

5 'Ercan' is the Turkish name; the Greek name is 'Tymbou'.

143. If Ercan airport were opened to direct flights it is estimated that north Cyprus would receive a million tourists who would generate \$1 billion in revenue. With this income, north Cyprus could stand on its own two feet. Turkish Cypriots suggest that tourists flying into Ercan should be able to visit the whole island, which would benefit the Greek Cypriots as well. In addition, if Ercan were opened to direct flights not only would tourists fly in, but goods could be exported by air as well which would also make the economy stronger. However, the Greek Cypriots fear that if Ercan were opened to direct flights, the Turkish Cypriots would lose any incentive to reach a wider settlement.

The United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)

144. UNFICYP's mandate has to be renewed each 6 months. When the mandate was last renewed, in December, Kofi Annan said that the continued presence of UNFICYP should not be taken for granted. UNFICYP is presently commanded by an Argentine General. The UK contingent patrols the central sector, in Nicosia; an Argentine-led force patrols the sector to the West of Nicosia; and a Czech-Slovak-Hungarian contingent patrols the eastern sector.

145. UNFICYP's mission is to prevent a recurrence of fighting, maintain a stable environment and de-escalate the military presence along the Buffer Zone (BZ) in order to enable a just and lasting political solution to be found.

146. UNFICYP seeks to help create the conditions to install in the two communities and their political leaders, the will to engage in meaningful political progress leading to a comprehensive settlement. There are four "lines of operation" to achieve this:

- Promote UNFICYP sphere of influence.
- Confidence building.
- Consolidate UNFICYP control of BZ.
- Promote UN reputation and credibility.

147. UNFICYP has to deal with regular violations of the ceasefire:

- Over manning of guard posts
- New construction of defenses
- Heavy weapons or military aircraft close to the buffer zone
- Ill discipline
- Cocking and pointing weapons

148. UNFICYP has a set of 5 principles:

- Commitment to the unification of Cyprus based on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation and political equality, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

- Recognition of the fact that the *status quo* is unacceptable and that its prolongation would have negative consequences for the Turkish and Greek Cypriots.
- Commitment to the proposition that a comprehensive settlement is both desirable and possible, and should not be further delayed.
- Agreement to begin a process immediately, involving bi-communal discussion of issues that affect the day to day life of the people and concurrently those that concern substantive issues, both of which will contribute to a comprehensive settlement.
- Commitment to ensure that the right atmosphere prevails for this process to be successful. In that connection, confidence building measures are essential, both in terms of improving the atmosphere and improving the life of all Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

Appendix: Visit programme

Sunday 14 January 2007

Ankara

British Residency

Briefing by H M Ambassador, Nick Baird

Monday 15 January

Ankara

British Residence

Breakfast meeting with Yasar Yakis, Chair of the EU Harmonisation Committee

Treasury

Meeting with Ali Babacan, EU Chief Negotiator

Turkish Parliament

Meeting with Mehmet Dulger, Chairman of the Turkish FAC, and other Members of the Committee

British Residency

Working lunch with Turkish politicians, NGOs, academics, etc

Turkish National Security Council

Meeting with Ambassador Yigit Alpogan, Secretary-General

Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Meeting with Ambassador Ahmet Acet, Deputy Under-Secretary (EU)

Istanbul

British Consulate-General

Briefing by H M Consul-General, Barbara Hay

Tuesday 16 January

Nicosia

British High Commission

Briefing by H M High Commissioner, Peter Millet

Wednesday 17 January

Nicosia

British Council

Briefing by Richard Walker, Director

DESY Party Headquarters

Meeting with Nicos Anastasiades, leader of the DESY political party

British Residence (South Nicosia)

Working lunch with Greek Cypriot opinion formers

Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce

Meeting with Erdil Nami, Chairman

Turkish Cypriot leader's residence

Meeting with Mehmet Ali Talat, Turkish Cypriot leader

Cyprus House of Representatives

Meeting with Dimitris Christofias, President of the House of Representatives and leader of the AKEL political party

British Residence (North Nicosia)

Working dinner with Turkish Cypriot opinion formers, including Mr Ferdi Soyer, leader of the CTP political party

Thursday 18 January

Nicosia

Cyprus House of Representatives

Meeting with George Lillikas, Cyprus Foreign Minister

United Nations Force in Cyprus

Briefing by Michael Møller, UN Special Representative

Briefing by Colonel Peter Fraser Hopewell, UNFICYP Chief of Staff

Walking tour of the Green Line through Nicosia

Cyprus House of Representatives

Working lunch with Mr Averof Neophytou, Chairman, and other members of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee

Formal minutes

Wednesday 18 April 2007

Members present:

Mike Gapes, in the Chair

Mr Fabian Hamilton
Mr David Heathcoat-
Amory
Mr John Horam
Andrew Mackinlay

Mr Malcolm Moss
Mr Greg Pope
Sir John Stanley
Richard Younger-Ross

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (*Visit to Turkey and Cyprus*), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 3 read and agreed to.

Annex agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Fifth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

Several Papers were ordered to be appended to the Report.

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Report be reported to the House.—(*The Chairman.*)

[Adjourned till Wednesday 25 April at 2.00 pm.]
