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# Turkey Waits for 'Big Push' From U.S. to Resolve Cyprus Problem

By Stephen Kinzer  
New York Times Service

ISTANBUL — With President Bill Clinton's new foreign-policy team now nominated, Turkish officials are wondering whether the expected U.S. "big push" to resolve the festering Cyprus conflict, and perhaps the larger Greek-Turkish confrontation, will materialize in 1997.

Last week, Mr. Clinton sent a letter to congressional leaders saying that tensions on Cyprus had risen to "their worst level in many years."

While not explicitly promising an initiative, he referred to "the urgency of the current situation" and said his administration was "committed to promoting a lasting peace on the island."

He said recent outbreaks of violence there "underscored the unsustainability of the status quo and the need for redoubled efforts toward a negotiated solution."

In another sign that the world community may be preparing a new effort to resolve the Cyprus dispute, Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind of Britain arrived there on Sunday for a round of meetings. It was the first visit to Cyprus by a British foreign secretary in more than 30 years.

"I think there is a real scope for progress," Mr. Rifkind said Monday. "One must acknowledge that it is not going to happen overnight but that 1997 ought to be the year in which perhaps the important breakthrough is made."

The special United Nations envoy to Cyprus, Han Sun Joo, a former foreign minister of South Korea, announced recently that he was preparing for an extended stay on the island beginning in January. He will seek to organize "proximity talks" between Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders.

Many European diplomats say they believe that 1997 will be an ideal time to confront the Cyprus dispute and related issues, largely because the Greek Cypriot government has applied for membership in the European Union. The Greek Cypriots, they reason, can be told that they will not be admitted unless they make peace with their Turkish Cypriot neighbors.

Turkish Cypriots, in turn, could be told that if they do not cooperate in a peace process, Greek Cyprus will be admitted to the European Union without them. If both sides can reach a broad agreement, the entire island could join as a single entity.

The Greek and Turkish governments on Cyprus are responsive, respectively, to Athens and Ankara. Any peace effort would have to include the patron governments, either formally or informally. That might hold out the possibility of agreement on larger issues that divide Greece and Turkey.

"Quite a bit of momentum has built up, and we are expecting the big push in the first half of next year," said Michael Lake, the European Union's envoy to Turkey.

"All signs have been that after the American presidential election and the appointment of the national security team, the United States would make a substantial effort," he said. "It would be aimed at bringing Cyprus into the EU as a binational state."

"Membership in the EU would be a great prize for everyone on the island," Mr. Lake continued. "It would give the Greek Cypriots what they want, the political and economic benefits of full integration with the European Union."

For the Turkish Cypriots, who are effectively stateless because of the international embargo on them, it would mean a secure prospect of recognition as part of the world community. They would also become the first identifiably Muslim community inside the EU, which could be very important for Turkey. All of this might also pave the way for a broader solution to problems in the Aegean between Greece and Turkey.

After Mr. Clinton announced his nomination of Madeleine Albright to be secretary of state, Turkey's Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, praised her as a "positive and constructive person."

The two met in Ankara in July, and Mr. Erbakan said he hoped that she would visit again soon. Mrs. Albright also visited Cyprus in July.

The state-run Anatolian News Agency quoted unidentified Turkish diplomats as saying Mrs. Albright's appointment was "something favorable from our point of view" because she had visited

Turkey and had "no known bias in favor of one of the sides in the Turkish-Greek and Cyprus disputes."

Turkish governments have traditionally been friendly toward the United States, but they instinctively mistrust U.S. efforts to mediate Greek-Turkish disputes, because they fear that potent Greek and Armenian lobbies in the United States will force U.S. diplomats to take anti-Turkish positions.

Tensions between Greeks and Turks on Cyprus have been almost continuous since 1960, when Britain granted the island independence.

In 1974, fearing that Greece's military dictatorship was planning to absorb the island and turn it into Greek territory, Turkish leaders sent troops there. About 35,000 remain, and the "green line" dividing the Turkish and Greek zones has become one of the world's tensest borders.

The Greek Cypriot government is internationally recognized, while the Turkish Cypriot state, declared in 1983, is recognized only by Turkey. There is almost no contact between the two and the bitterness that divides them is reflected in periodic outbreaks of violence along the border. Four persons have died in such incidents since August.

Both Greece and Turkey are members of NATO. Their continued hostility, as well as that of their allies on Cyprus, is a flashpoint that security planners in foreign capitals fear could one day flare into war.

## Ankara Loses Cypriot Case

Reuters

STRASBOURG — The European Court of Human Rights, in a landmark judgment, ruled Wednesday that Turkey had violated the rights of a Greek Cypriot who lost her land in northern Cyprus when Turkey invaded in 1974.

The court dismissed Turkey's argument that the European human rights convention did not apply to its occupation of the north of the Mediterranean island, and it rejected Turkey's contention that the expropriation was legal under the constitution of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, an entity recognized only by Ankara.

The court, voting 11 to 6, ruled that Turkey had violated Titina Loizidou's property rights by denying her access to plots of land she owned in Kyrenia. When she tried to return in March 1989, she was arrested and returned to the Greek sector.