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Cyprus 'facing catastrophe'

THE Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktash, warned yesterday that the island of Cyprus was heading for catastrophe unless immediate action was taken to reduce the growing tension between his community and the Greek Cypriots.

He was speaking after a Turkish Cypriot soldier was shot dead on Sunday and another was wounded at a sentry post on the line which has separated the communities since 1974. His people have blamed the Greek Cypriots, but the Cyprus government says there is no evidence its supporters were involved.

Turkey's foreign minister, Tansu Ciller, will attend the soldier's funeral today.

Last month, two Greek Cypriots were killed during demonstrations against the Turkish army's occupation of the north of the island. Mr Denktash said he was again appealing for talks with the Cypriot president, Glafcos Clerides.

"If the Greek Cypriots want to keep Cyprus in the headlines and instead of cooling the atmosphere by meeting and talking they want to keep on adding fire to it, then I think the signals are that we are heading for catastrophe," he said. — *Chris Drake, Nicosia.*

"Η Κύπρος αντιμέτωπη με την καταστροφή"

Ο Τουρκοκύπριος ηγέτης Ρ. Ντεκτάς προειδοποίησε ότι η Κύπρος βαδίζει στην καταστροφή εάν δεν γίνουν αμέσως ενέργειες για να μειωθεί η ένταση μεταξύ των δύο κοινοτήτων. Οι άνθρωποι τουτηγόρησαν τους Ελληνοκύπριους αλλά η Κυβέρνηση της Κύπρου ισχυρίζεται ότι δεν φαίνεται να έχουν αναμιχθεί Ελληνοκύπριοι.

Ο Ρ. Ντεκτάς καταλήγει λέγοντας; "αν οι Ελληνοκύπριοι θέλουν να διατηρήσουν την Κύπρο στην επικαιρότητα και αντί να ηρεμούν την ατμόσφαιρα με συζητήσεις και συναντήσεις, θέλουν να ρίχνουν λάδι στη φωτιά, δείχνουν ότι οδηγούμαστε στην καταστροφή."