



End discrimination against Turkish Cypriots



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Ending EU discrimination of Turkish Cypriots

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www.embargoed.org





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About Embargoed!

- Formed in September 2004, launched on 4th March 2005
- Our principal aim is to bring **an immediate and unconditional end to the international isolation of North Cyprus**, and the full restoration of political, economic and social rights of the Turkish Cypriot people
- We are a membership based, volunteer managed apolitical group
 - The group enjoys broad based support in North Cyprus & the Diaspora
- We do not prescribe to a particular political solution in Cyprus – that is for the two sides to decide
 - However, any solution must ensure that both the Greek and Turkish Cypriots are treated equally & can enjoy the same fundamental rights





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Past Campaigns



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Some of Our Previous Campaigns

Our peaceful methods & actions help highlight the unjust embargoes & lobby for them to end. These include:

- **World Promises Report** (2005) – contains all promises from world leaders & international bodies to end Turkish Cypriot isolation following their 2004 vote in favour of a united Cyprus.
- **Transport for London Ruling** (2005) – campaigned to overturn the North Cyprus ad ban, which was secured in the law courts.
- **Balls to Embargoes** (2005) – to highlight the 50 year ban on international football – even friendly games are banned.
- **Gagged in London/Brussels** (2005-6) – protesting against the lack of political representation & rights.
- **Rotting Lemons** (2005-6) – created by Hussein Chalayan MBE & shown at his Paris Fashion Show to highlight impact of trade embargoes, before sold as t-shirts to supporters.
- **Drop the Bloody Map** (2006-7) – complained to ASA and lobbied Greek Cypriot groups to stop using this offensive, hate-filled symbol.
- **EU's Excluded Citizens** in London (2005, 2008, 2012) – from two Go Slow Convoys in London to taking part in the mass Turkish Cypriot 'ghost/invisible citizens' protest in Brussels to condemn the ongoing discrimination.
- **Operation Pabuc** (2009) – a 2nd hand slipper wrapped in a letter from his former UK former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw is given to successor David Miliband to reflect their worthless promises on ending the embargoes.
- **Hellim/Halloumi** (2006-12) – lobbied EU to ensure application for protected designation of origin (PDO) status of traditional Cypriot cheese covers producers on both sides of the island, which resulted in a favourable outcome earlier this year
- **Religious sites in Cyprus** (2011-12) – lobbying UK politicians to action on desecration of sites on both sides of the island instead of their initial biased approach.
- **Turkish Cypriot Olympic Project** (2012) – raising awareness that Turkish Cypriots are excluded from sporting events such as the Olympics, where they cannot even participate under the Olympic Flag.





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EU and Turkish Cypriots – the downside



- **The EU discriminates against its own citizens**

- The '*acquis communautaire*' & full EU benefits only apply to people in South Cyprus
- Turkish Cypriots have their own democratically elected officials, but do not even have Observer Status at the EU Parliament
- By excluding 300,000 EU citizens in the North, the EU is guilty of apartheid
- The ongoing exclusion of Turkish Cypriots pushes them further towards Turkey for aid and support, and away from the EU (support for EU entry down to 35%)

- **Admitting a divided Cyprus into the EU was a mistake**

- According to EU rules, a divided territory cannot be admitted – Cyprus' political problems should have been solved first
- Turkish Cypriots are the founding co-partners of the Republic of Cyprus, yet their formal consent to EU entry not given
- Turkish Cypriots voted in favour of the 2004 UN-backed Annan Plan for a united island, yet they remain frozen out of the EU, while Greek Cypriots who voted against are no full EU citizens
- The EU recognises the Greek Cypriot Government as the sole authority for the whole island, ignoring the political equality of Turkish Cypriots and the fact the South has no control over North Cyprus

- **The EU is not an honest broker in Cyprus**

- Both Greece & South Cyprus are full EU members; both use their status to obstruct Turkish Cypriot rights
- Greek Cypriots have used their veto rights to block EU promises on direct trade & TC rights to other EU freedoms
- The EU Parliament's Turkish Cypriot High Level Contact Group contains two members of ethnic Greek origin who fail to champion the interests of the Turkish Cypriot people





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EU and Turkish Cypriots – the upside

- **Ongoing spotlight on Cyprus**

- Having admitted a divided island, the EU is now obliged to act to resolve this decades old conflict

- **Financial Aid**

- €259m invested in essential infrastructure such as roads, water & sewage works, refuse treatment, & rural development, as well as aid for education, border crossing points (e.g. Yesilirmak-Limnitis), de-mining & missing persons, with additional funding of €28.5m & €25m for 2011 and 2012 respectively

- **Harmonisation with EU Laws**

- The Turkish Cypriot EU Co-ordination Office has a dedicated team seeking to bring laws in North Cyprus in line with the EU
 - EU citizens can arrive at Ercan airport, or sea ports in the North & cross into the South without obstruction

- **Trade between Greek & Turkish Cypriots**

- While the Green Line Regulation is no substitute for direct trade for Turkish Cypriots, its existence has encouraged trade & greater interaction between the two sides





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You cannot solve Cyprus on a lie or through hate





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Efforts to Reconcile Cypriots

Regardless of the end political solution in Cyprus, both sides need to normalise relations. Embargoed! has sought to help reconcile Greek & Turkish Cypriots, challenging the bigotry and mistrust that exists so we can all live together with respect & dignity:

1. Love Cyprus, Hate Racism – Greek Cypriots have a right to protest but not to incite racial hatred

- Police complaints on iGreek petition – 1/3 of all signatures on a 10,000 strong petition to Arsenal FC to ban Mete Ahmed's TRNC flag made racist remarks
- UEFA complaint against APOEL Nicosia FC's xenophobic leaflets & pitch-side banners
- Held seminar to tackle racism on both sides of the border – first of its kind.
- Using European platforms to raise awareness of ongoing racism Turks in Cyprus face

2. Remembering the Past for a Better Future – both sides have suffered

- Embargoed! screened The Elders film about Missing Persons in London followed by a panel discussion about what needs to be done to reconcile Cypriots.
- 'Bloody Christmas Vigil' outside the Cyprus High Commission in December 2010, to remind them of the atrocities committed against Turkish Cypriots, which they seek to airbrush out.

3. Property – a complex issue affecting both sides

- Two seminars on legal developments & their impact on Cypriots & new buyers of property in Cyprus, helping to inform both sides – the first of its kind.

4. Religious sites – promoting respect for Cyprus' cultural heritage

- Lobbying both sides and UK politicians to help champion the care of cultural & religious sites across the island, and for those guilty of desecration to be punished.





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Current Issues & Opportunities 1

● Green Line Regulation - where there's a will...

– Trade growing slowly between the two sides

- 2012 trade figures with South Cyprus/EU are up, projected to be €10 million for year end
- This is one tenth of total TRNC trade; yet EU should be biggest trading zone for Turkish Cypriots (TC)
- TC exports to South for first 8 months of 2012 totalled €7.6m – bolstered by huge electricity sales to South, which have now stopped followed repairs to their power plant, and exports South now averaging €0.4m.
- Zero trade in many key sectors such as food & drink continue due to GLR rules/obstacles
- Second seed potatoes & olive oil can are sold into the South, boosting trade. The seeds are vetted by TCs' Agriculture Department & inspected by EU experts – why is this not possible in other food areas?

– Efforts made to increase trade across the Green Line continue to hit new & silly obstacles

- South Cyprus potato farmers are now lobbying to have ban on TC exports as trade effecting them.
- TC goods & services still cannot be advertised in Greek Cypriot media, while their products are rarely seen on shelves in South Cyprus – those stocking/buying 'Turkish' goods are branded 'traitors'

– The EU needs to help break down these psychological & political barriers in the South or else how can both sides normalise relations?





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Current Issues & Opportunities 2



• Trade not Aid!

- Decades of handouts from Turkey have not helped Turkish Cypriots, neither will aid from the EU. This merely encourages a culture of dependence instead of creating a strong sustainable free market economy.
- Trading directly with Turkish Cypriots (TCs) should not be politicised. The EU needs to find a new mechanism to ensure both sides of the island can enjoy the same economic rights.
- The Green Line Regulation was intended as a temporary measure & as illustrated, it is failing to make major inroads.
- Direct trade is a vital part of the EU's commitment to help the TC economy improve & create the right conditions for convergence with the South.
- EU members should be able to act unilaterally if necessary to instigate direct trade with TCs.
- Operating under free market conditions will allow TCs to improve their competitiveness & economy, thereby smoothing the way for unification of the island without Greek Cypriots fearing they must bear the burden of propping up & restructuring the weaker North Cyprus economy.





Current Issues & Opportunities 3

● Political Landscape

– *Democracy & human rights*

- The EU playing an important role in recognising the rights of people in Kosovo, Kurdistan & Palestine – but not North Cyprus.
- Cyprus negotiations cannot be used to deny TC rights indefinitely.

– *Politically, two sides in Cyprus drifting apart*

- GCs have little incentive to reach a compromise settlement with TCs
- The GC Orthodox Church & other GC actors actively campaign against sharing power with TCs on an equal basis & continue to demonise the North.
- Oil-gas drilling has polarised two sides.

– *South Cyprus' EU Presidency, July-December 2012*

- The GC Presidency of the EU has merely bolstered perceptions among TCs that the EU only benefits the South .
- Yet the Presidency could have been a catalyst to change dynamics on the island.

● EU must help end 'cold war' in Cyprus

- *Time for the EU to deal with the realities that there are two separate states in Cyprus.*
- *EU must decide: is the Green Line an EU border or does it have the will to develop a formula that formally includes Turkish Cypriots within its borders?*





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EU must stop discriminating against Turkish Cypriots

•EU-Turkish Cypriot Relations

- The composition of the EU TC High Level Contact Group should only include those committed to championing TC rights; it is morally and politically wrong to allow those who seek to obstruct TC interest to be a part of this group. It needs to be pro-active on issues affecting North Cyprus, helping the wider EU body to eliminate the unnecessary obstacles placed before TCs.
- Enable TCs to have their own representatives at the EU Parliament.

•Trade not Aid

- Apply procedures used for GLR fish & potatoes to husbandry & dairy sectors.
- Give greater support to TC SMEs so they become more robust & competitive.
- Support TC trade initiatives e.g. bi-communal business directory.
- Follow up the European Commission's Direct Trade Regulation of July 2004 to allow North Cyprus originated products within the EU without preconditions. The proposed DTR would provide a preferential trade arrangement until a permanent political solution, enabling free entry & circulation of North Cyprus origin goods within the EU.

•Love Cyprus Hate Racism

- The politics of peace must dominate over the language & mindset of conflict. The EU should initiate a comprehensive campaign to tackle historical untruths & racism on both sides of the island, in particular the hatred of Turks regularly witnessed in schools, sport & by the Church. These create strong psychologically barriers that, for example, prevent the sale of goods from North Cyprus & hampers efforts for Cypriots to live together peacefully.
- Politicians, the media, schools & religious leaders all have important roles to play, while EU race hate & discrimination laws must be enforced.





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Contact Us

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