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## EUROPEANISATION OF TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY IN NORTH CYPRUS

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**Olakunle Olowojolu and Modupe Ake**

Department of Political Science & International Relations

PMB 1001, Landmark University Omu-Aran, Nigeria.

E-mail: [kunleolowojolu@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kunleolowojolu@yahoo.co.uk); [akemodupe@gmail.com](mailto:akemodupe@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** *Cyprus is an Island in the Mediterranean region divided along ethnic lines. The small country that gained independence from Great Britain in 1960 was thrown into chaos after the clamour for Enosis gained currency amongst Greek Cypriots who wanted to become part of mainland Greece. In 1974, the Turkish armed forces intervened in Cyprus in order to stop a coup orchestrated by the Greek government and also to provide a buffer zone for the Turkish Cypriots. Turkey's incursion led to the displacement of many Cypriots and subsequently the Island was divided into South and North Cyprus. The Southern part is largely occupied by the Greeks, while the North is dominated by Turkish Cypriots. Despite the 1983 declaration of the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus, the International community has refused to recognize the state. Meanwhile, the Greek side of Cyprus (South) was given full EU membership status in 2004. Several efforts have been made by international actors to resolve the dispute between the two warring factions with minimal success. Since 2006, EU has maintained an aid programme aimed at bringing the Turkish Cypriot Community closer to EU's policies, rules and regulations. This paper will attempt to know to what extent has the EU succeeded in integrating Turkish Cypriots into EU through the aid programme. Can we say that Turkish Cypriots are being Europeanized? For the Turkish Cypriots to have a real sense of belonging in Europe, the paper advocates for the recognition of Turkish Republic of North Cyprus by the international community.*

**Keywords:** EU, Europeanization, Turkish Cypriots, Greek Cypriots.

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### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since the mid-1960s', Cyprus dispute has taken the centre stage in international politics. The conflict between the Turkish and Greek communities of Cyprus can be traced back at least to the Greek Cypriot mobilization for *Enosis* in the 1950s (Fatma & Leopold, 2002). As one of the guarantor states under the London/Zurich accords of 1959 and Constitution of Republic of Cyprus (1960), Turkey had to intervene in Cyprus in 1974 in order to stop a military coup backed by Greek junta that aimed to achieve *Enosis*, annexing the Island Cyprus to Greece. The inter-communal fighting resulted in the creation of a "Green Line" which separates the two communities from each other. Since then, the Island has been split into two parts as Northern Cyprus and Southern Cyprus by

a demilitarized zone under the auspices of UN and British Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs). Southern Cyprus is ruled by the administration of the Republic of Cyprus which is internationally recognized. On the other hand, Northern Cyprus constitutes 37 percent of the Island and is controlled by the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC), which was declared on November 15, 1983. Turkey is the only country that accords TRNC full recognition. The European Union's involvement in the Cyprus question dates back to the 1960s'. The EU has continued to play an important role towards ending the political impasse. In April 2004, there were dramatic events that shook the international community, the UN master plan known as Annan Plan was offered as a solution in form of a referendum. Interestingly, 76 percent of Greek Cypriots voted no, while 65 percent of Turkish Cypriots voted yes. Despite the setback, the Republic of Cyprus represented by the Greek Cypriot community acquired full membership status within the EU on May 1, 2004 at the expense of their Turkish Cypriot counterpart (Olowojolu, 2013).

### **EUROPEANIZATION AS A CONCEPT**

Different scholars have worked extensively on the concept of Europeanization. Europeanization can be defined as the emergence and development at the European level of distinct structures of governance, that is, of political, legal and social institutions associated with political problem solving that formalizes interactions among the actors and of policy networks specializing in the creation of authoritative European rules (Risse, Cowles & Carporosa, 2001). Radaelli (2000) defined Europeanization more broadly as a process of construction; diffusion and institutionalization of formal and informal procedures, policy paradigms, styles, "ways of doing things" and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies. Olsen (2002) separates Europeanization into five possible phenomena when examining what is actually changing and considers that it may be seen as :

- a. Changes in external boundaries
- b. Governance institutions developed at the supranational level
- c. Influencing and imposing supranationality at the sub-national and national levels
- d. Exporting governance procedure and policy specific for EU beyond EU borders
- e. A project of a political nature aimed at intensifying the unification of the EU.

From its humble beginning in 1951 with six founding members, EU currently has 28 member countries. EU has grown in becoming an economic giant that can rival America and China. EU has also expanded its frontiers with the establishment of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Euro-Mediterranean Policy. Hence, the confirmation of EU as a global actor in international affairs.

## **EU AND TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY**

Given the fact that the Annan Plan of 2004 could not succeed in re-uniting the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots, the EU came up with Council Regulations aimed at integrating the Northern part of Cyprus. The Council Regulation for the instrument of financial support was eventually adopted on February 27, 2006 with an initial allocation of €258.8 million (EU Council Regulation, 2006). The EU Aid Programme in North Cyprus covers areas educational scholarship; trade, transportation, private sector, rural development, telecommunications, preservation of culture, water supply and sustainable energy and peace building. It must be noted that despite the benefits derived from the EU programmes, the Northern part of Cyprus are yet to be fully integrated into EU.

## **REMEDIAL RIGHT ONLY THEORY TO SECESSION**

Remedial Right Only Theory asserts that a group has a general right to secede if and only if it has suffered certain injustices for which secession is the appropriate remedy of last resort (see Buchanan, 1997). To buttress this assertion, Ryngaert and Griffieon (2009) posited that:

*What if a state persistently denies a people the fundamental right of internal self-determination? What if a people does not have free choice but is repressed and suffers from gross violations of basic human rights, and all possible remedies for a peaceful solution to the conflict have been exhausted? Should that people not be allowed a self-help remedy in the form of external self-determination?*

## **MAKING A CASE FOR THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS**

It is on record that even before the 1974 intervention of Turkey in Cyprus dispute; the Greek Cypriots dominated the political climate of the Island at the expense of Turkish Cypriots. The call for *enosis* and the 1974 coup in Cyprus cannot be blamed on the Turkish Cypriots. The admission process of Republic of Cyprus into European Union which started in 1990 and came into fruition in 2004 was done without the consent of the Turkish Cypriots. Moreover, the much talked about Annan Plan was massively turned down by the Greek Cypriots. It is quite surprising that since 1983, the international community has not given TRNC recognition despite the injustices they have suffered since the 1960s. The Declaration on the Principles of International Law (1970) states that:

*By virtue of the principles of equal rights and self –determination of peoples enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, all peoples have the right freely to determine without external interference, their political status and to pursue their economic, social and economic development, and every State has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.*

Furthermore, UNESCO's 1990 final report of the concept of the Rights for Peoples list certain criteria that describes people. They include:

1. A group of individual human beings who enjoy some or all of the following common features:
  - Common historical tradition;
  - Racial or ethnic identity;
  - Cultural homogeneity;
  - Linguistic unity;
  - Religious or ideological affinity;
  - Territorial connection and;
  - Common economic life
2. The group must be of a certain number which need not be large (the people of micro States) but which must be more than a mere association of individuals within a state.
3. The group as a whole must have the will to be identified as a people or the consciousness of being a people.
4. The group must have institutions or other means of expressing its characteristics and will for identity.

The aforementioned criteria are good enough for the legality of TRNC. In series of negotiations, the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have disagreed on major issues. On the political system, the Turkish Cypriots favour two sovereign states or a bi-zonal confederation arrangement. On the other hand, Greek Cypriots prefer a unitary state or a loosed federation that will allow Turkish Cypriots have autonomy (Sosen, 2007). On representation, Turkish Cypriots support equal representations in government, meanwhile Greek Cypriots support 80:20 Greek to Turkish ratio with no room for rotational presidency (ibid). It is against this background that this paper supports the view that TRNC should be given full recognition by the international community and should be considered for EU membership.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The impact of Euro Aid Programme on the Turkish Cypriot community cannot be overemphasized. There are clear evidences of improvement in human capacity development, human capital development and societal development. Nevertheless, the EU Aid Programme in North Cyprus cannot bring an end to the political feud between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. This research is of the view that Turkish Cypriots can be better integrated into EU through increased EU financial aid. EU should allow Turkish Cypriots to engage in Direct Trade. By opening the frontiers of international trade and investment, Turkish Cypriots will not be too dependent on EU aid or financial assistance from Turkey. This paper argues that Turkish Cypriots should use their peculiar statehood as a bargaining power to push for assistance from EU and other international organizations. All the stakeholders in Northern part of Cyprus should show more

enthusiasm in pushing for international recognition since the body language of their Greek counterparts suggest their disapproval for re-unification.

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