United Nations Security Council

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Background of the Committee

The Security Council is one of the six main organs of the United Nations. The Security Council is the UN body with primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security which may meet whenever peace is threatened. It discusses and decides on topics related to the maintenance of international peace and security. Member States are required to accept and carry out the decisions of the Council, What makes the Security Council different from other UN organs is its capability to impose its decisions to every Member State, like economic sanctions or military operations, while the other organs can only make recommendations.

The functions of the Security Council and the extent of its faculties are:

- Maintain international peace and security, in accordance with the purpose of the United Nations.
- Investigate any dispute or situation that could lead to a situation of international friction.
- Recommend methods to solve those situations or adjust the terms of settlement.
- The formulation of plans to create a system to regulate the armament.
- To identify any threat for the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what actions should be taken.
- To call on members to impose economic sanctions or other measures, avoiding the use of force to prevent or stop aggression.
- Take military actions against the aggressor.
- Recommend the admission of new members.
- Exercise the trusteeship functions of the United Nations in strategic areas.

Topic A: The military participation of the Russian Federation and the United States of America in the Syrian Civil War in order to limit the terrorist movements of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

Syrian Arab Republic Background

General Hafez al-Assad, the Minister of Defense, seized power in the "corrective movement" in November of 1970, becoming Prime Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic. In March 1971, Hafez Assad declared himself President. Since then, the secular Syrian Regional Branch has remained the dominant political authority in what was a one-party state in Syria, in other words, Syrian citizens could not participate in multi-party elections for the legislature.

In 1982, with the country involved in a condition of Islamic insurgency that lasted six years, Hafez al-Assad carried out a tactic to put down an Islamist revolt of the Sunni community, This was considered illegal according to the city of Hama's laws. During these operations, 10,000 people died in what was later known as the "Hama massacre". After 18 years, Hafez Al -Assad died and Bashar al- Assad took his place as President of Syria.

In March, 2011, Syria's government faced pro-democracy protests that erupted throughout the country. The protesters demanded an end to the authoritarian practices of the Assad regime, in place since Assad's father, Ḥafiz al-Assad, became president in 1971. The Syrian government used violence to suppress demonstrations, making extensive use of police, military, and paramilitary forces.

Protests broke out in Syria, inspired by a wave of similar demonstrations elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa, The Arab Spring. In the city of Darʿā, several people were killed on March, 18th when security forces opened fire on protesters who were angered by the arrest of several children for writing anti-government graffiti. Protests continued, and on March, 23rd, more than twenty people were killed by the security forces. In Damascus, to counter the opposition's protests, large pro-government rallies were held. On March, 29th, the Syrian government announced that the president resisted the opposition's calls for immediate reform, saying that the government would proceed with its plans to introduce reform gradually.

As protests intensified and spread to more cities, there was an increase in the use of violence by Syrian security forces. On April 8th, security forces opened fire on protesters in several Syrian cities, killing at least thirty-five people. Amid reports that the total of deaths since the first protests in March had exceeded two-hundred, human rights organizations and foreign leaders called for an immediate end to violence.

In mid-April, the new cabinet passed measures that repealed the emergency law and dissolved Syria's Supreme State Security Court, a special court used to try defendants accused of challenging the government. However, the government also took action to retain its power to suppress public protest, passing a new law requiring Syrians to obtain government permission before protesting. Authorities would continue to treat demonstrations as a threat to public safety.

Soon after ending the emergency law, the Syrian government intensified its use of violence against protesters. In late April, security forces fired on protesters and killed about seventy-five people. In spite of the international outcry provoked by the killings, the Syrian government created new operations to silence protests, sending a large amount of troops equipped with tanks and armored personnel carriers to the three cities which were considered centers of anti-government protests. In several areas of the country, the government ordered a communication blackout and shut down telephone and internet service. In Darʿā, security forces cut the town's water and electricity supplies.

As violence persisted, Syria started to become isolated from its regional allies. In May, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Turkish Prime minister, condemned the government's use of violence against civilians and weeks later, the country showed its support for protesters by hosting a conference for members of the Syrian opposition. After this, the Assad regime continued to use violence against protesters in July and August, launching military assaults on cities including Ḥamāh and Latakia.

Outbreak of the conflict

In July, 2011, some protesters started responding to the Bashar al-Assar's army with weaponry, and the Free Syrian Army -hereinafter referred as the Rebels- was created. By this moment, the uprising conflict had escalated to become a Civil War.

At the beginning of 2012, an al-Qaeda-linked Islamist extremist militant group, called the Jihadists, or the al-Nursa Front, joined the Rebels in its opposition against Assad's government. The Jihadists are described as the most violent movement and people of contemporary Islam. Simultaneously, Syrian Kurdish groups, who've long sought autonomy, took up arms against Assad's government in the north of the county. The Kurdish people are an Indo-European group of people who live in the mountainous region of Kurdistan, in West Asia, divided mainly between the sovereign states of Syria, Iraq, Turkey, and Iran; most of them are Sunni Muslims. The Kurds nowadays conform less than the ten per cent of the Syrian population and fight against the Assad government, looking for political autonomy for the Kurdish inhabited areas in Syria.

In the summer of 2012, Iran, the most important Assad's ally, became involved in the conflict by intervening in Assad's behalf; the Syrian conflict had become a proxy war. By the end of 2012, Iran was sending daily cargo flights, weaponry, and hundreds of officers to support Assad's army. At the same time, countries who are part of the Arab States of the Persian Gulf started sending weapons and money, mainly through Turkey, to the Rebels with the main purpose of countering Iran's influence.

In October of 2012, Iran had intensified its influence in Syria when a Lebanese Shi'a Islamist group, called Hezbollah -which is backed by Iran- entered the conflict, fighting with Assad's government. In consequence, at the beginnings of 2013, some of the Arab States of the Persian Gulf -Saudi Arabia leading the effort at this point- sent more financial support and weapons to the Rebels, but this time through Jordan, which is also against Assad's government and supports the Free Syrian Army.

The Russian Federation and United States of America intervention in the conflict.

The most direct form of American intervention is the flow of small weapons to rebels in the south of Syria, where they control a part of the territory. Most of the weapons will be given to the Free Syrian Army, the loosely organized group of anti-Assad fighters

considered to be the more moderate forces. In addition to the light arms, the United States of America (hereby referred to as the U.S.) is distributing monetary help to Syrian rebel groups to pay fighters and equipment.

In early 2013, U.S president, Barack Obama, announced it was sending $60 million in "non-lethal" aid to the Free Syrian Army in the form of food rations and medical supplies. In April of the same year, Barack Obama's administration launched a program of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to train and equip rebel anti-Assad forces in Syria. At the ends of April, the U.S. said it would double the amount of "non-lethal aid sent to Syria, which is meant to allow Syrian opposition forces to provide essential services in areas they control.

After the mentioned, more than 1,700 civilians in the town of Ghouta were killed in August of 2013 because of the use of chemical weapons from part of Assad's government; because of this, Barack Obama announced that the use of chemical weapons in Syria was within U.S. national security interests, so the country would respond to the atrocity of Assad's regime through a targeted military strike. Three days after this, the Russian Federation proposed that the Syrian government surrender control over its chemical weapons to the International Community for its eventual dismantling, to avoid the U.S. military strike. After this, the conflict in Syria became a dispute among powerful countries, since Assad's government counts with Russian backing, while the U.S. supports the rebels.

In 2014, the U.S. has dropped $3 million dollars toward anti-Assad Syrian groups. In February of the same year, an al-Qaeda affiliate group broke away from their entity, because of internal disagreements over Syria. Said group was created by the reunification of the al-Nusra front and the Islamic State of Iraq and started calling themselves "The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria" (hereinafter referred as ISIS) or "The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL). However, the group's main objective was not to fight against the Assad regime, instead focusing on attacking the Kurds and the Rebel forces, with the intent of establishing a caliphate within Middle East territory. In the summer of the same year, ISIS marched through Iraq galvanizing the world against it. In all of their attacks,

ISIS military forces made massive killings and terrorized civilians. They had been using car bombs, suicide bombers, mustard agent and chemical weapons, among others.

Since the creation of ISIS, multiple attacks took place from Aleppo, in northern Syria, to province Diyala, in eastern Iraq. All of this in order to gain new territory for their previously mentioned caliphate. Strictly speaking, the "caliphate" refers to the process of choosing the religious and political leader of the Muslims in the world, the caliph ("successor"), but also to the system of government established after the death of Mahomed in 632. The leaders of Al Qaeda struggled in the wars in Afghanistan, while the Islamic State, a younger organization, mostly developed in Iraq and Syria. ISIS is much more strict and literal than Al Qaeda, who mocks many of Islam beliefs such as the approaching end of the world. The Islamic State, however, given its strict religious interpretation was forced to proclaim the Caliphate when it had its own territory, on pain of apostasy.

In September of the same year, the U.S. government announced to be moving ahead with their campaign of airstrikes against ISIS. After the previously mentioned events, the U.S. Department of Defense, commonly known as the Pentagon because of the location of its headquarters, launched its new program to train Syrian Rebels in order to fight only against ISIS forces. During the same year, ISIS launched a beheading campaign of Western and Japanese civilian hostages, which caused some Western countries like France, Netherlands and Britain to become part of the U.S effort to fight ISIS.

By September of 2015, Assad's government had lost most of the Syrian territory –from 70% to 75% of the territory. After this, the Russian government intervened in the conflict by sending troops that were strictly supposed to bomb ISIS troops and settlements, however, there was evidence that indicted they attacked anti-Assad rebels instead, including groups who were trained by the U.S. forces.

Moscow has also launched a diplomatic and public relations campaign, including a speech by Vladimir Putin himself to the UN General Assembly, warning of the common

threat that ISIS represents, declaring Assad's security services to be the strongest force confronting it, criticizing Western and Middle Eastern governments calling for Assad to step down as there's no apparent realistic alternative to him, and inviting others to join, or not oppose, Putin's and Assad's efforts to combat ISIS.

While the Obama Administration has ended its effort to train Syrian opposition forces, Washington and Moscow finally signed a "deconfliction agreement" on October, 19th of 2015, aimed at avoiding close encounters between their aircraft over Syria aerial-territory. After ISIS took down a Russian passenger jet over the Sinai, the Administration's focus has shifted from other rebel groups to the growing threat of ISIS in the east, all the while searching for a Russo-American alliance to wipe out the terrorist quasi-state.

By October 13 of 2015, the United States sent 50 tons of ammunition to rebel groups trying to topple Assad and four decades of his family's rule. Since the start of the civil war, only 90 people have been granted permanent stays in the U.S. The Obama administration has pledged to take in 2,000 over this year, a tiny fraction of the overall number of refugees.

Throughout 2015, ISIS has made multiple bombings to several countries of Europe and Africa. The best known attack was the bombing of Paris in France in November 13. That night, ISIS bombed the French capital in a coordinated attack and left 129 dead and numerous wounded. France responded to ISIS in 15 November of the same year by bombing ISIS in Syria. Another attack from ISIS was Al Rish in Egypt on October 31, 2015, leaving 224 dead. It has also attacked Sanaa in Yemen on March 20, 2015 and left 137 dead. ISIS other small attacks were: Sousse in Tunisia, Jalalabad in Afghanistan, Qatif in Saudi Arabia, Aden in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, among others.

Current situation

Since the creation of ISIS, the Syrian Civil War has been divided into four main armed groups, each side with their own foreign backers and allies. Nowadays, the Syrian Government and its allies include the Government of Bashar al- Assad, the Armed Force of Syria, the Force of National Defense, governmental groups like Jaysh al-Shabi,

Shabiha, and Suqur al-Sahara, and the main organization involved in the conflict, Hezbollah. Its State allies, which provide direct military support, are Russia, North Korea, Iraq, and the main supporter, Iran.

On the other side, the Syrian Opposition, which is the term given to the political entity called Syrian National Coalition. The Syrian Opposition is formed by the Free Syrian Army, Syrian Revolutionary Command Council and the Islamic Front, among others. The Syrian Opposition declared itself to be the legitimate Syrian Arab Republic, an alternative Syrian government, and has a certain territorial control over Syria. The current President of this organization is Khaled Khoja and its prime minister is Ahmad Tu'mah. By 2011, the organization was supported or recognized by seventeen members of the United Nations, while three of those are part of the permanent members of the Security Council (United Kingdom, United States of America, and France).

The Islamic State of Syria and Iraq and the Levant has no foreign backing, particularly not from recognized organizations. It is nowadays recognized as a terrorist group by the United Nations and many other states. They count with an army of 50,000 people in Syria and another army, 30,000 strong in Iraq. Both armies fight against Rebels and the Syrian Government in order to gain more territory to establish the previously mentioned Caliphate, with Syria and Iraq as the main starting points.

Since November of 2013, the Kurdish people gained their independence and formed their own facto autonomous region in Syria called Western Kurdistan, Syrian Kurdistan, or simply known as Rojava, with a population estimate of 4.6 million of people. The Syrian Government still does not officially recognize Rojava as an autonomous territory. Nowadays, the Kurdish people still fight for their complete autonomy and for the dissolution of the ISIS. The Kurdish is involved in a military intervention with Iraqi Kurdistan and the U.S.

In August of 2015, an infographic about the approximately number of casualties during the conflict of the Syrian Civil War was published by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. It signaled that the war had already caused a total of 330,000 fatalities,

with more than a 111,000 being civilians, another 90,000 are undocumented people, 36,000 are rebel fighters and Islamic people, 50,000 being regime soldiers and officers, 34,000 foreign people who fight with Islamic groups, 33,000 that are combatants from people committees, 3,000 from pro-regime militiamen, 903 fighters from Hezbollah and 3,000 unidentified people.

The conflict has escalated to involve the entire globe, with Syrian refugees fleeing the territory and entering neighboring countries. The amount of displaced people has now reached 8 million, with half already in another country. Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan have been the ones to bear the brunt of the fleeing refugees from the Syrian Civil War. However, European and American countries have begun accepting refugees, granting them with political asylum, but this has caused a problem amongst said countries, with some refusing to open their borders for refugees to enter, for fear of unemployment rates increasing.

The Security Council in the Syrian Civil War.

The Security Council endorsed a roadmap for a peace process in Syria the 18 of December of 2015, setting out an early-January timetable for United Nations-facilitated talks between the Government and opposition members, as well as the outline of a nationwide ceasefire to begin as soon as the parties concerned take initial steps towards a political transition.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2254 (2015), foreign ministers and others gathered in New York for the third meeting of the International Syrian Support Group, the Council reconfirmed its endorsement of the 30 June 2012 Geneva Communiqué, and endorsed the "Vienna Statements" in pursuit of the Communiqué's implementation as the basis for a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned political transition to end the conflict.

"The Syrian people will decide the future of Syria," the text stated. By other terms, the Council requested that the Secretary-General — through his offices and the efforts of his Special Envoy — convene representatives of the Syrian Government and opposition to engage in formal negotiations on a political transition process "on an urgent basis", with a target of early January 2016 for the initiation of talks. It expressed support

for a Syrian-led political process facilitated by the United Nations which would establish "credible, inclusive, and non-sectarian governance" within six months and set a schedule and process for the drafting of a new constitution.

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Topic B: Negotiations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots on the Demarcation of the Buffer Zone.

Cyprus Background

In 1489, Cyprus abdicated the throne in favor of the Venetians. On assuming power in Cyprus, the Venetians imposed a series of high taxes, arousing feelings of resentment among the Cypriots. For the Italian Republic, Cyprus was the last Christian bastion against the Ottomans in the Eastern Mediterranean. Venice, having lost the monopoly of the Black Sea trade and being threatened by the Ottomans from the late fourteenth century, acquired Cyprus and sought a substitute market in North Africa.

In 1570, a Turkish envoy called for immediate cession of Cyprus. The surrender would mean the sacrifice of the most important Venetian possession, and consequently could lead to the loss of other territory like Crete and Corfu. On the other hand, there could be war against the Ottoman Empire, which could affect Venice drastically. When this trade was subject to debate, the Turkish ultimatum was rejected by 220 votes to 199.

The Fourth Ottoman-Venetian War, also known as the War of Cyprus was fought between 1570 and 1573. In 1571 the Holy League was created, which was a coalition of Christian states including Spain. The war, the most important one during the regime of Sultan Selim II began with the invasion of the island of Cyprus, but a few days later continued with Venetian possession. The capital Nicosia and several other cities quickly fell to the Ottoman army, which was considerably stronger than the Venetian one.

In 1571, during the Battle of Lepanto, the Christian fleet destroyed the Ottoman naval forces, however, this did not define the victory of the conflict. The Ottomans rebuilt their naval forces quickly and Venice was forced to negotiate a peace agreement, in which Venice ceded Cyprus to the Ottomans and was also forced to pay a tribute of 300,000 ducats. Cyprus continued to be governed under the power of the Ottoman Empire for more than 200 years, until 1878, when the most powerful countries were reunited with the purpose of solving the situation that remained after the end of the Russian-Turkish war (1877-1878). This reunion, called the Congress of Berlin leadered by Otto Von

Bismarck, had as participants the United Kingdom, the Austria-Hungarian Empire, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and The Ottoman Empire. After the congress, one of the agreements was that United Kingdom would take control over the administration of Cyprus, with the conditions that Cyprus would still be part of the Ottoman territory until November, 5th of 1914 and that the Ottoman empire would have the support of Great Britain.

In 1914, the First World War began, and with it came the annexation of Cyprus as a colony of Great Britain. Just after Turkey and Germany joined forces, in 1915, Great Britain offered the island to Greece as an incentive to enter the war on the side of the Triple Entente, but its king, Constantine, decided to reject the offer as they preferred to stay neutral.

A few years later, the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922, or the Minor Asia War, happened, and series of armed conflicts between the Kingdom of Greece and Turkish revolutionaries of Turkish National Movement for the partition of the Ottoman Empire between May 1919 and October 1922. It was one major conflicts that arose from the First World War. The main source for said war, came from the First World War, in which Greece, since the change of regime in 1917, fought alongside the Entente against the Ottoman Empire.

Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos had the British promise of major concessions on the coast of Minor Asia in return for entry into the war. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the war, Greece saw its aspirations of the Megali Idea as feasible, the reconquest of all the provinces belonging to the Greeks as direct successors of the Byzantine Empire.

During the conflict, more than 20% of the male population of Anatolia died. Furthermore, Greece perceived defeat as the great catastrophe; on the Turkish side, the war was seen as a victory for the so-called Turkish War of Independence, which struggled to counter attacks from different European powers (France, the United Kingdom, and Greece itself) in its territory.

In the middle of 1960, after the Zurich and London Agreement between Turkey, United Kingdom, and Greece, Cyprus gained his independence from the British. The number of casualties was of approximately 500 and the new country begin to develop its own activities. The archbishop Makarios said: "Our island has not ceased to beam its beneficial radiation in all directions to bridge contrasts and to constitute a link and uniting factor in this neuralgic area of the world." Since Cyprus was declared as a crown colony, and even before, the British government did not understand the Enosis they wanted and tried to reclaim the territory.

The 1960 Republic of Cyprus, having a total population of 573,566 people where the 77.1% of them were Greeks and 18.2% were Turks or others, recognized the political equality of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots as the co-founding partners of the new republic. The Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus was designed, in effect, as a functional federation. Communal affairs, such as birth, death, marriage, education, culture, sporting foundations and associations, some municipal duties as well as taxes, were managed separately by the respective administrations of each community. At the international level, the Republic of Cyprus became a member of the United Nations and maintained one legal personality.

The 1960 partnership, however, lasted only three years. With a view to initiating the Akritas Plan, which put forward a deliberate campaign for changing the state of affairs created by the Constitution and ultimately realizing the ideal for enosis[1], the Greek Cypriots proposed amendments to the Constitution, known as the Thirteen Points that entailed usurping the rights of Turkish Cypriots and degrading their equal co-founder status to that of a minority on the Island.

The disagreements between the two communities pertaining to the Constitution and other inter-communal matters consequently led to the tragic events of 1963 during which many Turkish Cypriot civilians lost their lives. At this point, the Greek Cypriots

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[1] Enosis: Term used in various times and places to refer different movements from part of Greek communities established outside of Greece that seeked the unification of their territory with Greece.

forcibly seized the partnership Republic of Cyprus, ejected all Turkish Cypriots from state organs and unilaterally amended the fundamental articles of the Constitution.

In the wake of inter-communal havoc, Turkish Cypriots were forced to live in small and confined enclaves corresponding to only 3% of the territory. As a result of the acceleration of the inter-communal conflict, the situation on the Island was debated at the UN Security Council, leading to the adoption of resolution 186 dated 4 March 1964, which called for the creation of a UN Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

After their expulsion from the partner republic of 1960, the Turkish Cypriots established administrative mechanisms to regulate daily affairs. Initially, they formed a General Committee that functioned until December, 27th of 1967. Subsequently, a new administration was established, the Provisional Cyprus Turkish Administration, which was renamed as the Cyprus Turkish Administration on December, 21st of 1971. Regardless of these developments, the period between 1963 and 1974 was marked by deprivation, isolation, inaccessibility, fear and insecurity for Turkish Cypriots.

In 1964, Turkey tried to invade Cyprus, but it was stopped by a telegram from the president of the United States of America, Lyndon B. Johnson, saying that the US would not support Turkey in case of a consequential Soviet invasion of Turkish territory

Outbreak of the conflict

In July 1974, the Greek army, in collaboration with the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA), promoted a *coup d'état$_2$* against right-wing Greek Cypriot government of Archbishop Makarios and for the union of Cyprus with Greece, by which Turkey argued that the situation was jeopardizing the Turkish Cypriot community. Archbishop Makarios, in his address to the UN Security Council on July 19th, 1974, defined the Greek coup as "an invasion which violated the independence and sovereignty of the Republic". Claiming interest to protect the Turkish Cypriot minority and the right conferred by the Constitution as a guarantor power, Turkey invaded the northern part of

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2 A sudden attempt by a small group of people to take over the government usually through violence.

the island to Nicosia, which caused the collapse of the government in Cyprus and in Greece Board .

At the inter-communal talks held on August 1975 in Vienna, the Voluntary Exchange of Populations was agreed, and Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots were respectively transferred to the north and the south of the Island with the assistance of the UN.

On November 15th, 1983, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, hereinafter referred to as the TRNC, was proclaimed. Turkey is the only country that has recognized and still recognizes it. At the same time, the founding parliament of the TRNC unanimously passed the Declaration of Independence which emphasized that the Turkish Cypriot side "firmly adhered to the view that the two peoples of Cyprus were destined to co-exist side by side and could and should find a peaceful, just and durable solution through negotiations on the basis of equality", confirming that the proclamation of the TRNC aimed at facilitating the re-establishment of a new partnership on the Island between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots and resolving the Cyprus problem through comprehensive negotiations. However, the peace talks failed and, despite successive UN resolutions, Turkey has refused to withdraw its military contingent in Cyprus (approximately 30,000-40,000 troops) , perpetuating the division of the island into two parts.

Following the hostilities of July and August 1974, the Security Council adopted a number of resolutions which have affected the functioning of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and has required the Force to perform certain additional functions relating, in particular, to the maintenance of the ceasefire. Following the *de-facto* ceasefire, UNFICYP inspected the deployment of the Cyprus National Guard and the Turkish Cypriot forces, while ceasefire lines and a buffer zone were established between the areas controlled by the opposing forces.

The ceasefire lines extend approximately 180 kilometres (111.85 miles) across the island. The buffer zone between the lines varies in width from less than 20 metres (21.87 yards) to some 7 kilometres (4.35 miles), and it covers about 3 per cent of the island,

including some of the most valuable agricultural land. Strict adherence to the military status quo in the buffer zone, as recorded by UNFICYP at the time, has become a vital element in preventing a recurrence of fighting. UNFICYP maintains surveillance through a system of observation posts, and through air, vehicle, and foot patrols. The task of the Force has significantly been complicated by the absence of a formal ceasefire agreement. As a result, UNFICYP has been confronted with hundreds of incidents each year. The most serious incidents tend to occur in areas where the ceasefire lines are in close proximity, particularly in Nicosia and its suburbs.

Over the years, the UNFICYP's structure, strength and its concept of operations have been reviewed and adjusted on several occasions, in light of the developments on the ground. The Force has continued to investigate and act upon all violations of the ceasefire and the military status quo. Its reaction in each case depends on the nature of the incident and may include the deployment of troops, verbal and written protests, and follow-up action to ensure that the violation has been rectified or will not recur. In addition to maintaining the military status quo, UNFICYP must also preserve the integrity of the buffer zone from unauthorized entry or activities by civilians. As a result, UNFICYP has from time to time become involved in crowd control. The Force has also continued its activities relating to clearing minefields located in the buffer zone.

The situation in the buffer zone between the two sides remained calm, and there has been a decrease in military violations. The opposing forces demonstrated restraint and overall good cooperation with UNFICYP. Nevertheless, the generally good cooperation has been marred by increased restrictions imposed on the Force by the Turkish forces, which has constrained its ability to carry out its mandate and posed significant difficulties for its personnel.

The conflict nowadays: Security Council in Cyprus

Nowadays, the Cyprus civil war is an ongoing conflict affecting the territory and the population of the island. Mustafa Akıncı is the fourth and current President of Northern Cyprus. He took office in April, 2015 for a five-year term. Akıncı became mayor of the Nicosia Turkish Municipality at the age of 28, and served at various times as Member of Parliament, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Tourism.

Elected president with 60.5% of the vote, Akıncı was perceived as representing the 'brother nations' outlook regarding relations with Turkey, as opposed to the 'young nation' outlook maintained by Turkey. Akıncı's policy of increasing Northern Cyprus's independence from Turkey was met with strong opposition from the Turkish government, with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan having a phone-in debate with Akıncı on live TV soon after his election. While Akıncı has proposed greater independence from Turkey, the Turkish government is sceptical due to the large amount of financial and military aid that has been given to Northern Cyprus since the invasion in 1974. The Republic of Cyprus regards this victory as positive as its president has expressed the interest of holding discussions regarding the reunification of Cyprus and the reopening of Varosha in Famagusta for tourists.

The Security Council extended the mandate of UNFICYP until January 31st, 2016, and welcomed resumed negotiations between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders to reach a comprehensive settlement. Resolution 2234 adopted by the Security Council at its 7496th meeting on 29 July 2015

1. Welcomes the resumption of the leaders-led negotiations as well as the progress achieved so far and the ongoing efforts of the leaders and their negotiators to reach a comprehensive and durable settlement, and encourages the sides to grasp the current opportunity with determination to secure a comprehensive settlement;

2. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/517);

3. Recalls Security Council resolution 2026 (2011), and calls upon the two leaders to:
    a) Put their efforts behind further work on reaching convergences on the core issues;
    b) Continue to work with the Technical Committees with the objective of improving the daily lives of the Cypriots;

c) Improve the public atmosphere for the negotiations, including by focussing public messages on convergences and the way ahead, and delivering more constructive and harmonised messages; and

d) Increase the participation of civil society in the process as appropriate;

4. Urges the implementation of confidence-building measures, and looks forward to agreement on and implementation of further such mutually-acceptable steps, including military confidence building measures and the opening of other crossing points, that can contribute to a conducive environment for a settlement;

5. Welcomes all efforts to accommodate the Committee on Missing Persons exhumation requirements as well as the joint appeal for information issued by the two leaders on 28 May 2015, and calls upon all parties to provide more expeditious, full access to all areas, given the need to intensify the Committee's work;

6. Reaffirms all its relevant resolutions on Cyprus, in particular resolution 1251 (1999) of 29 June 1999 and subsequent resolutions;

7. Expresses its full support for UNFICYP and decides to extend its mandate for a further period ending 31 January 2016;

8. Calls on both sides to continue to engage, as a matter of urgency and while respecting UNFICYP's mandate, in consultations with UNFICYP on the demarcation of the buffer zone, and on the United Nations 1989 aide-memoire, with a view to reaching early agreement on outstanding issues;

9. Calls on the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkish forces to restore in Strovilia the military status quo which existed there prior to 30 June 2000;

10. Calls on both sides to allow access to deminers and to facilitate the removal of the remaining mines in Cyprus within the buffer zone, and urges both sides to extend demining operations outside the buffer zone;

11. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on implementation of this resolution, including on contingency planning in relation to the settlement, by 10 January 2016 and to keep the Security Council updated on events as necessary;

12. Welcomes the efforts being undertaken by UNFICYP to implement the Secretary-General's zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, requests the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and urges troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action including the conduct of pre -deployment awareness training, and to take disciplinary action and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel;

13. Decides to remain seized of the matter.

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