

The President

Mr. Andros Kyprianou
General Secretary
Central Committee of AKEL,
4, Ezekia Papaioannou,
1075 Nicosia,
Cyprus

D 300338 21.01.2021

Dear Mr. Andros Kyprianou,

Thank you for your letter of 17 December 2020 regarding the dangerous escalation of tensions in Cyprus and the proposals that you submitted to President Anastasiades.

As you very well know, tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean are very high on the agenda of the European Union and of the European Parliament. We keep following the situation very closely and have most recently discussed the issue at our plenary sessions in September and November 2020, in the Committee on Foreign Affairs and our Delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee.

On 17 September 2020, the European Parliament has adopted a resolution, by an overwhelming majority, to express its full solidarity with Greece and Cyprus. We unequivocally condemned Turkey's illegal activities in the continental shelf/EEZ of Greece and Cyprus, which represent a violation of the sovereign rights of EU Member States, and called on Turkey to engage in the peaceful settlement of disputes and to refrain from any unilateral and illegal action or threat.

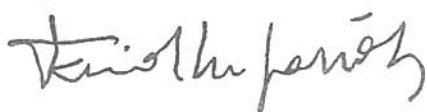
On 26 November 2020, the EP has adopted a resolution by an overwhelming majority, on Turkey's activities in Varosha. Through it, we condemned these activities and warned that its partial "opening" weakens prospects of a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem, exacerbating divisions and entrenching the permanent partition of the island. The EP called on Turkey to transfer Varosha to its lawful inhabitants under the temporary administration of the UN, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 550 (1984), and to refrain from any actions that alter the demographic balance on the island through a policy of illegal settlement. The EP regrets that the highest Turkish authorities have endorsed the two-state solution and urges Turkey to commit concretely to the UN Secretary-General's call for the resumption of negotiations from where they were left off at Crans-Montana in 2017.

Moreover, we also called on the European Council to maintain its unified position on Turkey's illegal actions and impose tough sanctions in response. During my intervention of the European Council meeting, on 10 December 2020, I have also urged to seriously consider all instruments at our disposal, including economic sanctions, to send a credible signal of our support for the territorial integrity of Cyprus.

Furthermore, in all our communications with the Turkish authorities, we keep insisting that, as a candidate country, Turkey has agreed to uphold the highest standards of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, including compliance with international conventions, and to engage in good neighbourly relations. In this context, I deplore Turkey's continuous distancing from the EU, as confirmed, *inter alia*, by the 2020 European Commission's report on Turkey.

Please rest assured that the European Parliament remains in full solidarity with Cyprus, and keeps supporting the efforts for a sustainable resolution of the conflict through dialogue, diplomacy, and negotiations in a spirit of good will and in line with international law. In this respect, your contribution is valuable and will be taken into account.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Maria SASSOLI', written in a cursive style.

David Maria SASSOLI