

## **CYPRIOI LEADERS IN NY; TURKEY'S BESMIRCHED REPUTATION**

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President Nikos Anastasiades, accompanied by his Foreign Minister Yiannakis Kasoulides and Government Spokesman Nikos Christodoulides and an array of officials, made his annual pilgrimage to the United Nations. Unlike previous years however there appears to be movement relating to the Cyprus issue that emanates not only from the usual Washington quarters (that are studiously oblivious to current realities) but also from forces in the US capital that are disturbed by the transformation of Turkey into a hard-line, autonomous regional player promoting Sunni Islamic expansion (including support for Islamic terrorist groups, explicit enemies of the US, its allies and Israel).

The Turkish government clearly appears to think it can gain the political and economic upper hand in a resolution of the Cyprus issue. President Erdogan and Prime Minister Davutoglu, each after his recent election, made it a symbolic point to visit the part of the island occupied by the Turkish military and to wave — what no doubt in their view is — the conqueror's flag. As if to reinforce this posturing Dervis Eroglu, the Turkish regime's factotum, stated said that Greek Cypriot hopes to return the status quo to pre-1974 conditions "will not come true."

Support for Turkey's posturing (and cover for the war crimes it has committed during its 40-year illegal occupation of Cypriot land) has been given as a matter of policy since 1974 by elements of the US Government. Today those adhering to this policy include some in the State Department that include its Bureau of Energy Resources, who are playing "footsie" with one of its former officials now working for Turkish energy interests. When asked, in a recent Congressional hearing, about his thoughts of an alliance between Greece-Cyprus and Israel, the head of this bureau changed the subject and discussed the "wider region," which is State Department code for Turkey becoming energy hub and driving a wedge against the EU.

Another arm of the State Department, namely the US Embassy in Nicosia is promoting a policy to undermine the cultural centrality of Hellenism and to weaken the Greek identity of the overwhelming majority of the island-Republic's population. It is coordinating the funding of NGO activities in "peace education" and the arts that are reminiscent of efforts at promoting sterile Soviet propaganda, reinforced by the provision of generous grants by "enlightened" donors . . . Such a squalid policy not only is demeaning and unworthy of the United States — its democratic polity itself being a product of Hellenism's most lasting inheritance, but also is bound to create a negative reaction.

Despite these State Department postures, borne of a combination of bureaucratic inertia, residual Turkish-lobby influence and no doubt all manner of incentives and personal agendas, *a new perception of Turkey has emerged.*

Turkey is no longer considered essential in the balance of power structure in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean, which appears to have fallen apart. Indeed more educated and subtle observers are troubled because Erdogan's Turkey has become very much a part of the problem — as Amy Kurmanj put it, in an article published on September 21 in *eKurd.net* tellingly titled “Boycott Turkey, the Black Sheep of NATO:”

“If a major US ally and NATO member were guilty of supplying the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization with funds, training, logistics, weapons, transportation, access to recruitment and an open border, we would probably want to reconsider that alliance and membership, wouldn't we? In fact, that country could then be defined as a state sponsor of terrorism and subject itself to international discipline, if not military intervention, as part of the global war on terror. “

Indeed a growing number of distinguished policy figures and public personalities in Washington, and among its European allies and certainly Israel, are reexamining the Turkish “alliance.” A lead editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* of September 12 titled “Our Non-Ally in Ankara: Turkey bugs out of the anti-ISIS coalition. Why not a base in Kurdistan?” summarizes and reflects those attitudes.

Which brings us back to the visit by the Cypriot leadership to New York and the contacts they have made. Inevitably some of the State Department elements will have promoted the idea that a “solution” to the Cyprus problem has to go through Turkey — given however the increasing number of policy figures who have become aware of the support the Erdogan-Davutoglu duo have given to the forces of instability only someone who is mentally impaired would accept such an approach.

President Anastasiades is a shrewd player, one not likely to be swayed into a slippery deal sold by fast-talking Turks and their western mercenaries. He can be counted on to seize the opportunity to build *on the growing network of support that Cyprus and Greece are gaining in Washington* — from name players in the Executive and Congress, both in and out of this Administration, to distinguished think tanks and the press. These mostly new supporters realize that, as the easternmost state of the European Community and a resolute democracy, it is Cyprus's link with Greece and cooperation with Israel that provide those forces of stability in the Eastern Mediterranean on which any system that ensures peace must be built.