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Excellency,

I am writing in response to the statement made by the Greek Cypriot representative at the session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names held between 28 April - 2 May 2025, which once again blatantly distorted facts pertaining to Cyprus. The Greek Cypriot side has been exploiting the absence of the Turkish Cypriot side at international platforms in order to mislead the international community and to divert attention from its sole responsibility for the creation as well as the continuation of the Cyprus issue. Therefore, I am compelled to respond in writing in order to set the record straight.

At the outset, it is important to clarify that the Cyprus issue commenced in 1963, not in 1974, when the Greek Cypriot side forcibly usurped the title of the partnership Republic of Cyprus and expelled its Turkish Cypriot partner from all state organs. During the years from 1963 to 1974, a period that the Greek Cypriot representative has conveniently chosen to ignore, the Greek Cypriot militia, aided and encouraged by Greece, took part in an ethnic cleansing campaign against the Turkish Cypriot people, known as the *Akritas Plan*, with the ultimate aim of achieving *Enosis* (the annexation of the entire island to Greece). As a matter of fact, there has not been a joint central administration capable of representing the entire island since 1963, but there exist two independent self-governing States on the Island of Cyprus. The usurpation of the title of the partnership Republic by the Greek Cypriot side and the expulsion of the Turkish Cypriot people from all state organs resulted, out of necessity, in the evolution of the legislative, executive and judicial organs of the Turkish Cypriot people, which eventually led to the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983.

**H.E. Mr. António Guterres**  
**Secretary-General of the United Nations**  
**New York**

**cc: Mr. Pierre Jaillard**  
**Chairperson of the United Nations Group of Experts**  
**on Geographical Names**  
**New York**

Therefore, the claim of the Greek Cypriot representative that the sovereignty of the now defunct “Republic of Cyprus” extends over the whole of Cyprus is factually incorrect, since it is an undisputable fact that there are two fully-fledged States on the island today, each exercising sovereignty and jurisdiction within its respective territory.

Greek Cypriot representatives have long been misinforming the international community by portraying the Cyprus issue as one of “invasion” and “occupation”. As a matter of fact, none of the United Nations Security Council resolutions on Cyprus describe the legitimate and justified Turkish intervention in the island, carried out in line with the 1959 International Cyprus Treaties, as “invasion” or its subsequent presence on the island as “occupation”. Lest we forget, Guarantor Türkiye had to intervene after eleven years of Turkish Cypriot suffering at the hands of the Greek Cypriot militia, which culminated into the coup attempt organized by the military junta in Athens and its Greek Cypriot collaborators, aiming at the annexation of the entire island to Greece (*Enosis*) and the total annihilation of the Turkish Cypriot people. In view of past experiences and current human sufferings inflicted by recent conflicts worldwide, it is without any doubt that the Guarantee system in Cyprus is now more relevant and necessary than ever.

The claims of the Greek Cypriot representative regarding the changing of geographical names in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is clearly an unfounded allegation with racist underpinnings, ignoring or rejecting the presence of all other civilizations in the island throughout its long multicultural heritage. Place names can identify and reflect culture, heritage and landscape, and are significant elements of a people’s cultural heritage. The guiding principle for the standardization of geographical names has been a practical one; it relates to how the inhabitants refer to an area. In a similar vein, it is natural for the Turkish Cypriot people to refer to geographical places with their Turkish names. This practice is necessitated by three main reasons: to provide ease of reference for practical purposes, to help the Turkish Cypriot people who had become refugees for the third time between 1963-1974 adapt to their new homes and, above all, to help ease the painful memories of all Turkish Cypriot people who were subjected to all sorts of inhuman treatment, including armed attacks, over the course of eleven years by Greek Cypriots. Thus, the Greek Cypriot side does not have the moral or legal authority to comment on geographical names under the control and jurisdiction of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, where the Greek Cypriot administration exercises no control or jurisdiction whatsoever.

It is also important to note that the claim regarding “displaced” persons is a part of archaic Greek Cypriot propaganda that conveniently omits the fact that this issue dates back to 1963, when Turkish Cypriot people throughout the island had to flee their homes out of fear for their lives and were forced to live in enclaves comprising a mere 3% of the island. Though many Turkish Cypriot people as well as Greek Cypriot people were also displaced in 1974 as a result of the Greek/Greek Cypriot coup and its aftermath, the question of displaced persons was comprehensively settled through the Voluntary Exchange of Populations Agreement reached between the two sides at the third round of talks held in Vienna in 1975. Following the Agreement, Turkish Cypriot people and Greek Cypriot people were transferred, respectively, to North Cyprus and South Cyprus under the

supervision of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. Given these facts, referring to Greek Cypriot people living in South Cyprus as “displaced” is inappropriate.

Moreover, the property issue in Cyprus, as is the case with all issues relating to Cyprus, does not solely affect the Greek Cypriot people but also the Turkish Cypriot people. Turkish Cypriot people who had to leave their properties in South Cyprus are, after all these years, still unable to claim any sort of compensation or any other effective remedy for their properties due to the “Custodianship Law” in South Cyprus. Under the “Custodianship Law”, the Greek Cypriot administration acts as the “Custodian” of Turkish Cypriot properties, preventing their restitution, exchange or compensation to Turkish Cypriot people. Contrary to the obstructionist policies of the Greek Cypriot side in this regard, in 2005 the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus established, in line with the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the Immovable Property Commission (IPC), which is recognized by the ECtHR as an effective domestic remedy for the settlement of the property claims in the form of restitution, compensation and/or exchange. As of 2 May 2025, 8,129 applications have been lodged with the Commission and 2,021 of them have been concluded. The Commission has awarded GBP 529,237,351 to the applicants as compensation. Moreover, it has ruled for exchange and compensation in 2 cases, for restitution in 5 cases and for restitution and compensation in 8 cases. In one case, it has delivered a decision for restitution after the settlement of the Cyprus issue, and in one case it has ruled for partial restitution.

With regard to the allegations in relation to the historical identity and heritage of the island, I would like to emphasize that the Turkish Cypriot side, despite its meagre resources and Greek Cypriot efforts to prevent it from receiving any technical or financial assistance from the relevant international institutions, does its utmost to protect and preserve the cultural heritage of Cyprus, emanating from the diverse and rich cultures as well as civilizations that have populated the island throughout history. In addition to its own efforts for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, irrespective of its origin, the Turkish Cypriot side has also been constructively and actively engaging with and contributing to the work of the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage.

On the other hand, the Greek Cypriot administration, since 1963, has been pursuing a policy of eradicating all traces of the Turkish-Islamic heritage of Cyprus. During the period from 1963 to 1974, mosques, shrines and other holy sites in Turkish villages all around the island were destroyed by the Greek Cypriot side. Field studies conducted by our experts and the information gathered from Turkish Cypriot people visiting South Cyprus have indicated that there are more than 130 mosques in South Cyprus, a significant number of which are in extremely poor condition. Furthermore, all the movable cultural objects from these monuments, namely hundreds of manuscript Holy Korans, prayer rugs, Holy Koran reading desks and pieces of Islamic iconography have been destroyed or looted.

Against this background, it is clear that the misleading remarks of the Greek Cypriot representative are not corroborated by legal and historical facts pertaining to the island. In view of the above realities, such statements made by Greek Cypriot representatives under their purported

title as the representatives of the so-called "Republic of Cyprus" are legally null and void as far as the Turkish Cypriot people are concerned.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Mehmet Dâna

Representative

Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus