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13 April 2026

Dear Mr. Todt,

I am writing in response to your report entitled the C-34 Annual Field Visit 2025 Trip Report, published in February 2026, following an annual field visit of the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) to the island of Cyprus between the dates of 8-12 December 2025 and to convey our views and considerations on the matter.

At the outset, I would like to underline our firm expectation that **the international organizations as well as the International Peace Institute, demonstrate the sensitivity in upholding the equal status and inherent rights of both Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots in all their documents and statements.** Upholding its responsibility to act objectively, the Institute should send a clear and constructive message that the peculiar and unresolved nature of the Cyprus issue does not confer upon either side the right to claim authority over the other or to assert the right to represent the entire island unilaterally. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) expects the Institute, to convey objective messages in order to prevent the parties from falling into misperceptions. Nevertheless, we observe with great concern that references in the Report such as “.. *participants met with UN officials, peacekeepers, senior government representatives..*”, “..*successfully negotiate with the host government over the use of drones..*”, “..*more than two years of efforts to engage with the host authorities to secure consent..*” and “..*positive working relationship with host authorities..*” point to interactions, on matters of major importance to both sides, that were conducted solely with the Greek Cypriot side. This situation reflects the biased outlook of international community that falls short of maintaining equal distance between the sides which are of equal status with one another. As a result, your report inadvertently encourages the Greek Cypriot side’s persistent efforts to present itself as the sole authority representing the entire island, thereby reinforcing its intransigence and undermining the prospects for a sincere and meaningful negotiation process.

**Mr. Jean Todt**

**Chair of the Board of Directors of International Peace Institute  
New York**

**cc: Mr. Michael Gort**

**Chairperson of the United Nations Special Committee  
on Peacekeeping Operations  
New York**

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Accordingly, referring in the Report to the Turkish Cypriot people as a “community,” and to the President of the TRNC as the leader of the Turkish Cypriot “community,” while referring to the Greek Cypriot leader as the “Government of Cyprus,” creates a wrong impression of an unequal power balance between the two sides. The unjust situation created by **Resolution 186** that does not reflect the legal and political reality of the two co-founding peoples, has long been the primary source of the problem as it encourages the maximalist policies of the Greek Cypriot side. We expect your institution to correct these mistakes in your next report (please see the annex for historical context), uphold the sovereign equality of both sides in all its undertakings and to endorse a language that will respect the equal standing of both sides. A comprehensive reassessment of the UNFICYP’s mandate, functions, and operations in light of the island’s changed circumstances is necessary and long overdue. There are two separate States and two distinct peoples on the island.

**With regard to the UNFICYP**, it is essential to recall the three fundamental principles of UN peacekeeping operations: impartiality, the non-use of force except in self-defense, and the consent of the parties. In the Brahimi Report (Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations), it is clearly stated that “...*consent of the local parties and impartiality [...] should remain the bedrock principles of peacekeeping.*” Despite **the fact that the principle of consent is fundamental** to the operations of the UNFICYP, which concerns both the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot sides equally, this principle has long been overlooked in Cyprus, as the UN persistently refrains from seeking and obtaining the consent of the Turkish Cypriot side. As such, the UNFICYP “*risks becoming a party to the conflict*”, as stated in the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines. In fact, the UNFICYP can operate on both sides of the island only on the basis of the consent of both parties. In this respect, it must be underlined that the sole reason the UNFICYP has been able to continue its activities within the territory of the TRNC is the constructive and good-faith approach of the Turkish Cypriot authorities, a situation that is clearly unsustainable. The Turkish Cypriot side has consistently put on record, especially since 2022, the need to establish a formal agreement/framework that defines the relationship between the UNFICYP and our authorities. We expect a breakthrough with the UNFICYP in this respect.

With regard to **the mission’s administration of the buffer zone and execution of its main tasks**, including management of tensions within the buffer zone, we would like to reiterate that years-long double standards by the UNFICYP have resulted in numerous permissions and/or tacit approvals —through inaction with regard to unauthorized constructions — being granted to substantial construction projects of the Greek Cypriot side, to the detriment of Turkish Cypriot interests. The UNFICYP’s decisions in favor of the Greek Cypriot side and its negative stance towards the requests of the Turkish Cypriots over the years have **resulted in preferential treatment for the Greek Cypriot side**. This preferential treatment feeds resentment and distrust between the two sides while exacerbating estrangement, accumulating tension, countering trust building efforts, affecting the status quo to the benefit of only one side and damaging the image of the UNFICYP; consequences which are in no way compatible with the mandate or duties of the UNFICYP. **The UNFICYP’s failure to implement impartiality and to maintain a balanced**

approach towards the two sides has resulted in giving the Greek Cypriot side the opportunity to implement and enforce its legislation disproportionately and therefore creating the impression that it can extend its authority over the buffer zone as well. Construction of Nicosia Mall in the Lefkoşa-Trodos highway, the open air cinema in Derinya, the University of Central Lancashire Cyprus (UCLAN) in Pile/Pyla, construction of the Larnaka - Dikelya - Ayia Napa road (passing through Turkish owned lands), Pile-Kingsfield road (passing through Turkish owned lands), unauthorized road in Troulli and Pile – Oroklini road (passing through Turkish owned lands) and Astromerit-Evrihu road are only some examples among **numerous and continuous violations of the buffer zone by the Greek Cypriot side which were neither met with any physical confrontation by the UNFICYP nor prevented**. On the contrary, they were effectively tolerated. Granting of permission by the UNFICYP to the Greek Cypriot side within the buffer zone to exploit the natural reserves (copper mines), which belongs to both sides, unilaterally with the pretext of “cleaning” is another example of preferential treatment afforded to the Greek Cypriot side. The UNFICYP must act firmly and decisively to stop any unauthorized Greek Cypriot construction within the buffer zone not only by protests but also through physical action. In fact, the UNFICYP must repeatedly call for the reversal of each and every unauthorized Greek Cypriot construction/activity, in the buffer zone. We would also like to make it abundantly clear that the UNFICYP must stop appeasing and encouraging Greek Cypriot constructions through tacit or explicit approvals, which results in Greek Cypriot attempts to dominate the buffer zone and create a misleading perception of the realities on the ground.

**In contrast, the construction of the Yiğitler–Pile road**, which is a purely humanitarian project, and the only request of the Turkish Cypriot side over many years, was prevented by the UNFICYP through physical confrontation, in an unprecedented manner, by use of its personnel and vehicles, in an approach which was never applied to the Greek Cypriot side. In face of Greek Cypriot violations, the UNFICYP has, to date, sufficed with merely verbal expressions of discomfort behind closed doors or simple references in UN reports for a limited period before dropping them from the agenda. The UNFICYP also refrains from publicly protesting significant constructions by the Greek Cypriot side within the buffer zone that are unauthorized. On the other hand, the UNFICYP went as far as turning a humanitarian road project of Turkish Cypriots into an international issue through immediate and strong verbal and written statements. The biased approach of the UNFICYP towards the Turkish Cypriot side in discharging its mandate not only calls into question the UNFICYP's presence in the TRNC, **but also increases the risk of escalation, undermines trust building efforts and adversely affects the political process**.

**It must be firmly underlined that the composition and funding of the UNFICYP remain key factors that significantly compromise its impartiality and prevents it from executing its mandate in an objective manner**. Currently, the overwhelming majority of its “national staff”—over 70% of total UNFICYP personnel—are Greek Cypriots, whereas Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots should be represented in a balanced manner. The Greek Cypriot side alone finances one-third of the mission’s budget, and together with Greece, they cover 43% of the UNFICYP’s annual budget. It is without a doubt that this financing structure inevitably gives rise to concerns regarding the balance and structural neutrality of the mission. Eliminating all funding

from parties to the Cyprus issue would represent an important step towards strengthening confidence in the mission. These “voluntary contributions” and imbalances in the number of “national staff” not only undermine the impartiality and credibility of the UNFICYP, but also cause a conflict of interest.

**This structural imbalance strongly prevents the UNFICYP from acting objectively**, as many decisions, both minor and major, at every stage are effectively filtered through, followed, or shaped by Greek Cypriot interests due to overwhelming presence at every level. This gives them an upper hand, provides immediate access to insider knowledge, and creates the necessary basis to initiate actions to lobby and influence decisions. **In this context, it is particularly concerning to see that the conclusions in the Report**, such as “*the role of national staff is particularly imperative given their contextual knowledge*” and that “*the mission also consists largely of national staff, who comprise more than 70 percent of the UNFICYP personnel. This was cited as a ‘major advantage’...*” **completely misjudge the issue.** The Report and thus the UN fails to recognize the problem posed by the structural imbalance and consequently, does not even see any need to explore potential avenues for addressing it.

In this respect, contrary to the conclusions in the Report, **the key to maintaining the effectiveness of the mission does not lie in increasing resources, budget, or personnel, nor merely in securing additional support from member states**, but rather in upholding objectivity and impartiality and conveying accurate messages to both sides in a manner that upholds the sensitive balances and does not favor one equal partner over the other. The Greek Cypriot side has no legal or moral right to represent or act on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot People. The longstanding unfair approach by the UNFICYP is unacceptable.

On the matter of “building trust”, while the report highlights the UNFICYP’s engagement in “building trust” between the sides, such efforts, in practice, have been largely confined to a limited, selected segment of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot peoples. “Trust building” meetings and activities repeatedly involve the same groups and civil society actors, who do not necessarily represent the broader populations. As a result, these initiatives risk remaining disconnected from the majority of society and have limited impact on fostering genuine, widespread intercommunal trust.

With regard to the report’s claim that “*the last two years have brought additional momentum with the appointment of the Envoy ... and new leadership of the Turkish Cypriot community*,” any attempt to attribute responsibility for the lack of momentum to the Turkish Cypriot side or to attribute equal responsibility to both sides is neither acceptable nor objective. Such a characterization risks conveying a biased and prejudiced message detached from the realities on the ground. The historical record, in particular the 2004 referendum process and the 2017 Crans Montana negotiations, clearly demonstrates that the Greek Cypriot side has no genuine willingness to share power and prosperity with the Turkish Cypriot people. This well-established reality remains the principal source of the persistent stalemate.

In this context, the expectation of the Turkish Cypriot side from the UNFICYP is that it consistently acknowledges the sovereign equality of the Turkish Cypriot people in every report, correspondence, and statement. The UNFICYP is expected to convey impartial messages to both sides, avoiding any wording or statements that could undermine the principle of sovereign equality. Furthermore, the Mission should adopt a neutral and objective approach regarding matters in the buffer zone as well as ensure that the recruitment policy of local UN personnel is undertaken in a fair and proportionate manner between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, in line with their equal status, so as to strengthen perceptions of neutrality and institutional impartiality. Furthermore, in its engagement with civil society, the UNFICYP should ensure comprehensive inclusivity by engaging with representatives reflecting the full spectrum of views within both Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot people not only focusing on the groups that hold a specific view. Equally important is the principle of consent, which constitutes one of the fundamental pillars of United Nations peacekeeping operations. In line with internationally recognized peacekeeping principles, the continued presence and effective functioning of the UNFICYP on the island must be based on the consent of both sides. The Turkish Cypriot side therefore reiterates the importance of establishing a clear and mutually agreed framework governing the relationship between the UNFICYP and the Turkish Cypriot authorities. Such an arrangement would ensure transparency, strengthen cooperation, and enable the Mission to operate on a more sustainable and mutually respectful basis.

Please accept, the assurances of my highest consideration.



**Murat Soysal**  
**Representative**

**Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus**

ANNEX I

1. There is no single authority in Cyprus capable of representing both the Turkish Cypriot people and the Greek Cypriot people or the island as a whole. The Cyprus issue commenced when the Greek Cypriot co-founder of the 1960 Republic of Cyprus tried to impose its political will on the Turkish Cypriot co-founder by force of arms and illegally converted the bi-national Republic into a purely Greek Cypriot entity by expelling its Turkish Cypriot partner from all state organs in 1963. The island-wide attacks on the Turkish Cypriot people, which commenced on 21 December 1963, are still fresh in our memories. It was actually this large-scale violence and ensuing gross human rights violations that necessitated the UN Security Council to deploy the UNFICYP to the island in 1964 to stop the bloodshed and the atrocities perpetrated against the Turkish Cypriot people, who are still mourning their tragic losses.
2. It is also crucial to note that the Turkish Cypriot people were forced to flee their homes throughout the island out of fear for their lives and live in small enclaves comprising a mere 3% of the island. Many Turkish Cypriots were subjected to mass atrocities and mass killings, hundreds were taken from their homes or workplaces never to be seen or heard of again, while thousands of others were forced to live under deprived conditions on Turkish aid that could reach them. 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.
3. In this period, the Turkish Cypriot people were forced to abandon 103 villages as a result of the oppression and violence they endured by the Greek Cypriot side, and, in addition to numerous other attacks, suffered significant civilian casualties in six major massacres. These facts have been well documented in the relevant UN documents. With regard to the atrocities perpetrated against the Turkish Cypriot people, it is also important to recall the apology extended by the former Greek Cypriot Minister of Foreign Affairs Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis to the Turkish Cypriot people for “*the horrific crimes committed*” on 14 August 1974 by the Greek Cypriot militia in the villages of Muratağa, Atlılar and Sandallar. Mass graves in where the civilian Turkish Cypriot victims were buried were discovered, and one such grave has been exhumed recently in these villages.
4. As is known, in 1974 Guarantor Türkiye had to intervene after eleven years of Turkish Cypriot suffering at the hands of the Greek Cypriot leadership and armed combatants, which culminated into the coup attempt organized by the military junta in Athens and its Greek Cypriot collaborators, aiming for the annexation of the entire island to Greece (*Enosis*) as well as the total annihilation of Turkish Cypriot people in line with the notorious *Akritis Plan*. In fact, the intervention of Guarantor Türkiye brought peace and

security to the island in 1974 by putting an end not only to the violence inflicted against the Turkish Cypriot people, but also to the violence committed by the Greek Cypriot militia against its own people.

5. In 1983, the Turkish Cypriot people declared their independence, and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) was established as a fully-fledged democratic State with all its institutions in place. The TRNC exercises full control and sovereignty over its territory, and its competent authorities are the sole bodies responsible for maintaining law and order.
6. There is no single constitutional Government representing both peoples of the island or capable of representing, legally or factually, the whole of Cyprus. Each side has since ruled itself, exercising sovereignty over its own territory, while the Greek Cypriot side has continued to unlawfully claim that it is the "Government of Cyprus".



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April 13, 2026

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Re: Office of the Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus  
Registration No. 2619  
Filing of Copy of Document Disseminated April 13, 2026.

Dear Madam/Sir:

Enclosed for filing please find the following disseminated document:

- 1. Dissemination Date: April 13, 2026.** A five (5) page letter and its two (2) page annex dated April 13, 2026 from H.E. Mr. Murat Soysal, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in New York to Mr. Jean Todt, Chair of the Board of Directors of International Peace Institute and H.E. Mr. Michael Gort, the Chairperson of the United Nations Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

Sincerely yours,

Murat Soysal  
Representative