

On Cyprus: Support the opportunity for lasting peace

The Cyprus problem persists for decades now. Despite the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the EU since 2004, no comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus problem has been reached and the island remains divided to-date. Therefore, we welcome the decision of the two parties to resume the negotiations on a comprehensive settlement for the reunification of Cyprus after the failure of the so-called Annan plan in 2004. We appreciate the constructive approach of the leaders of the two negotiating parties and the progress made so far, even if still a lot remains to be decided notably on territorial issues and the chapter of securities and guarantees, which has not been yet discussed.

The European Greens therefore urge both sides not to miss this historic opportunity and to step up efforts with the vision of overcoming the remaining open questions and submit a plan for a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem to a referendum in 2017; and we welcome the planned conference on Cyprus which is convened with the added participation of the guarantor powers and the invitation of other relevant parties as needed in order to also reach agreement on the issue of security and guarantees and thus provide the basis for the implementation of the settlement.

Moreover, we consider that the EU has to engage quickly with the authorities of the Republic of Cyprus and the leaders of the Turkish Cypriot community in order to identify and plan the assistance and means needed for the implementation of the agreement, only after the latter has been concluded. It is not only a problem for Cyprus, it is a problem for the European Union and the EU should be actively engaged in solving it.

We also want to underline the importance of adopting confidence-building measures aimed at strengthening the dialogue between the two communities, stepping up people-to-people relations at all levels and enhancing mutual trust with a vision of paving the way for the full reconciliation between the parties and overcoming the mistakes of the past. In this framework we consider that the solution of Famagusta problem is necessary and we recall the proposal of the European Greens for the declaration of the city as a model Mediterranean eco-green city under EU supervision, as a common pursuit of the Greek and Turkish side until a comprehensive solution for the Cyprus problem has been reached.

European Greens insist on our strong conviction that a re-unified and sovereign Cyprus following a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem which would be compatible with the EU acquis, will be able to take its full place among nations; insist on a bi-communal bi-zonal configuration of the federal state, which would ensure an adequate level of unity and autonomy at the same time and calls for the withdrawal of the Turkish troops.