

Security Council Press Statement on Cyprus

The following Security Council press statement was issued today by Council President Linda Thomas-Greenfield (United States):

The members of the Security Council expressed serious concern at the launch of unauthorized construction work by the Turkish Cypriot side inside the United Nations buffer zone near Pyla/Pile. The members of the Security Council stressed that this action runs contrary to Security Council resolutions and constitutes a violation of the status quo in the United Nations buffer zone.

The members of the Security Council condemned the assaults against UN peacekeepers and damage to UN vehicles by Turkish Cypriot personnel, and wished a speedy and full recovery to the peacekeepers who were injured. They underlined that attacks targeting peacekeepers may constitute crimes under international law and reaffirmed their full commitment to the safety and security of all UN personnel.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the halt in unauthorized construction by the Turkish Cypriot side and the removal of equipment and personnel. The members of the Security Council underscored the need to avoid any further unilateral or escalatory actions by either party that could raise tensions on the island and harm prospects for a settlement. The members of the Security Council called on all parties to show flexibility and to support the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to negotiate mutually agreed development in the area concerned.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed their full support for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and its mandated authority in and delineation of the buffer zone, and called for the removal of all unauthorized constructions and the prevention of unauthorized military or civilian activities within and along the ceasefire lines.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed their commitment to an enduring, comprehensive and just settlement in accordance with the wishes of the Cypriot people, and based on a bicommunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in relevant Security Council resolutions. They encouraged both sides to take tangible steps in support of the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and to fully engage with UNFICYP to promote a conducive climate.

The members of the Security Council also reiterated their call for the sides to reach an agreement regarding the proposal of the Secretary-General to appoint a United Nations envoy, who could provide critical support in the search for common ground with the goal of returning to formal negotiations for a lasting settlement in Cyprus.

The members of the Security Council agreed to remain seized of the matter.