

With my best compliments

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Statement by the Government Spokesman

It is obvious that an orchestrated effort is being made by certain circles of the U.N. Secretariat to put the blame on the Greek Cypriot side for the failure of the High Level Meeting. This is gathered also from the sources quoted by International News Agencies and certain papers abroad.

This effort was noticed by us while the High Level Talks were still in progress and the President of the Republic, Mr. Spyros Kyprianou, protested about this to the U.N. Secretary-General who undertook to investigate the matter.

After the failure of the Meeting, these attempts to shift responsibility were intensified and yesterday a very strong protest was made by the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to Mr. Pico and through him to the U.N. Secretary-General who is now in Great Britain.

The answer officially given by the U.N. Secretariat was that all these reports, that our side was to blame for the failure of the meeting, were entirely unfounded and wrong and in no way projected the real image of the situation.

Another member of the Secretariat expressed deep regret and dismay about the associated press dispatch which he described as sheer invention and containing gross mistakes about the position of the U.N. Secretary-General which remained that "we are closer than ever before".

It is also known that the U.N. Secretary-General himself, who was informed of the matter in Edinburgh and was asked if he blamed the Greek Cypriot side, said "No it would be unfair to put the blame on the Greek Cypriot side".

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Regardless of the inspired reports and dispatches, I want to repeat emphatically that in no case were we told or given the impression either by the U.N. Secretary-General or anybody else that the High Level Meeting would be a mere formality. The contrary was the case. Publicly and otherwise both we and third parties were told that the High Level Meeting would be a meeting for substantive discussions and negotiations on the basis of what had been exchanged at the Proximity Talks and of all existing documents with a view to finding a framework for a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem. On 19.12.84 the Secretary-General replying to a question at a Press Conference clearly said:

"I don't, as you can imagine, see the meeting as a mere formality. What I expect from the meeting is a constructive discussion, in which the two parties will present their views on my presentation".

On other occasions also, it was made clear by other sides and interested Governments that everybody expected discussions and negotiations at the meeting with the purpose of reaching an agreement on a framework for a comprehensive, just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem.

With this firm belief we attended the High Level Meeting with goodwill, ready for a constructive dialogue to deal with basic outstanding issues in order to go ahead with our effort to seek and find a framework for a solution.

For four days nothing was left undone, there was no formula that was not proposed, no effort that was not made to get Mr. Denktash to accept to discuss the basic outstanding issues which make up the Cyprus problem. None produced results. Up to the last moment efforts were made for a compromise formula and the President of the Republic, as he himself said at his Press Conference last Sunday, in a final effort to

avert a deadlock, submitted a specific proposal for discussion, at a new High Level Meeting to be held on a date to be fixed in advance, of four basic aspects of the Cyprus problem, i.e. the withdrawal of non-Cypriot troops, the guarantees, the three fundamental freedoms and the territorial issue and at the same time for the immediate establishment of a working group to deal with the constitutional aspect and report back to the High Level Meeting on its findings. This proposal too was rejected.

Mr. Halefoglou, in a statement yesterday, repeated that a historic opportunity for a solution to the Cyprus problem has been lost through the fault of the Greek Cypriot side. I repeat what I said in my statement yesterday in reply to the Turkish Government's statement. If this High Level Meeting has not proved productive, this is due to the refusal of the Turkish side to accept even to discuss anything. However, neither we, nor the Secretary-General, as he himself has said, consider that the efforts to find a just solution to the Cyprus problem have come or can come to an end. We are ready for a constructive dialogue and the Secretary-General has invited the two sides to a new meeting. If there is a political will on the part of the Turkish side it will then be possible to carry out a real dialogue with a view to finding a fair solution to the Cyprus problem the soonest possible. I repeat that we are the first to want such a solution to be found, because it is we who are primarily and more than anybody else, experiencing the hardships from the protraction of the Cyprus problem.

Asked to comment on Denktash's charge that President Kyprianou asked that everything should be negotiated, the Government Spokesman said: "This is entirely untrue. The President of the Republic made general comments on the Cyprus problem at the start of the meeting, but made it clear that he was ready to negotiate on the basis of the existing documents and the exchanges at the Proximity Talks, while his proposal

to resolve the deadlock showed clearly that, far from wanting everything to be renegotiated, his aim was to discuss only outstanding basic issues and that he was ready to refer the constitutional issue to a working group."

Asked whether the Kyprianou formula for breaking the deadlock was binding, the Spokesman said:" The Secretary-General has called for a new High Level Meeting. We shall go to this new meeting to discuss and seek, once again, on the basis of what has taken place so far a framework for a solution to the Cyprus problem. A proposal to this end was made to us and was rejected by Mr. Denktash. If this new meeting is held, we expect that there will be a constructive dialogue and we are ready to discuss everything that has been exchanged, including, of course, our own presentation."

In reply to a question why the High Level Meeting was held since nothing had been decided, the Spokesman said:
"At the Proximity Talks progress, but no solution was achieved. As the Secretary-General said, there was sufficient progress justifying the convening of a High Level Meeting, i.e. the meeting between the President of the Republic and Mr. Denktash in the presence of the Secretary-General, so that the two of them, on the basis of the progress achieved at the Proximity Talks could hold discussions and negotiations and agree on a framework for a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem!"

In reply to another question, the Government Spokesman said that "throughout this period, whenever a new statement was made by Mr. Denktash that the meeting would be a mere formality, we notified the UN and others, publicly and otherwise, who assured us that the meeting would not be a mere formality but a substantive one. Even at the Geneva meeting which dealt with preliminary procedural matters relating to the High Level Meeting, we were given the same assurances."

Answering a relevant question, the Government Spokesman said: There were various documents. The document about which there is so much talk had as title "Draft Agenda" and as sub-title "preliminary draft agreement". There was no agreement to sign, but a draft agenda intended to be, and was, the preliminary draft agreement.

The President of the Republic and Mr. Denktash were invited to New York to discuss and negotiate so that the preliminary draft agreement might, if possible, become the framework for an agreement which would define basic elements of a solution to the Cyprus problem, to be elaborated by Committees at a later stage. These Committees, however, had to be given guidelines and terms of reference which would emanate from the framework for an agreement that would be reached by the President of the Republic and Mr. Denktash following a substantive dialogue. There were gaps and outstanding matters of substance in the preliminary draft agreement.

In reply to a question if our side went to New York after being given assurances and if this meant that we endorsed the charges against the Secretary-General, the Spokesman said: As I stated, we went to the meeting on assurances that there would be substantive dialogue there. This does not mean that we endorse the charges against the Secretary-General. The fact is that when Mr. Denktash went to New York he refused to discuss any point whatsoever.

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