

**ADVANCE COPY**

CONFIDENTIAL  
UK COMMS ONLY  
FM NICOSIA  
TO DESKBY 191200Z FCO  
TELNO 47  
OF 190855Z FEBRUARY 88  
INFO IMMEDIATE ATHENS, ANKARA, HQ BFC  
INFO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON

MY TELNO 46: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

SUMMARY

DEKO WILL VOTE BY CONSCIENCE. OUTCOME UNCERTAIN, BUT ODDS ON VASSILIOU.

DETAIL

1. KYPRIANOU'S DEKO PARTY HAS TOLD ITS SUPPORTERS (27 PER CENT IN ROUND ONE) TO VOTE AS THEY WILL IN THE SECOND ROUND OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS ON 21 FEBRUARY. A DEKO STATEMENT SAID THAT NEITHER CLERIDES NOR VASSILIOU WOULD SERVE THE NATIONAL INTEREST. DEKO'S DECISION MAKES THE OUTCOME UNCERTAIN. IT IS THE FIRST TIME IN CYPRUS' HISTORY THAT A SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF THE ELECTORATE MUST VOTE WITHOUT PARTY GUIDANCE.

COMMENT

2. IN CLERIDES' FAVOUR ARE HIS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE INCLUDING AS ACTING PRESIDENT IN 1975 AND AS INTERLOCUTOR IN INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS. INNATE CAUTION AND SUSPICION OF VASSILIOU'S LINKS WITH COMMUNISM WILL ALSO WIN CLERIDES VOTES. HE HAS RESIGNED AS LEADER OF HIS PARTY (DESY) TO TRY TO UNDERLINE HIS INTENTION TO FOSTER UNITY.

3. AGAINST THAT, THOSE DEKO SUPPORTERS WHO HAVE PROSPERED UNDER 11 YEARS OF KYPRIANOU, KNOW THAT VASSILIOU (UNLIKE CLERIDES) DOES NOT HAVE AN ARMY OF PARTY SUPPORTERS THIRSTING FOR PATRONAGE. HE HAS ALSO PORTRAYED HIMSELF AS THE CHOICE FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE LATE MAKARIOS, WHEREAS CLERIDES IS WIDELY DISTRUSTED BECAUSE HIS PARTY INCLUDES ANTI-MAKARIOS FORCES AND THOSE EXTREME NATIONALIST ELEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH EOKA-B.

4. A 2.5 HOUR LIVE TV DEBATE BETWEEN THE TWO CANDIDATES ON

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106400  
MDADAN 6244

18 FEBRUARY PRODUCED NO CLEAR WINNER. HOWEVER, WITH EDEK (9  
PER CENT) BACKING VASSILIOU (MY TUR), THE ODDS ARE SLIGHTLY  
IN HIS FAVOUR.

WILBERFORCE

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DISTRIBUTION

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