



# National Federation of Cypriots in the UK

## Εθνική Κυπριακή Ομοσπονδία Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου

Working for a Free, United Cyprus

The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs  
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office  
King Charles Street, London  
SW1A 2AH

15<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

On behalf of the National Federation of Cypriots in UK, the representative body and acknowledged voice of the UK's 300,000 Britons of Cypriot origin, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Foreign Secretary. We look forward to working with you for the benefit of the UK Cypriot community and to support the flourishing relations between the UK and Cyprus.

As you are aware, Turkey illegally invaded and occupied the northern part of Cyprus in 1974 and continues to occupy it until this day. The illegal invasion and occupation of Cyprus resulted in thousands being murdered; over 1,000 missing persons whose fates have yet to be determined; and over 170,000 refugees of whom many fled to the UK. Since the invasion in 1974, Turkey has attempted to alter the demographics of the island of Cyprus through a policy of forced population settlement in the occupied area; at the same time, it has also pursued the destruction of the cultural heritage of the island through the desecration of churches and culturally significant places.

As British-Cypriots, we want to see a just and lasting solution in Cyprus, that reunifies the island and its people in a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, in line with UN Security Council Resolutions. It has been clear for decades that Turkey holds the key to a solution to the Cyprus issue but shows a distinct lack of support for reunification. As the Foreign Secretary of one of Cyprus' 'Guarantor Powers', and a fellow member of the Commonwealth of Nations, we urge you to play a positive and constructive role in seeking the reunification of Cyprus. We ask that the British Government does more to exert real pressure on Turkey to engage positively and constructively towards a just and lasting solution in Cyprus.

Since becoming Foreign Secretary, you have been clear that Britain will, correctly, prioritise developing its relations with democracies whilst also tackling negative and anti-democratic

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Members of the Executive Committee: Constantine Alexandrou, Susie Constantinides, Andreas Gregoriou, Yiannis Koumettou, Menicos Kouvaros, Marios Minaides, Christos Tuton, Michael Yiakoumi  
A complete list of member organisations and the names of all the current officers and members of the Secretariat of the Federation can be found on the Federation's website

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actors. We welcome this positive and meaningful vision for Britain's role and influence in the world.

As a reliable, stable, and democratic country in the Eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus is a vital ally for Britain and we are excited at the prospect of further cooperation and enhanced relations. In the last few years, there has been outstanding work done by both the UK and Cyprus to deepen defence, trade and cultural ties between the two countries and we look forward to seeing this continue with you as Foreign Secretary.

In stark contrast, President Erdogan's Turkey is demonstrating that it is a negative and undemocratic actor that antagonises its neighbours and disregards international law. We therefore want to see HM Government do more to hold Turkey to account for its actions. Earlier this year, Turkey and Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar announced the illegal 'opening' of part of the fenced off area of Varosi, in direct contravention of the UN Security Council resolutions on Varosi; Turkey has also repeatedly violated the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and just this week has issued further threats to drill there; Turkey is also now pushing for the permanent partition of Cyprus rather than a federal solution that will reunify the island in line with UN resolutions. These developments have caused deep concern within the UK Cypriot community and we want to see HM Government take further steps to hold Turkey and its leadership to account for their actions.

With your foreign policy vision prioritising protecting democracies and developing positive relations with like-minded allies, we believe that UK-Cyprus relations can go from strength to strength. Equally, we believe that it's time for Britain to use all available measures to hold Turkey to account for its unacceptable actions. President Erdogan's increasingly authoritarian regime is a threat to liberty and democracy in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

Christos Karaolis  
President, National Federation of Cypriots in the UK