

The Cyprus Problem and Cyprus' Accession to the EU: the role of the Cypriot House of Representatives (Vouli)

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Abstract:

This paper analyzes the role that the House of Representatives (*Vouli ton Andiprosopon*) of the Republic of Cyprus has played since 1974 with regards to the Cyprus Problem. The paper argues that the *Vouli* has played an increasingly important role in the diplomacy of the Island. A number of factors explain such a development: the small size of the Island, its presidential system, and, the existence of a unique arrangement called the *Ethniko Symvoulion* (National Council) which includes representatives of all political parties represented in the Vouli. The role of the *Vouli* has been even further reinforced following the 1990 decision to apply for EU membership and the beginning of accession negotiations in March 1998 as other parliaments, this time the European Parliament and the national parliaments of the EU member states, are more involved with, and will participate in, the ratification process of the next EU enlargement.

Introduction

The Cyprus Problem has been a complex and difficult international issue since it began in 1974 when Turkey invaded the Northern part of the Island, following the –then ruling- Athens junta-engineered coup against Archbishop Markarios. The United Nations (UN), through both its Security Council and its General Assembly, has repeatedly stated that the situation on the Island is an unacceptable violation of international law and other UN principles and that a 'just and lasting solution' be found. From the beginning of the Cyprus Problem², the European Community/Union (EU) has consistently, at least at

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² There is sometimes disagreement over when the Cyprus Problem actually began. Some would argue since the British colonial years, or even the Ottoman occupation. Others would put forward the first UN intervention in 1964 as a start to the Problem. What remains clear is that the 1974 Turkish invasions have altered the situation on the Island in a dramatic manner. This paper concentrates on that aspect of the Cyprus Problem because it involves a military invasion and occupation of an independent

the rhetorical level, supported the UN resolutions and other efforts made to try and find a solution to the Problem. Since late March 1998, when accession negotiations between the Republic of Cyprus and the EU began, the EU and all its member states have consistently reiterated that the lack of a solution to the Cyprus Problem will not be regarded as an obstacle to Cypriot entry to the Union.

This paper will not discuss the Cyprus Problem, nor is it a study of the European Union relations with Cyprus (Brewin 2000; Chiclet 1997; Drevet 2000; Emiliou 1997; Nugent 2000; Pieridis 2001; Theophanous et. al. 1999; Vaner 1999). It will concentrate on what the Cypriot Republic has done to try and solve the Cyprus Problem, but not through the usual lenses of its President and Government. It will instead focus on the role that the *Vouli ton Andiprosopon* (House of Representatives) has played. This approach is important *per se* because it has been rather neglected in the existing literature. It also important because the beginning of EU accession negotiations has also increased the Vouli's international role. The EU context not only facilitates contacts with the European Parliament (EP) and the national parliaments of the EU member states in a way that differs from other existing parliamentary fora, be they the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Interparliamentary Union (IPU), or the parliamentary bodies of the WEU (Western European Union), NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation), the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and other institutions (such as the Parliamentary Forum of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership). The main difference is that, with EU accession, all the national parliaments, together with the EP, will also play a role in the ratification of the current enlargement of the EU, thus enjoying a 'constitutional' role that other parliamentary fora simply do not possess. The EU context has *a priori* reinforced the role of parliaments in general, and that of the Vouli in particular.

Furthermore, the current inter-communal negotiations (which began in January 2002) between the two community leaders, Glafcos Clerides and Rauf Denkstah, make the Cyprus Problem a highly-visible international conflict resolution exercise. In addition, the role of parliaments has also been made more visible since the March 2002 launch of the European Convention on the Future of Europe. For the first time in the long history of EU institutional developments, all parliaments of EU member and applicant states, together with the European Parliament, participate in this preparatory meeting to the next IGC (Intergovernmental Conference) in 2004 which will decide the future shape of an enlarged Union. Two EU states have even chosen MEPs to represent their respective governments (Spain and Greece). All this unprecedented experiment has further enhanced the role of parliaments in EU politics and policies.

third country (by one of its Guarantor Powers, that is Guarantor for its independence), and not 'only' inter-communal tensions. For more on the background to 1974, see Joseph (1997). For a similar view to the one taken in this paper –that the post-1974 conflict is different in nature to the previous conflicts– see Fouskas (2001/2).

Although the wider theoretical context to which this study belongs is that of the so-called 'parliamentary diplomacy', this paper does not attempt to define what the term means, how it works, what its results are, and how these efforts can or should be assessed. It is an empirical study of how the Vouli has acted in its international relations with a view to try and promote a solution to the Cyprus Problem, and, later on, how it has acted with regards to the wider issue of Cyprus accession to the EU. This will therefore be the *a priori* definition of what parliamentary diplomacy is all about.³

In order to put the issue under study in its wider context, the paper will also include an analysis of the Cypriot political system. Then, it will concentrate on the international role the Vouli has played in the efforts to find a solution to the Cyprus Problem, before concluding whether this represents a 'good' example of parliamentary diplomacy at work.

What follows consists of 3 main sections:

1. Cyprus: politics, institutions and political parties
2. The role of the Vouli in efforts at finding a solution to the Problem
3. Is the Cyprus Vouli a good case of 'parliamentary diplomacy' at work?

Cyprus: politics, institutions and political parties

Background⁴

The current Cypriot political system is a result of the 1960 Constitution, which remains even today the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus. Initially, the Republic was a unitary state with divided powers among two political communities, despite the existence of a clear demographic imbalance: 80% of Greek-Cypriots, 18% Turkish Cypriots, plus another 2% of various minorities⁵. Thus, there was a Turkish-Cypriot (vice-presidential) veto, a 70-30 ratio of representation throughout government, and a 60-40 one for the police and the army. After the December 1963 decision by President Makarios to amend the Constitution and try and make the system work more smoothly (in particular to try and avoid some of the obstructing powers of the Turkish-Cypriot community), the system partially collapsed as the Turkish-Cypriots withdrew from the political decision-making process, as a result of inter-communal conflict (and the first arrival of UN troops). It is only however in 1974 that a complete *de facto* collapse of the 1960 arrangements materialised as a result of the Turkish invasions and ensuing occupation. There is now a

³ There is no clear definition of what 'parliamentary diplomacy' actually represents. In particular there tends to be confusion over whether it consists of the international relations of parliaments, or/and the actions of transnational parliaments, and/or interparliamentary relations (of both transnational and national parliaments), and/or the 'mere' exercise of parliamentary scrutiny of foreign policy. For details, see, *inter alia*, Stavridis (2003a).

⁴ My thanks to Mr Harris Georgiades (Secretary-General, DISY-Youth organisation) for explaining to me the intricacies of the Cypriot political party system.

⁵ Armenians, Maronites (Lebanese Druze) and Latins (Catholic). The 1960 Constitution only recognises the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot communities. All three communities that have just been mentioned above chose to belong to the Greek-Cypriot community under the 1960 agreements. On minorities, see Kyle (1997).

separate entity in the 'North', with its largely undemocratic system given the commanding role of the Turkish occupation forces. The overall *de facto* situation that has been made more complicated with the 1983 UDI (Unilateral Declaration of Independence) of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus', which is only recognised by the invading state, Turkey, and with the demographic change in the occupied territories which mean nowadays that there are more Turks from mainland Turkey than Turkish Cypriots (many of them having emigrated to Turkey or Britain). It is also important to note that, most recently in May 2001, a number of legal bodies such as the ECHR (European Court of Human Rights) of the Council of Europe or the European Court of Justice do not recognise that the 'TRNC' exists and consider Turkey to be the *de facto* ruling power in that part of the Island with all the consequences that such a decision implies (see Palley 2001). The government in the 'South' continues to be the sole *de jure* executive of the legitimate and internationally recognised Cypriot state (The Republic of Cyprus), with a structure closely mirroring the 1960 arrangements even if there is no Turkish-Cypriot participation in any of the official political and administrative organs.

Although this is not the place to expand on the role of external powers, including the original three Guarantor Powers (the UK, Greece and Turkey), it is relevant to stress that there was a number of direct or indirect efforts at undermining the independence of the Republic of Cyprus since its inception. It is also important to note that the solution that was found in 1960 was not the preferred option of either the Greek Cypriot majority (overwhelmingly in favour of *enosis* or union with Greece) or the Turkish-Cypriot minority (overwhelmingly in favour of *taksim* or separation). Nor did Greece, Turkey, the UK, or the USA for that matter refrain from directly or indirectly undermining the independence of Cyprus (see Couloumbis 1996).

This general introduction to the Cypriot political system shows not only how difficult the history of the Republic has been, but also that the 'TRNC' is not recognized internationally and is considered to be a 'puppet regime'. Therefore, there will be no analysis of how the regime in the occupied territories functions, nor how its so-called 'parliament' works and what role it plays. Suffice it to say that the 'TRNC' is not deemed to be a working democracy (see the Commission Progress Reports on Cyprus 2000 and 2001).

The political system and political parties⁶

The Cypriot political system is a Presidential system, with a President elected by universal suffrage every 5 years. The President acts as both Head of State and Head of Government. Parliamentary elections also take place every 5 years but not necessarily at the same time as the presidential ones. So far, they have always taken place at different times but it is constitutionally possible to hold both at the same time. According to the Constitution, the Greek-Cypriots elect the President and the Turkish-Cypriots elect the Vice-

⁶ for details of the parliamentary parties and elections results, see Hadjikiriakos and Christoforou (1996).

President. The Presidents of Cyprus have been to date: Archbishop Makarios III (until his death in 1977), Spyros Kyprianou (1977-1988)⁷, George Vassiliou (1988-1993) and Glafcos Clerides (since 1993, re-elected in 1998). The next presidential elections are due in February 2003.

The Vouli consists of 80 MPs, with 70% Greek-Cypriots (56 seats) and 30% Turkish-Cypriots (24 seats)⁸. The latter's seats remain empty. There are also elected representatives of other religious communities who do not have the right to vote in parliament but advise on matters relating to these communities, including religion.

All political parties, except the Communist AKEL which was founded in 1926, are rather contemporary phenomena, not only because of the recent birth of the Cypriot Republic, but also because of personal allegiances, especially during the 'war of independence' but also during the first few years of independence, with the charismatic figure of Archbishop Makarios in the forefront. Since 1974, various parties have emerged.

In terms of political representation in the Vouli, the May 2001 parliamentary elections have produced the following results⁹ (with the 1996 elections results in brackets):

1. **AKEL** (Communist): 20 seats, with 34.7% of the vote (33%-19 seats)
2. **DISY** (Democratic Rally, right): 19 seats with 34% of the vote (34.5%-20 seats)
3. **DIKO** (Democratic Party, centre): 9 seats with 14.8% of the vote (16.4%-10 seats)
4. **KISOS** (KINHMA SOSIALDEMOKRATON, Socialist): 4 seats, 6.5% (8.1%-5 seats)¹⁰
5. **EDI** (united democrats ENOMENOI DIMOKRATES, centre): 1 seat, 2.4% (3.7%-2 seats)
6. **NEOI ORIZONTES** (a more nationalistic party): 1 seat, 3% (1.7% - no seat in 1996)
7. **ADIK** (AGONISTIKO DEMOCRATIKO KINHMA, Centre, DIKO splinter) 1 seat, 2.1%. (new party)
8. **KINHMA OIKOLOGON PERIVALLONTISTON** (GREENS) 1 seat, 2% (1%, no seat 1996).

The AKEL Leader is Demetrios Christofias who is now also the *President* of the Vouli. DISY, which was founded by Glafcos Clerides, is now led by Nicos Anastasiades. It has also absorbed the Liberal Party. DIKO was led by Spyros Kyprianou until he was replaced in 2000 by Tassos Papadopoulos, widely tipped to be the next candidate for the Presidency of Cyprus if he gets the

⁷ Kyprianou died in March 2002 after a short but terminal illness.

⁸ The current figures have been valid since December 1985. Before that date the Vouli had only 50 MPs in all, with the same proportional representation for each community. Since 1981 there has also been a proportional type of electoral system.

⁹ See Hadjikiriakos and Christoforou (1996) for details of previous elections results.

¹⁰ Previously known as EDEK.

support of the AKEL party. KISOS was led by the veteran politician Vassos Lyssarides until his recent replacement by Giannakis Omirou. EDI is led by George Vassiliou after a merger with an AKEL splinter group (ADISOK). Vassiliou is also currently the Chief Negotiator for Accession to the EU. Nicos Koutsou is the leader of Neoi Orizontes. The Greens are led by a committee and MP George Perdakis acts as their spokesman.

Political Parties and their stances on the Cyprus Problem and on EU accession

Two different questions must be addressed. Where do the different parties stand on:

[i] a solution to the division of the Island, that is to say, do they favour a unitary state, a loose federation or a strong federation?

[ii] the prospect of EU membership: is it considered to be a positive development, and if yes, since when?

On the latter point, the right-wing DISY has always favoured a pro-EU policy. AKEL has only reluctantly and recently accepted the prospect of EU membership (in 1995). Its opposition came mainly from ideological grounds (the EU as part of a capitalist western world led by the USA). EDEK (now KISOS) was against the Association Agreement with the EU (then EEC), but it has favoured EU membership, especially as a means to try and solve the Cyprus Problem. DIKO was somewhere in the middle (see Tsardanidis 1989: 74-75). DISY would clearly favour closer ties and possibly NATO membership. This is clearly not the case on the Left. However it is fair to say that most Cypriots did not envisage that EU membership was a good idea initially, as they really did not see it as a likely prospect at all. It has been said (Pieridis 2001, 58-59; see also Hadjikiakos and Christoforou 1996, 154-155) that in 1988 President Vassiliou was told by both British Premier Margaret Thatcher and (West) German Chancellor Helmut Kohl that there was no need for such an application as it would have led to a rejection and would have unnecessarily tied Cyprus' application to that of Turkey. This was confirmed to me by Vassiliou himself in an interview in Nicosia on 14 March 2002. There are of course other reasons, sometimes more convincing, for such a reluctance from President Vassiliou: one reason was not to create problems with the only recently re-started inter-communal talks; another reason was AKEL's initial opposition to EU membership and the fact that Vassiliou had been elected thanks to the Communists' support; a third reason was that the then President was hoping for a kind of off-shore Beirut style paradise for Cyprus which did not fit at all with EU membership prospects (for details, see Ifestos and Tsardanidis, 1991: 384-419)¹¹.

In more detail, DISY considered from its very foundation in 1976 that Cyprus was a Western European state whatever the Third Worldist rhetoric of Makarios in the 1950s and 1960s had meant. Thus, DISY is closest to its Greek counterpart, New Democracy/ND to use Greek analogies. It is also important to contrast ND and PASOK preferences, especially during the late

¹¹ See also Tsani (1989). Christos Tsani is a pseudonym for Charalambos Tsardanidis.

1970s and early 1980s when Greece was labelled a 'footnote state' in European Political Cooperation during the first Papandreou government, with a number of 'flashbacks' in the early 1990s over the new 'Macedonian Question'. When PASOK started to shift in the mid-1980s, the same happened in Cyprus (but the shift in Greece only became permanent with the arrival of Simitis to the Premiership in 1996, although the first clear signs appeared in 1988-89 with ministers Kranidiotis and Pangalos pushing from Athens for an early application on the grounds that it would facilitate a solution to the Cyprus Problem). EDEK, DISY and DIKO put pressure on (then) President Vassiliou to apply for membership. In fact, in the Vouli, the three parties threatened to introduce a bill asking for EU application if the President did not do so. That led to the formal bid for EU membership in 1990, despite Vassiliou's continued reservations about the wisdom of such a move at the time (see above). It took AKEL some more time to align its own position to that of the rest of the Cypriot political spectrum after 1995. A new generation of AKEL MPs (firstly elected in May 2001) like to stress that they are committed to the EU, by which they mean a more socially-minded Union. That is to say, a kind of new Labour, to use UK analogies this time around. That new approach by AKEL was confirmed by a leading AKEL MP of the new generation during an interview in March 2002 in Nicosia (Eleni Mavrou who is also one of the two Cypriot MPs who participates in the European Convention as one of the Vouli representatives). In that respect, it is interesting to contrast MP Mavrou's recent remarks to a 1998 AKEL pamphlet in which the EU is described as a 'capitalistic union'¹².

There are disagreements among Cypriot MPs about how to interpret the 1999 Helsinki Conclusions between those who think that they represent a diplomatic success for Hellenism (mainly on the Left) and those (mainly on the Right) who think they provide the EU with a formal veto on Cyprus because Turkish membership was simply not a credible option at that time. A similar analysis is made in Greece between ND and PASOK supporters or members, be they MPs or MEPs. There is furthermore a different approach about the future impact of Cyprus' EU membership. The Left favourably foresees that, within the EU, both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots will be distancing themselves from Athens and Ankara. A view that is not shared by the Right. Thus, nowadays, all political parties accept EU membership in principle despite varying opinions on its implications.

Where there is some division concerns the kind of solution to the Cyprus Problem which is favoured:

1. a 'hawkish' stance which argues for a return to the unitary Cypriot state of 1960.
2. a 'dovish' stance which argues for a solution at almost any cost so long as it remains a (loose) federation.
3. an 'owlish' stance which calls for a loose federation at best.

¹² My thanks to Ifigenia Katchie for letting me read in June 2002 her MA thesis, including her extensive background interviews results (University of Exeter, September 2000).

Although this way of differentiating stems from Cold War rhetoric¹³, it does help us understand better where the various Cypriot parties stand on a possible solution to the Problem.

The only party that clearly favours the first option (unitary state) is that of Neoi Orizontes (Neo.O) because it sees all other options as racist and anti-democratic. All the other parties adopt variations on the dovish and owlish stances. They all agree on the need for a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, as agreed in principle in 1977 and 1979 between the two leaders of the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities. Such a general solution has been reiterated by numerous UN decisions and resolutions since then. The devil is as usual in the detail. But what remains clear is the overwhelming support for a federation as a compromise solution to the Problem. There can be no other solution such as a confederation (proposed insistently by Rauf Denktaş and Turkey, especially since 1998), nor can a solution be found by splitting the difference between a federal solution and a confederal solution: both points were made in the most unambiguous way by three party leaders (Tassos Papadopoulos, Nikos Anastasiades and Demetrios Christofias) at a *Cyprus College* event on 11 March 2002. It should be noted that what might have been divergent positions initially have, over time, tended to converge among the Greek-Cypriot parties, politicians and public opinion, as there was little chance of a settlement, due to the Turkish-Cypriot/Turkish entrenched position. Also, whether one party is in government or in opposition might affect its stance. Individual members of all parties also may have different views on the precise details of a 'final solution'. But they all agree on the basic and fundamental issue of a federal structure with a single international representation. External factors, such as a shift in Greece, have also played a role in this overall consensual situation.

Neo.O represent definitely a more hawkish line. Of the parties that want a federal solution, DIKO and KISOS are owlish tending toward the hawkish according to time and circumstances (thus KISOS is less hawkish than in the past following PASOK's milder policy towards Turkey since Simitis' assumption of power in Greece). AKEL and EDI are more dovish although they would oppose a solution that would give too many powers to the Turkish-Cypriot community. DISY is more owlish overall. That is to say: use dialogue as much as possible but make sure the defence is ready just in case (the owl's wisdom but with the protection of its nails to continue with the ornithological metaphor which was initially used in the Cold War parlance). But such an effort at compartmentalisation is difficult because of time, personality and other factors. Thus KISOS is more difficult to 'put in a box' as it takes a rather hardline with the Turkish-Cypriot community even if it only represents a small minority of Greek-Cypriots, mainly intellectual radicals. Finally, any given view on the island about who is a hawk, who is an owl, and who is a dove also depends on one's own preferences and perceptions.

¹³ For more on this use of cold war classifications, see Melakopides (2001), 131-133.

It is important to note that the current situation is the result of an open democratic system. This should not be ignored and should be contrasted to the lack of open debate in both the occupied territories and in Turkey. One should welcome however some recent movement on that aspect of the question, especially among Turkish elites, and the early July 2002 electoral success of the 'opposition' to Denktash in key towns in the occupied territories during 'municipal elections'¹⁴. The key implication here is that, if the current negotiations lead to a solution of a different kind (i.e. not a bi-zonal, bi-communal federal state), then it is highly likely that the Greek Cypriots would reject it in a referendum.

The Ethniko Symvoulío (National Council)

This is probably the most important institution in Cyprus that deals **exclusively** with the Cyprus Problem (and related issues such as foreign policy and defence) even if it is an informal organ with few clearly defined prerogatives. But the President to ignore it would be to ignore political reality.

It was set up after the Turkish invasion as a way to directly involve the different political party leaders in what is still a presidential system. Although it is in theory only an advisory body, its real impact is very important. The Symvoulío consists of the President of the Republic, and three representatives of the government who are actively engaged in negotiations for a solution to the Cyprus Problem: the foreign minister, the attorney-general, and the government spokesman (at the time of writing: Clerides, Casoulides, Markides and Papapetrou respectively). These four figures represent the executive. There are 2 representatives for each party, provided that it has a representation in the Vouli. Initially only the four major parties were represented in the Symvoulío. Now as there are more parties in the Vouli, there are 2 representatives for each party even if there are 8 representatives (2 for four parties) who account for 90% of the popular vote and another 8 who represent again four parties but only 10% of the popular vote [for the current membership of the Symvoulío –which numbers 21 members- see Annex 2].

The accepted rule is that the President decides what is best for the country even if the majority of the Symvoulío disagrees. But if there is unanimity among the representatives of the parties within the Symvoulío (which, one should not forget, includes parties backing the executive), it is normal for the President to accept their views. But as the area of competence of the Symvoulío is the Cyprus Problem, it was not asked to discuss the 1990 decision to apply for EU membership. (As was noted above this was the result of pressure by the Vouli on Vassiliou, the then President, including the threat to introduce a bill under important constitutional doubts as foreign policy remains the prerogative of the executive –see above). It is also important to note that the personal style of the President does play an important role, as

¹⁴ *Turkish Daily News* (<http://www.turkishdailynews.com/FrTDN/latest/for.htm>) (2 July 2002 as printed on that day).

do of course the surrounding circumstances. Thus, as Kyprianou's Presidency was characterised by frequent political tension on the island, he decided not to convene the Symvoulío at all. Whereas initially all government ministers (11 departments plus the Government Spokesman) participated in the Symvoulío, when the latter re-started functioning during Vassiliou's tenure as President, it did not include all 12 ministers any longer but only four of them, plus of course the President of the Republic.

There are at least two different, contradictory in fact, ways of interpreting the above: On the one hand, the existence of the Symvoulío makes the role of the Vouli even less important with regards to what remains the number one foreign policy issue for Cyprus. On the other hand, the executive cannot ignore the views of the Vouli and the parties represented in it on such an important political issue. The latter view is the one adopted by this author. The Symvoulío plays a bridging role between the executive and the parliament rather than an obstructive one between the two. During difficult periods or pre-electoral times, the Symvoulío also allows for controversial issues to be put aside. If there is consensus, then political self-restraint and responsibility is achieved more easily. This aspect is of vital importance for 'big issues' such as the Cyprus Problem. This point was made very clearly by both the government spokesman and his AKEL's counterpart in a TV programme on the night of the departure of Koffi Annan's visit to the Island (the first such visit for a UN Secretary-General since 1979)¹⁵. One should not however overestimate the role of the Symvoulío. This lessening in the tension that the whole issue has generated in the Greek-Cypriot community in the past is also due to the absence of any progress towards a solution due to the lack of flexibility from the Turkish side. The last parliamentary election that witnessed controversy over how to deal with the strategy of the Cyprus Question was in 1985. The 2001 parliamentary elections showed that this aspect of the question was no longer a subject of controversy. A point reiterated by Tassos Papadopoulos in a PIK interview recently¹⁶, and confirmed as noted above by the common stance as expressed by all three political parties leaders during a debate at *Cyprus College* in March 2002.

What follows will show that the Vouli plays an important role in Cyprus' foreign policy in general, and its most pressing issue since 1974 in particular: the Cyprus Problem. The international role of the Vouli has been further enhanced with the EU accession negotiations.

The role of the Vouli in efforts at finding a solution to the Cyprus Problem

The previous section has dealt with the limited but still important role that the Vouli has played, mainly through the Ethniko Symvoulío, vis-à-vis the Cyprus Problem. Policy-making is, as in all democratic states, the result of a number

¹⁵ Papapetrou and Katsouridis on PIK's Nikos Kareklas PROEKTASIS Programme, shown on Cyprus International TV on 16-17 May 2002.

¹⁶ Cyprus TV PIK, Dialogoi, 25 March 2002.

of influences, factors and actors. This is however part of the wider question of how decisions are taken in a democratic country. In the case of Cyprus, this general question is linked very closely to the particular situation of the Island due to the Turkish invasion and occupation. What follows in the next section goes beyond the domestic politics issue of how the Cypriot political system works. It considers the international relations of the Vouli¹⁷, with a particular emphasis on the role the Vouli has played with regards to the Cyprus Problem. Since the 1990 EU application, and in particular since the beginning of accession negotiations in March 1998, the Vouli's role has expanded to facilitating the harmonisation of Cypriot laws with the *acquis communautaire*. However, what this paper considers is the 'parliamentary diplomacy' of the Vouli, with respect to the Cyprus Problem. Of course, the latter and EU membership have been related for sometime but one should be aware of the difference between the two. A difference that has become institutionalised in the Vouli itself after the 2001 parliamentary elections, when the Foreign and European Affairs Committee was split into a Foreign Affairs Committee and an EU Committee. The latter's legislative role in the 450 laws needed to be adopted before EU membership cannot and should not be underestimated. The Vouli's role in this process was praised by the President of its EU Affairs Committee, Tassos Papadopoulos (interview, 25 May 2002).

The current section of this study is based on a number of documents produced by various parliamentary bodies, and, more importantly, on extensive interviews with MPs, MEPs, parliamentary secretariat officials and other experts, over a number of years, and more especially during 2000-2002. There is also information collected through the author's attending several parliamentary sessions or fora, with the most recent one in May 2002 at the 21st EU-Cyprus Joint Parliamentary Committee meeting in Nicosia. The author has also attended a number of conferences, workshops and other related events (see list in Appendix 1).

The initial years

Prior to the appearance of the Cyprus Problem in 1974, there were two areas where some parliamentary activity could be visible. The first one concerned relations with Non-Aligned Countries as President Makarios took a pro-Third World line on international affairs in general and on East-West relations in particular that earned him the nickname of the 'Castro of the Mediterranean'. Such international activity had the merit of creating good links with developing countries and also countries of the then Soviet bloc, which, once the Problem materialised, helped garner support at the UN General Assembly and in the parliamentary bodies of the IPU and the Commonwealth.

The second important event took place after the first inter-communal fighting of 1963-64 and the arrival of UN troops. As a result of the withdrawal of

¹⁷ Committee level: now there are two committees in the Vouli, one dealing with foreign policy and the other with EU affairs, whereas before 2001 there was only one single committee. Now there are monthly meetings between the two committees. This is partly due to the EU accession preparations. Similarly the JPC will be replaced by Cypriot MEPs in the future.

Turkish-Cypriot participation in Cyprus' political system, the Cypriot representation at the PACE (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe)– which the Vouli had joined one year after independence in 1961 - was suspended in 1964. A return to this particular parliamentary assembly thus became a crucial element in Cypriot foreign policy, especially after the Turkish invasions in 1974 and its on-going military occupation of 37% of Cyprus' territory. One should note here the fundamental difference that exists between the pre- and post- 1974 situations: in the former case, despite all the problems, including the existence of *enclaves*, there was no strict geographical and physical division between the two communities, let alone the use of force to alter the *status quo* on the Island. Although this paper deals with the EU, the importance of the PACE and of the Council of Europe should not be underestimated as they both possess a legal dimension that the EU (earlier the EC) simply did not have, especially at the beginning of the integration process. Therefore, one of the first efforts of parliamentary diplomacy for Cyprus was to reintegrate the PACE.

After 1974

The successful reintegration of Cyprus in the PACE in 1983 when a compromise deal was struck between the Council of Europe members (which includes Turkey) and the Republic of Cyprus must be seen as an important diplomatic success for Cypriot parliamentary diplomacy. This is not the place to develop this point further, suffice it to say that the 1983 arrangement provides for 3 Cypriot MPs (2 Greek-Cypriots and 1 Turkish-Cypriot) plus their substitutes to be part of PACE. Currently only the four Greek-Cypriot MPs (2 full members plus 2 substitutes) participate. However, it is important to note that, on the whole, PACE offers a context that is more related to traditional state-to-state diplomacy than the one of the parliamentary kind (Takis Hadjidemetriou, interview, 12 March 2002): indeed, most MPs tend to act as official state mouthpieces rather than individual MPs who belong to various political groupings. The efforts made by Cypriot MPs in PACE to promote understanding and sympathy towards their plight in the Cyprus Problem were described by one veteran participant (Takis Hadjidemetriou, interview, 12 March 2002) as 'the toughest environment with regards to parliamentary diplomacy'. Another MP described it as a 'hostile environment' for Cyprus (Tassos Papadopoulos, interview, 25 May 2002). The main reason is that the Turkish MPs are very well prepared, with full support from an efficient Turkish foreign service, and that they make sure to create coalitions in their favour among third MPs. The fact that Turkey is represented by up to 24 MPs (including the substitutes) in the PACE (compared to 2 or 3 Cypriot MPs; there are also 7 MPs plus their 7 substitutes from Greece) complicated matters even further for Cyprus. Furthermore, the Cyprus Problem remains, to quote a former Cypriot delegate to PACE, an 'exotic' issue for the vast majority of parliamentarians in the Council of Europe. He also acknowledged that the influence of small states in international affairs is almost by definition restricted. This is also valid in Hadjedemetriou's view with regards to how much influence Cypriot MPs can have in PACE. The importance of the individual qualities of the MPs involved, as well as the need to construct

coalitions, were also stressed. Practical developments such as the use of the Greek language which has only been introduced recently in PACE will also help as Turkish had been used for years. There is little doubt that to use one's mother tongue helps a better dialogue, provided that interpreters and translators do their work properly.

Other fora, such as the Commonwealth, the C/OSCE (Conference/Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or the IPU (Inter-Parliamentary Union), have all played a role in Cyprus' effort to find a solution to the division and occupation of the Island, especially for support within the framework of the UN. The Vouli is also represented in the following bodies with 3 MPs in each case:

- the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which it joined in 1978;
- the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, since its inception in 1992;
- the IPU, since 1978;
- the European Inter-parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, since its creation in 1994 (with 2 members).

This paper will however concentrate on two areas for a simple matter of space:

- the bilateral relations with other national parliaments and especially the national parliaments of the EU member states;
- the multilateral relations between the Vouli and the EU, mainly the EP, through what eventually became to be known as the JPC (Joint Parliamentary Committee).

These two aspects are given more emphasis because they have increasingly taken center stage. They have become of vital importance once Cyprus applied to join the EU and negotiations for accession began in early 1998. One should add here that the EU is given special leverage on Turkey because of the latter's long-standing institutionalised relationships with the EU (1963 Association Agreement; 1995 Customs Union) and related organisations and institutions. What remains disappointing, but it is another paper altogether, is how little use the EU has made of such a leverage (see Stavridis 1999; 2001).

*Bilateral relations*¹⁸

Except for the UK and Greece, most other national EU parliaments have only recently become concerned with the Cyprus Problem, mainly through the question of EU enlargement. In more recent months, because Cyprus' accession becomes more and more likely, this interest is even more reinforced. All parliamentary reports on enlargement in national EU parliaments refer to Cyprus and by definition to the Cyprus Question.

With regards to the Vouli's international efforts, as an example, the following activities could be listed:

¹⁸ My thanks to Mr Giannakis Georgiades for a goldmine of information about both bilateral and multilateral relations between the Vouli and other parliaments.

- visits to Cyprus by the so-called 'friendship groups' from other national parliaments. By 2000, there were 30 such groups, including 7 of them from EU member states and 7 from applicant countries. For instance, there are 90 MPs in the Portuguese Parliament alone. These groups were described as '[t]he core of bilateral exchanges and visits' in the words of the current Vouli's Secretary-General (Kostakis Christoforou, interview, 12 March 2002). The importance of the personal qualities of the parliamentarians involved cannot be underestimated.
- Visits to Nicosia by parliamentarians, be they President or vice-presidents of parliaments, presidents of specialised committees: for instance, the Italian Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee, including its President, Gustavo Selva, (23 April 2002), the German Bundestag Vice-President, Petra Blaess (March- April 2002), the Vice-President of the French Senate European Affairs Committee, Maurice Ligot (7 March 2002) who was in Cyprus with a view to preparing a report (see below).
- Meetings of presidents or chairpersons of the Parliaments of the EU and applicant states (its latest –the 8th– such meeting was held in Paphos on 27-28 April 2002) or of the Mediterranean (e.g. latest meeting in Athens on 17-18 February 2002 where Cyprus was represented by Mr Christofias).
- Visits abroad by the President of the Vouli or by MPs. For instance in March 2002 Christofias visited Libya, in April the USA, and in May China.
- Cypriot MPs visit to EU and other states. Numbers vary but the Vouli's secretariat general mentioned the figure of 50 within one year, and another number (that of 60) was also mentioned by a DISY MP (Dimitris Syllouris, interview, 11 March 2002).
- Participation in all the relevant parliamentary fora.

Over the years, and especially more recently, there has been a concentration of the Vouli's efforts on those parliaments (or states) that are seen as 'problematic': The Netherlands always tops this particular list (almost all the Cypriot MPs I interviewed agreed on that point). There are also special links with the UK because of history but also because of the vast numbers of Cypriots (from both communities) who live in the UK (national and local politics). It is also widely perceived by MPs that the UK 'dictates' EU policy towards Cyprus. In addition to Britain and the Netherlands, France is seen as pro-Turkish especially since Chirac election to the Presidency in 1995, whereas Mitterrand was seen as less biased (see below). Germany is important not only because of its economic clout but also as a result of the presence of 4 million Turks on its soil (including 500,000 Kurds). Other countries (Belgium in particular) have also been active for instance to make sure that EC/EU aid can reach within the existing circumstances as many Cypriots as possible (meaning here both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots), or to protect their own agricultural interests (France again, plus Italy). The consensus is that the UK, France and the Netherlands deserve

special attention (Devret 2000: 269; Emiliou 1997: 11; this list of countries was also confirmed by most Cypriot MPs I interviewed in Nicosia)

The 'best' ally of Cyprus and the Vouli is by far considered to be the Greek parliament (and Greek MEPs). This special relationship exists in the official policies of both Greece and Cyprus, and it has been openly acknowledged in the Joint Defence Doctrine that those two states have set up since the early 1990s¹⁹. The Doctrine is a practical reinforcement of the general view that an attack on Cyprus would represent a *causus belli* for Greece. A number of military developments have ensued, such as the new airport in Paphos (named after the late Greek PM Andreas Papandreou), the purchase of tanks and other missile systems (even if the Russian S-300s only made it to Crete, other missile systems have been deployed). There is however realism about how much Greek MPs or MEPs can do. 25 MEPs out of 626 is not enough to guarantee strong influence, especially when there are often more views than people! But the opposite view was also expressed: 'We are lucky that Greece is a member of the EU and all its institutions including the EP' (both contradictory views were expressed in various interviews). By far, this strong support from Greece is the message I received from everyone I interviewed. The Cyprus Problem would have been much worse without Greece's support especially from within the EC/EU. One should dedicate a full study of the role that the Greek MPs and MEPs have played in the search for a solution to the Cyprus Problem. In 1998, the Greek Parliament produced a book on the destruction of the cultural heritage in the occupied territories in Northern Cyprus. This book is handed out in an extensive and systematic manner, be it during Greek Parliament President Apostolos Kaklamanis visit on 10-11 May 2002 to the USA to leading USA politicians and congressmen²⁰, or during the 21st JPC where MEP Marinos gave all non-Greek members of that Committee a copy of that book in English, French or German (there also exists a Russian version, in addition to a Greek one).²¹ This is an important aspect of the efforts made by Greek parliamentarians to try and protect what is left of the cultural heritage in the occupied territories (see also below JPC May 2002 meeting).

Most recently, 'President Clerides stated that just like Poland would be included in the next EU enlargement following Germany's persistence, Cyprus would also be included since all parties involved were aware that the **Greek Parliament would not vote for the EU's enlargement unless Cyprus were included** (based on his comments –my own emphasis added- at

¹⁹ see the comments by Cypriot MPs and members of the Vouli's Defence Committee Matsakis and Samson –the son of the leader of the failed coup against Makarios in 1974 who 'acted' as President for a few days- on Cypriot TV – PIK, 29 April 2002.

²⁰ ET1-Greek TV- News, 11 May 2002.

²¹ Committee for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus & The Hellenic Parliament: *Cyprus – A civilization plundered*, Athens, 1998.

Larnaca Airport on 2 June 2002 prior to his departure on an official state visit to Copenhagen)²².

With regards to other EU national parliaments, what follows is a rather schematic overview of recent developments. Its aim is to present the most recent activities of the Vouli and its EU national parliaments counterparts. It does not purport to be a comprehensive nor qualitative analysis of this particular issue (again this would need another paper or series of papers altogether). It shows that all EU parliaments have dealt with the Cyprus Problem in one way or another. It is presented here as a pilot-study with a view to further empirical and more systematic research in the future. It draws its information from interviews, documents and websites²³:

- *Germany*: Last year, 4 Cypriot MPs visited Germany where they met with the Vice-President of the *Bundestag*, members of its EU affairs committee, the President of its Foreign Affairs Committee, and the Secretary-General of the German Foreign Ministry. Also the Vouli's EU affairs Committee visited Germany. A report on Cyprus was produced. The (CDU) rapporteur on Cyprus accepts the inevitability of accession, but he argues that the issues of the return of refugees and of compensation should be handled as a humanitarian question.
- *Britain*²⁴: The rhetorical support for a reunification of the Island and for its EU membership is evident throughout the UK Parliament. This paper does not enter into the details of what is being done in practice to help find a solution. It remains unclear what the role of the UK for a solution to the Cyprus Problem has been over the years. This study does not enter fully into this debate but looks at what role, if any, British members of the Commons and of the Lords have played. Many UK parliamentarians (including MEPs) belong to the *Friends of Cyprus* group which strives to find common ground on the Island. This is important in the distinction I have been trying to make between informal and formal groupings but without underplaying the importance of looking at parliamentary action in a all-comprehensive way which includes both formal and informal links (for the *Friends of Cyprus* see below). Here, I only reproduce a number of statements that confirm that the position of the leading political parties in the UK Parliament is for an EU accession of the Island with or without a settlement. For instance the Fifth Report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons on 'European Union Enlargement and Nice Follow-up' states that '*the objective must be to reach a Cyprus settlement before enlargement*'. But that '*a settlement is not a precondition for accession*'.²⁵

²² as Denmark would hold the next Presidency of EU Council from 1/7/2002, as reproduced from 3rd June 2002: http://www.pio.gov.cy/news/daily_update_index.html).

²³ including the official Cypriot website: www.pio.gov.cy.

²⁴ Britain receives greater coverage than other states because of its historic role on the Island, and also because it is often said in Nicosia that the UK 'dictates' EU policy towards the Island.

²⁵ July 2001, Cm 5198.

Moreover, the Report stresses that 'Turkey should not have a veto over the accession of Cyprus
'and that to start talking about the practical arrangements for a divided island to enter as an entity the EU 'would risk undermining the credibility of the UN efforts to reach a settlement, by suggesting that the EU expected them to fail'.

A point made clear by the Conservative party in January 2002:
'(...) It cannot be the case that the lack of a solution should hinder the Republic of Cyprus - being the legitimate government of the island - in its accession process into the European Union. We believe that, with accession likely to take place within three years' time, a solution becomes more urgent. We are also supportive of Turkey's intentions to become a member of the European Union and we call on them to use their influence to help construct a process, which can solve the issue of Cyprus. The people of Cyprus are tragically divided. We hope that these talks will be seen as an opportunity to come together. One cannot overstate the importance of Cyprus' strategic location. It could play an even more important role in the Eastern Mediterranean if agreement were to be reached'²⁶.

A similar approach was repeated for the umpteenth time in a Lords debate in March 2002:²⁷ The British Minister for Trade, Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, stated during a debate on Cyprus in the House of Lords on 12 March that 'the best chance of a reunited Cyprus joining the European Union lies in supporting the current United Nations-brokered settlement talks in Cyprus'. Replying to a question put forward by Lord Wallace of Saltaire who asked Her Majesty's Government 'what steps they are taking to promote the entry of a reunited Cyprus to the European Union', Baroness Symons said: 'We and other member states are therefore working to support that process and the noble Lord, Lord Hannay, the Government's special representative, is active in that respect'. Asked by Lord Corbett of Castle Vale whether she would 'reiterate the views of Her Majesty's Government and the rest of the European Union that the accession of Cyprus to the EU does not depend upon reunification of the island, much as members of both Cypriot communities and others elsewhere want to see that', Baroness Symons said:

'My Lords, I agree entirely with my noble friend. However, the United Kingdom strongly supports the discussions underway between the two sides in Cyprus. We also strongly support the accession of Cyprus to the EU. But let me say categorically that neither we, nor the European Union, believe that such coming together in Cyprus is a precondition

²⁶ statement made on 16 January 2002 by an opposition MP (Shadow front bench Spokesman on Foreign Affairs Mr Richard Spring MP) following the fresh talks between the two Cypriot leaders in early January 2002 (source: http://www.pio.gov.cy/news/dailynews/news2002_1_18.htm as printed on 4 June 2002).

²⁷ http://www.pio.gov.cy/news/dailynews/news2002_3_15.htm as printed on 4 June 2002.

for accession. That was made abundantly clear at the Helsinki European Council, but for the purposes of further clarity I repeat that now to your Lordships'.

- *France:* A number of recent efforts with France have been made by Cypriot MPs because the more friendly government of the Mitterrand years has been replaced since 1995 (Jacques Chirac) by a French state less prone to favour Greek positions on international affairs. In October 2001, Cypriot MPs visited France and met the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French Senate. In addition the DISY MPs also met politicians and parliamentarians from the UDF and RPR parties. A return visit took place in March 2002 in Nicosia. But there are practical problems such as the lack of French speakers in Vouli: only two MPs speak French. Personal contacts are therefore especially important. Sheer coincidence may also play a role in this respect as for instance French MP (now defence minister in the Raffarin government) Michelle Alliot Marie takes her vacation regularly on the Island. The French Parliament published in May a new report on enlargement which includes Cyprus, and which is generally favourable to an accession of the Island, ideally with a solution prior to such an event, but not excluding the accession of a *de facto* divided (but *de jure* united) island according to the formula well reshearsed by now (a solution is not a precondition for accession). This particular report was published on 24 April 2002.²⁸
- *Italy:* there exist good relations overall, especially with regards to cultural links between the two countries. These included the organisation of a joint seminar (Vouli and Italian parliament) in January 2001 on 'Mediterranean Identity', which included in its speakers a number of MPs. The then President of the House, Luciano Violante, also performed a few hours 'flying visit' from Rome just to reinforce the importance of that event.

An important discussion in the Italian parliament towards the end of 2001 concerned the Vedrine (French foreign minister) suggestions to add a geopolitical criterion for EU membership to the normal Copenhagen ones. This was seen by many as an effort to create a 'special case' for the geo-strategic situation of Turkey, i.e. as an important element for Western security in general and EU security in particular, especially after the terrorist attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001. During an extensive interview with the President of the Italian's Senate Committee for European Affairs (*Giunta per gli Affari delle Comunita Europee*) in Rome in December 2001, I was told that such an approach would not be accepted because it would endanger the importance of the democratic and other criteria for membership that Copenhagen had made clear. By undermining the

²⁸ 'Elargissement de l'Union européenne : état des lieux' by senators HAENEL (Hubert); BADRE (Denis); DENEUX (Marcel); LAGAUCHE (Serge); SUTOUR (Simon): RAPPORT D'INFORMATION 295 (2001-2002) - DELEGATION DU SENAT POUR L'UNION EUROPEENNE.

democratic nature of the EU system, such a development would be making it *de facto* unworkable. In, addition, Senator Greco stressed that even if such an approach (geo-political) favoured *a priori* Cyprus' application to join the EU because of the Island's own geopolitical importance, one could not and should not go down the Vedrine route because the Copenhagen criteria –as they now stand- were enough.

- *Spain*: there were no visits but the relevant sub-committee on EU enlargement of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the *Congreso* is following developments closely. There have also been a number of other initiatives such as the 'hearings' of Cyprus' ambassador to Spain (in 2001 and 2002), and a question to the Spanish government: Minister for Europe de Miguel answered to MP Herrera Martinez Campos (on behalf of Martinez Casan) on 30 May 2001 where the Spanish government position was reiterated along the usual Helsinki lines.²⁹
- *The Netherlands*: a problematic case because two MPs (De Hoop Scheffer and Weisglas) tabled a motion on 16 December 1999 saying that in their view it was undesirable to allow a state with UN troops on its soil into the EU. They made specific mention of Cyprus in their resolution³⁰. Now the situation has improved between the two sides. Here, one needs to add that Holland has been problematic over a number of issues that have to do with Turkey and Greece, and even over the new 'Macedonian Question' (with an informal boycott of Dutch produce in Greece some years ago and later a particularly aggressive stance by the European Commissioner for External Affairs Van den Broek during the ECJ case against Greece in 1994-1995). However, Van den Broek is generally regarded on the Island as a fair Commissioner, especially during his tenure in 1995 and the crucial months when the promise of a start to accession negotiations was taken (Cannes European Council meeting in June). Although it is fair to stress that the *quid pro quo* was for Greece to lift its opposition to the EU's Customs Union with Turkey, Van den Broek was seen as pro-Cypriot and became the first invited speaker of the then newly-established (but short-lived) *Institute for Eurodemocracy* in Nicosia in late 2000. The President of that Institute was former foreign minister Alecos Michaelidis who, with such a gesture, wanted to thank the former Commissioner for his support in the past.
- *Denmark*: The *Folketing's* EU Committee visited Cyprus in June 2000 but it did not visit the occupied territories as Denktash had refused to invite them. When the same group went on to Athens and then to Ankara, the Turks issued an invitation to visit the 'TRNC' but the Danes declined.
- *Belgium*: The Belgian Parliament played a very important role during the 2001 Belgian Presidency. The Belgian foreign minister (and

²⁹ My thanks to the *Comision Exteriores* of the *Congreso* for providing me with the necessary information (information provided on 16-18 July 2002).

³⁰ My thanks to the EU Committee of the Dutch *Parlement* (*Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generall*) for providing me with the necessary information (on 17 July 2002).

member of the Senate) Louis Michel is the President of the Cyprus Friendship Group. Philippe Monfils produced a report on Cyprus. I reproduce here one of his interventions during a parliamentary debate on its government policy back in October 1999 that clearly shows where he stands as a Belgian parliamentarian on the Cyprus Problem:

*J'en viens enfin à ce que j'estime être une faute des dirigeants européens, à savoir la proposition faite à la Turquie d'entrer à moyen terme dans un processus de négociation avec l'Union européenne. Je sais bien que la morale internationale est particulièrement élastique. Mais tout de même, il faut rappeler qu'indépendamment des problèmes graves de droits de l'homme qui se posent en Turquie, notamment en ce qui concerne la minorité kurde, ce pays occupe militairement la moitié de Chypre. La Turquie est condamnée depuis des années par l'ONU pour cette invasion. Elle a toujours refusé toute négociation sur le sort de Chypre. Alors que depuis des années, des solutions existent visant à organiser Chypre sur une base bizonale et bicommunautaire, le dirigeant turc du Nord, M. Denktash, refuse tout début de négociation à cet égard. Et pendant que l'Europe des Quinze joue l'hymne européen devant des Turcs ravis, les enfants de Chypriotes otages au nord de Chypre ne peuvent pas être élevés dans leur langue ; aucun Chypriote grec enclavé ne peut exercer d'activités économiques dans le Nord et lorsqu'un enfant rejoint le Sud pour rencontrer des amis ou des parents, il ne peut pas rentrer dans sa maison d'origine. Je trouverais scandaleux, monsieur le premier ministre, que Chypre soit sacrifiée sur l'autel de la réalpolitik menée par les Quinze à l'égard de la Turquie. Ce serait évidemment un signe désastreux donné à la Communauté internationale. Comment voulez-vous, après cela, que l'Union européenne puisse encore intervenir pour pacifier des conflits extérieurs alors qu'elle ne serait pas capable de s'occuper de ce qui se passe à l'intérieur de ses frontières en s'aplatissant littéralement devant l'attitude hautaine et intransigeante de la Turquie ?*³¹

- *Finland*: There were visits both ways, but no report.
- *Sweden*: same as Finland.
- *Portugal*: no report nor visits.
- *Ireland*: many links with Cyprus including a lot of common sympathy as both have suffered from British colonialism, including from the implications of the 'divide and rule' policy that has made Britain so famous in the world in the past. Both are experiencing an inter-communal conflict even if there are probably more differences than similarities, as analogies often highlight more than is actually comparable. It is also hoped that the new EP President Pat Cox will be more sensitive to the Cyprus Problem. He did say so in his opening speech as President and also during his visit in Cyprus (see below). I mention his intervention here to show that there are clear links among parliamentarians and politicians on these issues.

³¹ Monday 18 October 1999, *Annales parlementaires*, séance de l'après-midi, Discussion de la déclaration du gouvernement.

Relations with the EU and the EP

Two introductory points need to be considered at this stage however briefly:

- links with other EU political groupings;
- the possible implications of EU membership without a solution and their impact on the political debate in Cyprus in 2002.

Links with other European and international political parties and groupings are important generally speaking but also with particular regard to Cyprus' forthcoming EU accession. The main links with EU parties or groupings are as follows:

- DISY has the longest standing link with EU parties. It is an EPP (European People's Party) party member, and it is also affiliated to the EPP group in the EP.
- KISOS belongs to the European Socialist Party (PES) group.³²
- whereas AKEL is linked to the Communist Group in the EP.
- The Green Party belongs to the Greens' European and international groupings.
- The other parties do not have formal links with their EU counterparts yet.

Although this particular aspect of the question has more to do with EU-Turkey relations than with EU policy towards Cyprus, the EP has also been described as a 'nuisance' (see Brewin 2000). The EP takes usually a strong stance on many a problem in Turkey especially with regards to human rights violations. In response, there is a tendency for the Turkish Grand Assembly to react rather 'violently' to most EP resolution or discussion, thus creating a rather negative feeling between the two institutions. In that respect, it is interesting to note that some parliamentarians accept Turkey's complaints about the EP, especially with regard to its stance on the Armenian issue and the Cyprus Problem. At least this is what Belgian MP Daniel Ducarme of the Mouvement Reformateur in Wallonia is reported to have said in a recent interview (*Turkish Daily News*, 10 June 2002). The same article did not hide that 'Ducarme [is] well-known for his close contacts with the Turkish community in Belgium'.

COSAC (Committee of Community and European Affairs Committees)

During my interviews, most MPs stressed how important such an institutional arrangement was, not only to make the Cypriot MPs get familiar with the EU institutions but also with MPs from the EU member states to understand better the Cyprus Problem. COSAC is the Committee of Community and European Affairs Committees of the EU member states. In recent years, all relevant committees of the parliaments of applicant states participate in COSAC.

The EU-Cyprus Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)

³² The EPP and the PES are the two largest groupings (by far) in the EP. Because of the way the EP works, if there is an agreement between these two groups, it is likely to become EP policy.

The EU-Cyprus JPC consists of MEPs and Cypriot MPs. On the EP side there are 12 members and 11 substitutes. On the Cypriot side there are 6 members and 5 substitutes. The JPC began informally due to the association agreement that Cyprus has had with the EC/EU mainly as a result of UK applications in the 1960s and membership in 1973. It just happened (interviews with Cypriot foreign ministry officials) that several members of the Cypriot embassy in Brussels noticed that Turkey was the only other country with a similar associate status arrangement (once Greece had become a full member in 1981) but that Turkey also participated in a JPC. So, the Republic of Cyprus decided to ask for one as well. The JPC began its work in 1992.

Until now there have been 21 such meetings: the latest one (21st) took place on 22-24 May in Nicosia³³. In addition, the most relevant EP report to date is that of Luxembourg MEP (and former foreign minister of that country for 15 years) Jacques Poos (September 2001) report which was updated and approved in the plenary in June 2002 (396 votes in favour, 16 against and 29 abstentions for the whole report on accession negotiations progress). In its preliminary draft, the EP Foreign Affairs Committee approved it without any modification by unanimity on 22 May 2002. One should contrast the fact that this time round all 10 amendments were rejected or withdrawn whereas in September there had been up to 100 amendments mainly put forward by pro-Turkish MEPs from the UK. The situation then was much more antagonistic vis-à-vis Cyprus than in May this year. But in either instance, it is important to note that none of the amendments was successful. A clear sign that the EP overall is supporting fully the accession of the Republic of Cyprus with or without a settlement. This stance was made clear by the then EP President Nicole Fontaine in November 2001 and reiterated by its new President Pat Cox during his May 2002 visit to Nicosia. He stated that:

'We know the general terms that surround this but in the end there will be no external vetoes and in the end each case will be judged on its merits and in the end all relevant factors will be taken into account'³⁴.

During the press interview that followed the conclusion of the 21st JPC, the co-chair MEP Mechtild Rothe emphasised time and time again that Cyprus will be a member soon. She stressed that it was the last meeting of that institution in Cyprus before the Accession Treaty is agreed (in Copenhagen in December 2002) as the next one is going to take place in Brussels according to normal procedural arrangements. Her strong conviction reassured the Cypriot MPs and became even more comforting when she said that any hostile act by Turkey would put that country's EU aspirations on hold 'until hell freezes over' (verbatim translation from German).

³³ My thanks to Mr Socratous and Mr Georgiou (International Relations Department, Vouli ton Andiprosopon, Nicosia) for their help in my attending the 21st JPC as an observer.

³⁴ http://www.pio.gov.cy/news/dailynews/news2002_5_10.htm as printed on 4 June 2002. See also his interview in *New Europe-The European Weekly* (18 January 2002; www.new-europe.info as printed on 8 March 2002).

The JPC is now widely considered by most Cypriot MPs I interviewed as an 'extremely significant' forum. One former MP argued that it does not suffer from the antagonism that he had experienced in PACE. The difference between the JPC and the PACE (see above) is worth stressing. Although there are still some individual exceptions (mainly British MEPs, such as Liberal Group MEP Andrew Duff, or Socialist Group MEP Richard Balfe) within the EP, the JPC itself is seen as being both pro-Cyprus entry and for a solution that is consistent with the UN resolutions and the 1977 and 1979 agreements which favour a federal Cyprus. I was even told that if the JPC could not be pro-Cypriot then the Cypriot MPs would not be doing their job properly. The current Cypriot Co-Chair of the JPC also expressed his disappointment that no more non-Greek MEPs were members of that institution. He thanked the support expressed by Greek MEPs but he insisted on the need to get more active participation in the JPC from other Euro-MPs (Tassos Papadopoulos interview, 25 May 2002).

But there is no guarantee of 'success'. Past experience shows that surprises of an unwelcome kind do occur: thus, when in 1995 the EP decided to give its assent to the Customs Union with Turkey, MEP Pauline Green (then JPC co-chair) had to come to Cyprus and explain what had happened. The same applies of course to other politicians, including Greeks, such as then Minister Pangalos (Prodromos Prodromou, interview, 14 March 2002). This is seen as a reflection of the limited impact that a small state like Cyprus can have on the foreign policy of 'bigger' ones such as Greece where the Simitis-Papandreou (George) shift on Greek-Turkish relations has taken place irrespective of what Cypriots may think.

The Socialist Group (PES) is seen as more well disposed towards Cyprus. The Right EPP is getting 'better'. This was the assessment of a DISY MP (Prodromos Prodromou, interview, 14 March 2002). Liberal, Greens and Extreme Right wing MEPs are seen as particularly problematic and open to Turkish 'propaganda'. It is interesting to note that this is roughly identical to the situation as described in the early 1980s in the only scholarly study on the role of the EP towards the Cyprus Problem (see Tsardanidis 1982: 391-394). In that respect, it is also interesting to note that whereas the Communist Group in the EP votes against EU enlargement on the grounds that it would extend US and Western capitalism, thanks to the influence of Greek communist MEPs, the same group abstains over Cyprus membership (Kostandinos Alysandrakis, interview, 23 May 2002).

Personal contacts are important : for instance, it was mentioned that personal contacts with Alain Lamassoure during the preparation of his Report on Cyprus were considered to have acted in a positive way. French-speaking Cypriot MPs played a role there, despite the later problems³⁵ this Report

³⁵ These problems had more to do with the insistence by some MEPs to include a reference to the Armenian genocide. Lamassoure was against and a number of Cypriots I interviewed during 2002 agreed with him as they argued that there was no need to link two different issues, one a historical one and another a current military occupation. The counter-argument is that the EP is one of the very few

encountered (Prodromos Prodromou, interview, 14 March 2002). One should finally add the symbolism of public statements made by EP Presidents especially if they are on an official visit to Cyprus (the only one to date): Madame Fontaine in late 2001. Her speech was reportedly repeated almost word for word by Commission President Prodi a few days later when he visited the Island as well (informal interviews in December 2001 in Florence and Athens).

European Convention on the Future of Europe

Although this is not a place for parliamentary diplomacy but on how a future enlarged EU will organise its own institutional and decisional arrangements, it does offer a good opportunity for the 2 Cypriot MPs (and their 2 substitutes) to have a say in the discussions. There is 'near-equality' (AKEL MP Eleni Mavrou) between current and applicant states, although if there is a need for a vote, applicant states representatives cannot take part. In her view, the respective EU presidencies also have an important role to play. For instance, not only the Belgian Presidency (second half of 2001) but also more importantly the Belgian Parliament were very useful with regard to providing information, organising events etc.

The Cypriot parliamentary delegation also possesses the unique distinction of including different parties with regard to full members and substitute members, thus offering a wider political representation than other states (Eleni Mavrou, interview, 15 March 2002). However, as with other applicant states, the key obstacle Cyprus is facing in the Convention is the lack of familiarisation with the EU system.

An added problem of the Convention for the Cypriot Vouli is the regular absence of 4 MPs one week each month: 4 out of 56 is a rather high percentage, especially when one takes into consideration all the other MPs who are abroad at any given time (see above). This is another problem that a small state encounters in international affairs.

The ratification saga

This aspect of the question is important because there has been a lot of words written and spoken about this issue: will Cyprus accession be part of a package deal (with the other 9 applicant states) or a separate treaty? In the first instance, the role of national parliaments will be much less important than in the second case. It is interesting to note that despite the fact that this will be the 5th case of an EU enlargement, and the 4th one which will be dealing with more than one applicant state (after 1973, 1981, 1986 and 1995, not including of course the *de facto* enlargement to Eastern Germany in 1990), there appears to still be the need to have a debate on the question

European parliaments that has passed a resolution (in 1998) condemning formally the Armenian genocide and thus it made sense to ask of Turkey to do something about such a recognition. I leave this debate open but just add that it would make more sense if all EU parliaments adopted similar resolutions (as the French did in 1998 and 2000 in their two chambers) because it reinforces consistency in EU foreign policy. For more on the question of consistency, see Stavridis 2002b).

when past experience clearly shows that there is a vote for each applicant within the EP, but *a single Accession Treaty* for all new members *at the national level of ratification*. All the same, the general view is that most national EU parliaments are not willing to accept a divided Cyprus (cf. according to former Russian ambassador to Cyprus –Muratov- based on a number of interviews he had conducted, as presented to the 4-6 April 2002 Intercollege Conference in Nicosia). It has also been mentioned that Greece (and the Greek Parliament in particular³⁶) would veto any enlargement that does not include Cyprus. Similar talk has been heard about Germany and Poland or Sweden and the Baltic states.

I reproduce below a letter I received in response to my written request from the office of Mr Leopold Maurer who is the head of accession negotiations with Cyprus in the Commission. It makes it quite clear what the ratification process will be, as it has always been in the past.

‘The ratification process is two-fold.

On the Community level, the Council will have to decide on each application, after consulting the Commission and receiving assent of the EP (Art. 49 (1) EU Treaty). Hence, the EP will vote on each application separately.

On the level of Member States, there will be only one Accession Treaty between all Member States + all candidate countries. This Treaty will have to be ratified in accordance with the constitutional requirements of each state (Art. 49 (2) EU Treaty).

Hence, all 15 EU Parliaments cannot vote on each country separately. They must either ratify the Accession Treaty with all Candidate Countries or reject it.

The same goes for the parliaments (and/or the people, if there will be a referendum) of the candidate countries.

If ratification fails in one candidate country, the Accession Treaty can nevertheless enter into force. The Council is authorised to adapt the Treaty by unanimity in this case (which means that it can strike out the references to the „failed“ new Member State). This was the reason why the Accession Treaty with Norway, Austria, Sweden and Finland was valid for the latter three although Norway rejected the ratification’.³⁷

Thus, from the above, national parliaments will only have to ratify a package deal. It has been argued that the real problematic candidate is Poland and not Cyprus (Giannakis Georgiades, interview, 2 April 2002). The real test will come before the end of 2002 when the EU and its member states will decide who joins and at what time. The role of the national parliaments should not

³⁶ For more on that aspect, see the New Democracy leader, Kostas Karamanlis, interview in *TYPOS TIS KYRIAKIS* on 10 February 2002 where he argues that there will be not one Greek veto but 300 such vetoes (the total number of Greek MPs). For a strong criticism of such a line, see *inter alia* MEP Baltas interview.

³⁷ For more see Frank Hoffmeister, *Earlier Enlargements*, in: A.Ott/K. Inglis (ed.), *Handbook on European Enlargement*, T.M.C. Asser Press, forthcoming, Part I, Chapter 4.1.

be underestimated all the same. The EU enlargement process is a political process and not only a juridical one. Cyprus will be a test for the EU (as will all the other candidate countries for a variety of other reasons). The fact remains that the Cyprus Problem has been regularly and thoroughly discussed in the national parliaments of the EU and in the EP irrespective of whether these national parliaments will have an individual say or not. What is a rather disappointing fact is that despite all this amount of information and debate there are still so many people, including parliamentarians and foreign ministry officials, let alone journalists etc., who insist on the potential veto of the Greek Parliament in that respect. If there is a veto from Greece it will be exercised in the European Council meeting (probably in Copenhagen in December 2002 if there is no further delay to enlargement) when the decision to enlarge will be taken.

Informal groupings

For instance the UK *Friends of Cyprus* consists of a number of British and other citizens who favour the reunification of the Island and the withdrawal of Turkish troops. It includes British parliamentarians but it is not a formal grouping a-la official 'friendship groups' with other parliaments members (see above). They last visited the Island in early April 2002. The visit included Labour's Lords Corbett and Dubbs, MP Andrew Love, Conservative MP Robert Spink, and the *Friends of Cyprus* Secretary, Mary Southcott. This informal group now presided by Lord Bethell (MEP) was started by the last UK governor of the Island after the 1974 events. It publishes a regular report and has its own website³⁸. It includes 63 members (as of Autumn 2001) in addition to its President (Conservative MEP), its Chair (Labour MEP), and three Vice-Chairs (MPs from the three traditional UK parties). Most of them are parliamentarians, including members of the JPC such as Conservative MEP Theresa Villiers or former members such as Labour MEP Pauline Green. There is no space to develop this informal aspect of parliamentary diplomacy here but I reckon this is an important aspect of the whole question. Just to stress that a 'counter-effort' led by a couple of members of the UK Parliament does not appear to acquire the same level of support in recent years. It was argued that only 3 parliamentarians attended a gathering aimed at reviving the *Friends of North Cyprus Group* in London³⁹.

Conclusions: a case of 'parliamentary diplomacy' at work?

This paper did not purport to offer a theoretical analysis of what 'parliamentary diplomacy' is. To a large extent, the choice of the Cyprus Problem implied some *a priori* relevance of the concept of parliamentary diplomacy. One could *a priori* argue that by definition the Cypriot Vouli must have played an important parliamentary diplomatic role because of the following factors:

- there is an international conflict situation.

³⁸ www.friendsofcyprus.org.

³⁹ see <http://www.hri.org>, 15 January 2002, as printed on that day.

- the political system of the Republic of Cyprus needs the support of all domestic political parties concerned and has formalised such a need through the Symvoulío.
- as there is a presidential system in Cyprus, political parties would use the Vouli as an additional form of diplomacy wherever possible, and, with the existence of the Symvoulío, such an exercise would be constructive and supportive rather than lean towards petty party politics; It remains perhaps debatable if this 'model' can be successfully 'exported' (see below on Greece).
- politics in Cyprus tends to a consensual model. This is particularly true now that the issues of *enosis* with Greece and a Left-Right divide have been overcome after the 1950s to 1970s developments, which led, in part, to the tragic consequences of the 1974 coup. Furthermore, because of the Turkish occupation of part of the Island, there is a need for more consensus with a view to finding a solution to the Problem, and thus allowing 'normal politics' to come back. Even parties that do not necessarily believe in the Western model of democracy have tended to play the system. Thus AKEL, despite its many opportunities at 'rocking the boat' has continued to play with the rules. It could however be argued that the main reason for such a stance is not only the need for consensus but rather that AKEL has always been an 'establishment' party and not a revolutionary one (of a people's party style).
- consensus implies the need for as many efforts as possible. Thus, the Vouli can be seen as a 'natural' ally for the diplomacy of the Republic of Cyprus.

Moreover, a number of developments in European and world politics mean that democratization has taken the form of a parliamentary system in most cases. Including recently, an added dimension to this debate about a so-called parliamentarization of the EU itself (see Tsatsos 2002). The proliferation of parliamentary bodies has also further enhanced the role of parliaments in world politics. Thus, the Vouli could but only play an important role in parliamentary diplomacy. Furthermore, one could add here the linkage role that parliaments can and should play between governments and the civil society, and vice versa. This is an area that has not been analysed from an academic perspective yet, even if there are growing empirical signs of such a linkage: the Vouli in Nicosia organised information seminars about the European Convention with an emphasis on the NGOs and other elements of civil society in Cyprus.⁴⁰

What follows does not enter in the wider debate I have just mentioned. The bottom line remains that the Cyprus Problem has yet to be resolved. In this section I would like to concentrate on the 'findings' of this study. I repeat this

⁴⁰ More evidence of such a phenomenon and its complementary dimension to elements of civil society favouring parliamentary contacts can be found in the EMP or Barcelona Process (Euro-Mediterranean relations). For more see Stavridis (2003b). This was also confirmed to me by Greek MP Elsa Papademetriou (interview, 10 July 2002).

is a 'pilot-study' in many respects. It needs more systematic and comprehensive research, something that cannot be done over a short period of time and space. It is hoped that this study forms the basis for more academic investigation.

It has been said (Harris Georgiades, Secretary-General, DISY-Youth organisation) that the current government has been very successful in 'steering Cyprus to the European port' despite the many difficulties. But that domestically-speaking it has achieved very little, thus implying that the next presidential elections would at least reflect the growing support among Cypriot voters for the opposition parties as already witnessed in the 2001 parliamentary elections. The same could be said of the Vouli's parliamentary diplomacy: it has contributed to securing support for Cyprus accession to the Union in the EU institutions and member states. Not a mean achievement considering the vast amount of Turkish propaganda against it. But it has not convinced other EU states for the need to find a solution to the Cyprus Problem.

Is parliamentary diplomacy more important for a small state? Probably. When there are 156 diplomats in the whole ministry of foreign affairs (i.e. including overseas embassy and consular staff), any help from other official quarters cannot be neglected. When in addition there is a 'national issue' such as the Cyprus Problem such an help is not only welcome but needed. It is no coincidence that there was an increase in the number of MPs in 1985 (Dimitris Syllouris, interview, 11 March 2002; Doros Theodorou, interview, 4 April 2002). In part it allowed for a better international representation. The need for a further increase was discussed again in 2001 but the solution (at least provisional) has been to give MPs a better administrative and technological back up⁴¹: one secretary for every two MPs, electronic connection, and refurbishing and additional construction for the current Vouli building, and eventually a new building.

Are MPs 'better' (more in numbers) than foreign ministry officials in a small state? There are more as at least one, sometimes two or three, MPs make visits abroad every week (information provided by the Secretariat General of the Vouli). To that aspect of the question one must add that the Presidential system in Cyprus does not help when its President, through no fault of his own, is rather limited in his travelling due to his age (although I received contradictory information from informal interviews: does President Clerides put in only 2-3 hours of work every day or more than 8?). This situation is further complicated with the current inter-communal talks which require the regular presence of the President and his team. But there is little doubt that most Cypriots prefer to see some form of negotiations taking place. The current talks are crucial for the future of Cyprus, a general assessment shared by all observers in 2001-02 (Wallace 2002; Emerson and Tocci 2002; Savvides 2002). Embassies do play an active role in providing MPs with information, so

⁴¹ One should note that the Cypriot Foreign ministry is also only now reaching the electronic age.

one should not overstate this difference between the foreign ministry and the Vouli either. Especially in a country as small as Cyprus where personal and family links still count very much. But the limited number of diplomats (even if one adds press offices, trade missions, etc.) does also have an impact on the quality of information made available to parliamentarians.

Personal contacts matter most. Not only as far as MPs are concerned. It can also be the Secretary General or other officials of a given political party, such as the DISY one who is reputed to have excellent links with the EPP. Other, more political and symbolic, examples are the presence of political figures at political party congresses, such as the 9 February 2002 presence of veteran politician Lysarides at a PASOK Youth congress in Greece where plenty of placards in favour of a 'Free Cyprus' were on show⁴². It is rather clear that because there are so few MPs and so many international links, both formal and informal, as we have seen above, the personal quality of a Cypriot MP and a future Cypriot MEP remains a crucial element in an effective diplomacy for the Republic of Cyprus, be it traditional or parliamentary in nature.

Is there a key difference between parliamentary and presidential systems in the way they deal with 'parliamentary diplomacy'? Cypriot ministers are not MPs, unlike most EU states. This can be an advantage or a disadvantage. MPs do become ministers and the other way round so one should not exaggerate this specificity of the Cyprus system.

There is a question about how one influences the views of MPs or MEPs. This issue is a sensitive one and has been widely discussed in the media. It has also led to a number of rumors, some of which have been substantiated whereas others have not. Does possessing a villa on a Greek island have anything to do with politics as the Turkish media rushed to claim about MEP and JPC co-chair Trotte? Of course the four freedoms in the EU make such claims rather naïve and unconstructive. But to buy a property in the occupied territories especially when it used to belong to a Greek-Cypriot before the 1974 Turkish invasion is a different matter altogether: it is not only illegal but also immoral. It smacks at best of ignorance, and at worst of provocation. But for MPs or MEPs to claim that they 'did not know' cannot but fall into the latter category, especially at the age of the internet⁴³. One should differentiate between legitimate deals and illegal occupations. Here, a clearer 'code of conduct' about what is permissible and what is not might be useful not only to a more ethical parliamentary behaviour but to a more ethical foreign policy as such.

It has been consistently repeated in my various interviews with MPs and MEPs that 'double standards' do not tend to happen so much in parliamentary diplomacy as they do in traditional state to state relations. The main reason being not only that some MPs can use this approach to criticise domestic

⁴² Greek TV news.

⁴³ See *The Observer* report in May 2002; see also *Cyprus Weekly* 24-23 May 2002 for details.

policies they do not like (especially if they belong to the opposition parties) but also because there is a sense of *camaraderie* as fellow parliamentarians (similar evidence is also available in other recent work I have carried out over the parliamentary dimension of the Barcelona Process; see Stavridis 2002a). One should not overestimate the role of parliamentary diplomacy either. Not only because it remains difficult to assess the overall impact of parliamentary diplomacy. One should also be careful about not reading too much into some JPC members' full support for the views of the Greek-Cypriots: MEP Theresa Villiers argued that: 'no date should be set for the opening of accession negotiations on Turkish entry to the EU, until Turkish troops leave Cyprus'⁴⁴. The official UK position on that particular aspect of the question is not that of the British MEP. What would matter is for such a policy to become EU policy and thus simply implement its own rhetorical commitments.

A key element of parliamentary diplomacy that was discussed time and time again was its comprehensive and complementary nature: *vases communicants*. That is to say that one form of parliamentary activity has an impact in other such forms. It is always difficult to see the links but the links are there. Formal and informal arrangements are important here too, as they are all based on personal contacts. One could of course dismiss the interests of other parliamentarians about the Cyprus Problem as mere electoral gains at the national and local levels. The case of the UK is often quoted in that respect (see above Villiers and Green), especially Northern London where Cypriots live together and at peace. Similarly, in 1998, ten members of the Australian Parliament, including its President, visited Cyprus, Greece and Turkey. It produced a report (Cobb 1998). The main reason for that balanced visit had to do with the fact that these particular MPs were coming from constituencies where their voters are of Cypriot origin (both Greek and Turkish). A less cynical view could be that due to Australia's own foreign policy difficulties over East Timor⁴⁵, there might have been some genuine interest in the Cyprus Issue. Another important area that has not been discussed as this paper is about Europe is of course the role of the US Congress with regards to Turkey, Greece and Cyprus. Finally, non-EU but European institutions which play an important role, especially legally speaking, such as the Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly, deserve further analysis in our view than was warranted in this study.

More about the 'vases communicants' approach of parliamentary diplomacy: during the 21st JPC meeting in Nicosia, the original idea had been to invite Arab and Israeli MPs in an effort to contribute to a solution to the violent situation in the Middle East. The original proposal came from MEP Jannis Sakellariou (Germany) with the support of MEP Pere Esteve (Spain), the EP's rapporteur on the EMP. Although invitations had been sent two months

⁴⁴ <http://www.pio.gov.cy> on 29 May 2002.

⁴⁵ Australia was one of the few democratic states that recognised in 1976 the Indonesian invasion of East Timor. Such a decision remained a serious 'blot' on its foreign policy until recently when Australia contributed substantially to the eventual UN-led 'transition to freedom' of the territory, including a military presence, even if more bloodshed had to take place during 1999.

before the event (22-24 May 2002), when the JPC took place in Nicosia, there were no Arab or Israeli MPs but MEP Pere Esteve was present and there was a debate over the situation in the Middle East. The situation in the Middle East had further deteriorated and by that time 13 Palestinians were temporarily hosted by the Government of Cyprus (in a hotel in Larnaca) before they were transferred to a number of EU countries, including Greece. The Palestinian representative on the Island, who had promised to attend the JPC, could not make it either as he was in Athens with the 3 Palestinians who on the day of the beginning of the JPC had been moved there. The main point here is that parliamentary diplomacy has many dimensions. Thus, what was originally a parliamentary dimension to EU-Cyprus relations, and which allows for a discussion of the Cyprus Problem, then became a matter of EU enlargement and discussing the progress in accession negotiations, and finally in 2002 because of the international situation in the Middle East was used – unsuccessfully in that particular case- to try and discuss another conflict.

A final 'lesson', this time more related to the question of the democratic control of foreign policy could be that the 'Symvoulio' approach that the Cypriots have been using since 1974 can be used as a model for countries where the international situation makes public policy decisions more difficult if they do not possess a sense of legitimacy. Thus, the 2001 Constitutional changes in Greece now call for a similar institution. Such was the demand of the Opposition (*Synaspismos*/United Left for a long time and New Democracy more recently). Recent events, especially over Cyprus, the 'Euro-army', and general relations with Turkey, seem to have led to the need to emulate Cyprus in that respect⁴⁶. The same could be useful at a time when the international fight against terrorism has projected international affairs to the forefront of public policy. Parliaments have played a role and that role should be enhanced for at least two related reasons: it helps the democratization of public life; it allows for another channel of communication during international crises. Both need further strengthening in my view irrespective of their direct impact on any given situation. Of course, the Cyprus Problem cannot be solved through parliamentary diplomacy alone. But any help it has produced is to be welcome. It is hoped that this study contributes in its own way to further strengthen the need for an academic study of parliamentary diplomacy in general and its role in the Cyprus Problem in particular.

⁴⁶ www.in.gr/news, 4 June 2002. For more see Ioakimidis (1999), 160.

APPENDIX 1

- *Interviews* (alphabetical order)
- * **Kostandinos Alysandrakis**, MEP, Communist Group, Greece, and JPC member, 23 May 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Alexandros Baltas**, MEP, Socialist (PASOK), Greece, 8 March 2002, in Athens
- * **Kostakis Christoforou**, General Secretary of the Cypriot Vouli, 12 March 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Andreas Christou**, Cypriot MP, AKEL Party, and, 1st Vic-Chair of the JPC, and *Ethniko Symvoulío* member, and, member of the Vouli's European Affairs Committee, 4 April 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Nikos Cleanthous**, Cypriot MP, DIKO Party, and Vice-President of the Vouli's European Affairs Committee, and *Ethniko Symvoulío* member, 4 April 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Giannakis Georgiades**, former International Relations Secretary of the Vouli, 2 April 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Mario Greco**, Italian Senate Member, and President of the Senate's European Affairs Committee, 18 December 2001, in Rome
- * **Takis Hadjidemetriou**, former Cypriot MP, KISOS/EDEK Party, former PACE Member, 12 March 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Ioannis Marinós**, MEP, EPP (New Democracy), Greece, and Vice President of the JPC, 16 July 2002, in Athens
- * **Eleni Mavrou**, Cypriot MP, AKEL Party, and member of the Vouli's European Affairs Committee, and one of the two Cypriot Vouli representatives to the European Convention on the Future of Europe, 15 March 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Giannakis Omirou**, former Cypriot Defence Minister, Cypriot MP, KISOS Party, and President of KISOS, and President of the Vouli's Defence Affairs Committee, and member of the Vouli's European Affairs Committee, 4 April 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Tassos Papadopoulos**, Cypriot MP, DIKO Party, and President of DIKO, and President of the Vouli's European Affairs Committee, and Co-Chair of the JPC, and *Ethniko Symvoulío* member, 25 May 2002, in Nicosia
- * **Elsa Papademetriou**, Greek MP, New Democracy, and member of the

European Affairs Committee, 10 July 2002, in Athens

* **Prodromos Prodromou**, Cypriot MP, DISY Party, and member of the Vouli's European Affairs Committee, and JPC member, 14 March 2002, in Nicosia

* **Mary Southcott**, *Friends of Cyprus* Secretary, 24 May 2002, in Nicosia

* **Dimitris Syllouris**, Cypriot MP, DISY Party, and Alternate President of the Vouli's Foreign Affairs Committee, and member of the Vouli's European Affairs Committee, and JPC member, 11 March 2002, in Nicosia

* **Doros Theodorou**, Cypriot MP, KISOS Party, and member of the Vouli's Foreign Affairs Committee, and JPC member, 4 April 2002, in Nicosia

* **Georgios Vassiliou**, former President of the Republic of Cyprus, current Chief-Negotiator for the Republic of Cyprus on EU accession, and Cypriot MP, EDI party, President of EDI, and Ethniko Symvoulío Member, 14 March 2002, in Nicosia

PLUS a number of interviews with:

- **Cypriot foreign ministry officials**, 5 April 2002, in Nicosia
- a **Greek foreign ministry official**, 30 November 2001, in Athens.

- *Parliamentary sessions of particular interest to this study I have attended*

* 2nd Euromed Parliamentary Forum (Brussels, 8-9 February 2001)

* 21st EU-Cyprus Joint Parliamentary Committee (Nicosia, 22-24 May 2002)

- *Conferences and seminars of particular interest to this study I have organised or/and presented relevant papers*

* member of the Advisory Committee of the Cyprus Institute of Political Research and European Affairs Conference on *Federalizing Europe - Federations within the EU and the Path of Cyprus* (Nicosia, 29-30 June 2001)

* member of the Organising Committee of the Institute for Eurodemocracy Conference on *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: five years on* (Nicosia, 21-23 June 2001)

* Co-organiser (with the Research and Development Center, Intercollege, Nicosia) *Cyprus and EU membership* (Nicosia, 7-9 May 1998); co-organiser: Dr A. Theophanous (Intercollege)

PLUS attendance only

* Cypriot Parliament and Italian Parliament Conference on 'Mediterranean Identity' (Nicosia, 8-9 January 2001)

* RSCAS/EUI Mediterranean Programme and Sabanci University Conference on 'Turkey's EU Membership Observatory' (Florence, 1-2 June 2001)

* Working Group on Cyprus (Prof W. Wallace) meeting, part of the Turkey's EU Candidacy Observatory project of the Mediterranean Programme of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the EUI and Sabanci University (Florence, 8 September 2001 & 15-16 December 2001)

* EKEM (Hellenic Centre for European Studies) Conference on 'The Future of Europe and Turkey' (Zappeion Megaro, Athens, 23 January 2002)

APPENDIX 2

The National Council (Symvoulío) membership as of June 2002:

1. President Clerides.
 2. Foreign Minister Casoulides.
 3. Attorney General Markides.
 4. Government Spokesman Papapetrou.
 5. Undersecretary to the President, Kouros
 6. Demitrios Christofias & Andreas Christou (AKEL)
 7. Nicos Anastasiades & Panagiotis Demitriou (DISY)
 8. Tasos Papadopoulos & Nicos Cleanthous (DIKO)
 9. Giannakis Omirou & Vassos Lyssarides (KISOS)
 10. Nicos Koutsou & Christos Clerides (NEO.)
 11. George Vassiliou & George Christofides (EDI)
 12. Dinos Michaelides & George Lycourgos (ADIK)
 13. George Perdikis & Evi Theopemptou (Greens)
- (party representatives can change if one of the usual participants cannot attend).

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International Herald Tribune, including *e-kathimerini* (Greek supplement published in Athens)

Le Monde

El Pais

Turkish Daily News-OnLine

A variety of Greek newspapers, in particular *TO BHMA* and *KATHIMERINI* (Sunday editions)

Official reports, etc

Commission Progress Report on Cyprus 2000

Commission Progress Report on Cyprus 2001

21st EU-Cyprus Joint Parliamentary Committee Conclusions (24 May 2002)

MEP Tsatsos oral intervention to the 21st JPC (Nicosia, 23-24 May 2002)

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