

GTF Statement 28th February 2018

The Greek Turkish Forum (GTF) began its work in 1998, two years after the incident in the Aegean that brought Greece and Turkey to the brink of a war. With regular contacts even during the most challenging times and with concrete ideas and proposals, the GTF has contributed to a gradual rapprochement between the two countries. In recognition of the importance of the Cyprus issue two Cyprus chapters were set up and remained active.

GTF met in Athens on the 28th of February 2018. GTF expresses its concerns about the current climate in Cyprus. Stagnation in the negotiations has had the effect of generating increased tensions and pessimism with regard to the future development of the negotiating process for the resolution of the Cyprus problem as well as derivative issues including disputes over hydrocarbon explorations in the eastern Mediterranean.

The GTF believes that the leaders and other relevant parties must do their utmost to defuse the current tensions and cultivate conditions conducive to the resumption of negotiations for a comprehensive settlement. The successful completion of the negotiations and a sustainable peace require mutual trust, mutual respect, and a spirit of cooperation. To this end, GTF brings to the attention of the two leaders their commitment to implement mutually agreed confidence building measures.

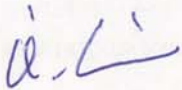
Given the importance of the subject, GTF also recommends a non-exhaustive list of proposals for further measures. These include:

- Ensure a common time zone across the whole of Cyprus
- Coordinate and finance the repair and maintenance of cemeteries
- Arrange meetings between the two fire brigades to agree a joint procedure for dealing with catastrophic fires.
- Return icons to their rightful owners.
- Facilitate purchase of car insurance to cover all the island at the same rates.
- Facilitate use of mobile phones throughout the island without limitation on the geographical position of the caller.
- Permission for respective religious buildings to be opened for services .e.g in Famagusta on Eastern Sunday
- Complete the opening up of the Derynia and Apliki crossing points.
- Complete the electricity interconnector without further delay.
- Kyrenia Archbishopric to be restored and opened for religious feasts.
- Expand cooperation and exchanges between the two communities in the field of education is an urgent need and more regarding joint citizenship courses in the educational systems could be established as soon as possible.
- Adopt Europa Nostra's proposal to celebrate European Cultural heritage year 2018 in the only divided capital in the European Union, by opening passages in Victoria street and the market area, combined with an urgent programme of consolidation and conservation of architectural heritage in the Green line.

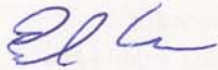
GTF believes that the implementation of CBMs including the incorporation of new inputs and ideas from society could invigorate and sustain the process of implementation. To this end, the GTF avails its services and remain at your disposal to address and assist for the implementation of such measures.

With our best wishes for an early and productive resumption of the negotiations.

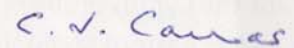
On behalf of the Greek Turkish Forum



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