



AMERICAN HELLENIC INSTITUTE

## CYPRUS MISSING PERSONS

In the summer of 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus and occupied 37% of the island. The occupation continues to this very day. In addition to the political consequences of the invasion, there were humanitarian ones as well. Both before and after the invasion, Turkish troops and their proxy groups within Cyprus arrested and detained thousands of Greek Cypriots, some of whom were illegally transferred to Turkey. Many of these individuals, which included non-combatants such as women and children, were never heard of or found again. It is these to whom we refer to as the Cypriot “missing persons.” There is well-documented evidence and testimony that these missing persons were last seen in the hands of the Turkish army or their proxies during the time of the invasion.<sup>1</sup>

### FIGURES AND STATISTICS OF MISSING PERSONS UP TO 30 JUNE 2020<sup>2</sup>

- Total Missing in 2006: 2002
  - Exhumed (as of June 2020): 1214
  - Identified (as of June 2020): 974
- Greek Cypriot Missing Persons- Total: 1510
  - Identified: 700
  - Still missing: 810
- Turkish Cypriot Missing Persons- Total: 492
  - Identified: 274
  - Still missing: 218
- Sites excavated up to June 30, 2020: 1336
- In 2019, 24 individuals exhumed and 42 identified
  - Greek Cypriots identified: 19
  - Turkish Cypriots identified: 23
- In 2020, 7 individuals exhumed and 5 identified
  - Greek Cypriots identified: 0
  - Turkish Cypriots identified: 5

### THE COMMITTEE ON MISSING PERSONS DONORS (IN EUR)<sup>3</sup>

- Donors 2020- Total: ~2,670,000 EUR
  - EU: 2,600,000
  - Russia: 45,370
  - Ireland: 25,000
- Donors 2006-2020
  - EU: 28,100,000
  - Cyprus: 2,935,700
  - Turkey: 998,000
  - United States: 846,840
  - Turkish Cypriots: 433,000
  - Greece: 195,000

### THE COMMITTEE ON MISSING PERSONS IN CYPRUS

“The Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, or CMP, was established in 1981 by an agreement between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities with the backing of the United Nations (UN), to determine the fate of persons reported missing as a result of the events of 1974.<sup>4</sup>

- A total of 493 Turkish Cypriots and 1,508 Greek Cypriots were officially reported as missing by both communities to the CMP.
- On July 31, 1997 the UN issued a press release referring to the meeting between the leaders of the two communities the then President of the Republic of Cyprus, Glafcos Clerides, and Rauf Denktash, the then so-called “President of Northern Cyprus” concerning the issue of missing persons. The two leaders recognise the basic human rights of the families of the missing to be informed about the fate of their loved ones, and agree to exchange information regarding burial sites and cooperate for the return of remains, it is noted in the press release. The Turkish Cypriot side, however, had been exercising delaying tactics vis-a-vis the resolution of the humanitarian issue and it took her eight years to cooperate in the process of exhuming and identifying the remains of the missing. Specifically, on June 30, 2005 the CMP set out the program for exhumations.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/mfa10\\_en/mfa10\\_en?OpenDocument](http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/mfa10_en/mfa10_en?OpenDocument)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cmp-cyprus.org/sites/default/files/facts\\_and\\_figures\\_30-6-2020.pdf](http://www.cmp-cyprus.org/sites/default/files/facts_and_figures_30-6-2020.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.cmp-cyprus.org/sites/default/files/facts\\_and\\_figures\\_30-6-2020.pdf](http://www.cmp-cyprus.org/sites/default/files/facts_and_figures_30-6-2020.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.icmp.int/where-we-work/europe/cyprus/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/the-cyprus-problem-missing-persons/#:~:text=As%20a%20result%20of%20the,of%20the%20missing%20persons%20emerged.&text=The%20Greek%20Cypriot%20side%20is,by%20Mrs%20Gulden%20Plumer%20Kucuk>

<sup>5</sup> <https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/the-cyprus-problem-missing-persons/#:~:text=As%20a%20result%20of%20the,of%20the%20missing%20persons%20emerged.&text=The%20Greek%20Cypriot%20side%20is,by%20Mrs%20Gulden%20Plumer%20Kucuk>

## AMERICAN MISSING PERSONS OF THE TURKISH INVASION

On October 19, 1994, President Bill Clinton signed into law "H.R.2826-To provide for an investigation of the whereabouts of the United States citizens and others who have been missing from Cyprus since 1974." The law is authored by Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY). The law mandates that American citizens who are among the missing be returned to the United States, and that the President should commission reports on such missing individuals. As a result of the legislation, the White House appointed Ambassador Robert Dillon, former Ambassador to Lebanon, to carry out an investigation. On May 1998, President Clinton signed and submitted to Congress the "President's Report to Congress on the investigation of the whereabouts of the US Citizens who had been missing from Cyprus since 1974." The Dillon Report only ascertained one of the five missing American citizens, Andreas Kassapis, whose remains were identified after DNA testing and were returned to his family for burial on 22, June 1998. The end of the Dillon Report clearly stated that the US government "will continue to pursue any additional leads it receives on their [US Citizens]. As such, the Cyprus government has called on the US to make efforts to, as defined in the law, investigate the four remaining cases.<sup>6</sup>

- five American citizens of Cypriot origin have been submitted to the CMP.
- Cyprus has repeatedly requested the full implementation of the 1994 legislation concerning the remaining missing US citizens and the completion of outstanding investigations.
- Resolution to the issue of the missing is a "race against time," as the relatives of the missing are aging.<sup>7</sup>

## COURT CASES ON THE ISSUE OF MISSING PERSONS IN CYPRUS

- Cyprus v. Turkey (2001) (No. 25781/94) is a case raised by Cyprus against Turkey in 1994 and decided on merits by the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in 2001. The court found that Turkey had 14 violations of the European Convention on Human Rights, including violations of Articles 3 and 5 concerning Greek-Cypriot missing persons and their relatives.<sup>8</sup>
- In the Grand Chamber Judgement of 2014 on the question of just satisfaction in the case of Cyprus v. Turkey, the court awarded the aggregate sum of EUR 90,000,000 for non-pecuniary damage suffered by surviving relatives of missing persons. The judgement followed the principal judgment of 2001 in which numerous violations of the ECHR by Turkey concerning missing persons were found in relation to military operations it had conducted in northern Cyprus in 1974.<sup>9</sup>
- On June 7, 2005, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted an Interim Resolution calling on Turkey to fulfil its obligations, regarding the issue of the missing.<sup>10</sup>
- In 2019, in a message to the annual General Assembly of the Panhellenic Committee of Parents and Relatives of Missing Persons, held in Athens, Photis Photiou, Presidential Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs and Overseas Cypriots, stated "more than 50% of the 1.510 declared and recorded cases of missing persons are still pending. It is also tragic that the majority of the families are receiving only a small part of their beloved persons' remains."<sup>11</sup>
- In addition, Commissioner Photiou stated to the General Assembly of the PanHellenic Committee that Turkey must allow researchers to have access to the archives of its army, and must indicate the locations of Greek Cypriots' and Greeks' massive graves, from the period of July-August 1974, as well as the graves where the Turkish army relocated missing persons' remains."<sup>12</sup>
- Commissioner Photiou also insisted that Turkey must allow researchers to have access to the archives of its army, and must indicate the locations of Greek Cypriots' and Greeks' massive graves, from the period of July-August 1974, as well as the graves where the Turkish army relocated missing persons' remains.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/mfa10\\_en/mfa10\\_en?OpenDocument#:~:text=Based%20on%20an%20Act%20of,assigned%20to%20Ambassador%20Robert%20Dillon.](http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/mfa10_en/mfa10_en?OpenDocument#:~:text=Based%20on%20an%20Act%20of,assigned%20to%20Ambassador%20Robert%20Dillon.)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2576843/Cyprus-mourning-Relatives-hundreds-Cypriots-disappeared-troubles-island-40-years-ago-desperate-lay-loved-ones-rest.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-144151%22%5D%7D>

<sup>9</sup> <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-144151%22%5D%7D>

<sup>10</sup> <https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/the-cyprus-problem-missing-persons/#:~:text=As%20a%20result%20of%20the,of%20the%20missing%20persons%20emerged.&text=The%20Greek%20Cypriot%20side%20is,by%20Mrs%20Gulden%20Plumer%20Kucuk.>

<sup>11</sup> <https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/turkeys-approach-towards-missing-persons-issue-is-inhumane-commissioner-photiou-says/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/turkeys-approach-towards-missing-persons-issue-is-inhumane-commissioner-photiou-says/>

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