

GOOD NEIGHBOURLINESS CONDITION FOR EU MEMBERSHIP: THE EU POLICY TOWARDS THE CYPRUS CONFLICT AND ITS SECURITY IMPLICATIONS

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*Avrupa Birliği Üyeliği İçin İyi Komşuluk İlişkileri Koşulu:
AB'nin Kıbrıs Sorununa Yaklaşımı ve Avrupa Güvenliğine Etkileri*

Özet

Bu çalışmada, Avrupa Birliği'nin (AB) Kıbrıs sorununa yaklaşımı, tam üyelik siyasi kriterlerinden olan "iyi komşuluk ilişkileri" çerçevesi içerisinde incelenmiştir. Makalede, Avrupa Birliği'nin Güney Kıbrıs Rum Yönetimine karşı, Birliğin genişleme politikasının koşullu üyelik prensibini oluşturan "ceza/ödüllendirme" araçlarını etkin bir şekilde kullanmadığı ileri sürülmektedir. AB'nin "iyi komşuluk ilişkileri" koşulunu Güney Kıbrıs Rum Yönetimine karşı tutarlı bir şekilde uygulamaması, Birliğin Kıbrıs sorununun çözümü konusundaki etkinliğini yitirmesine neden olmuştur. Çalışmada ileri sürülen diğer bir sav ise, AB'nin Güney Kıbrıs Rum Yönetimine uyguladığı koşulsuz üyelik stratejisinin, Birliğin Avrupa Kıtasında istikrar ve güven oluşturma prensipleriyle çeliştiği görüşüdür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa Birliği, genişleme politikası, iyi komşuluk ilişkileri koşulu, Kıbrıs, Türkiye.

Abstract

This article analyses the EU's approach towards the Cyprus issue. It argues that the European Union (EU) has not effectively used its stick and carrot instrument for Cyprus's accession to the EU, in order to exert pressure on the involved parties. That is, the EU has not been entirely consistent in applying condition of good neighbourliness to the Cyprus case. Thus, the EU has been less effective at influencing policy development in Cyprus than it might have been, had it pursued a consistent policy. The second contention of this article is that there has also been an inconsistency between security motivation of the EU's enlargement policy, which is to create stability throughout Europe, and its policy towards Cyprus. In fact, the EU could not only bring Cyprus's internal security problems into the EU, but also severely undermine regional security in Eastern Mediterranean. This is because if the EU accepted Cyprus as a member without a political settlement, it would not only lead to tension in Eastern Mediterranean, but also undermine security co-operation between the EU and Turkey, a country that has an important role to play in European security.

Key Words: European Union, enlargement policy, good neighbourliness condition, Cyprus, Turkey.

Good Neighbourliness Condition for EU Membership: The EU Policy Towards the Cyprus Conflict and Its Security Implications

Introduction

Cyprus is the main issue between Greece and Turkey that preventing them from constructing co-operative and peaceful relations. In spite of a number of negotiation attempts under the United Nations (UN) auspices and the European Union (EU), the Cyprus issue still remains an issue between the parties yet to be resolved. The main reason behind the failure to reach agreement between the parties seems to have been caused to a large extent by the disinclination of Greece and Turkey to work actively for a settlement.

Considering that both Turkey and the Greek Cypriot Administration applied for membership, the EU has a capacity and opportunity to encourage and even direct the process of settlement through a more balanced policy towards the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots. Indeed, it has a stick and carrot policy instrument that provides a diplomatic leverage for the EU to exert pressure on the involved parties. This, in turns, makes the EU an influential external actor to act as a catalyst for political settlement to the Cyprus problem. In particular, the EU has tended to exert political pressure on Turkey by using the carrot instrument: that is to increase the prospect of Turkish accession to the EU. In line with this, the Copenhagen Summit in December 2002 offered to review the prospect of Turkey's accession negotiation in December 2004. Nevertheless since the EU's strong accession commitment to the Greek Cypriot Administration, there seems to have been controversial debate over the question of as to whether accession negotiations with Greek Cypriots without the political settlement would accelerate, or undermine the UN effort for finding a political settlement.

This article presents an analysis of the EU's policy towards the Greek Cypriot Administration with respect to good neighbourliness conditionality for membership. In order to support the argument(s) of this study, the first section of this article briefly identifies the EU's security motivations and interests in

continuing to enlarge. Analysing security factor in the next enlargement policy of the EU is important for the purpose of this study, because good neighbourliness conditionality for EU membership is closely related to security consideration of the EU, in order to reinforce peace and stability in the applicant countries. Then, it moves on to evaluate good neighbourliness conditionality for EU membership, in order to establish what the norms of the EU's conditionality are. This provides an analytical framework in which to assess whether the EU's policy towards the Greek Cypriot Administration has been compatible with this established norms. Following the examination of the EU's policy towards Cyprus in the light of good neighbourliness conditionality, conclusions of the article intend to answer these following questions:

- 1) To what extent has the EU's policy towards Cyprus been effective in hastening the settlement of disagreements between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots?
- 2) To what extent has the EU's policy towards Cyprus been compatible with security considerations of the EU's enlargement policy?

Security Consideration of the Next Enlargement Policy of the EU

The post-Cold War security challenges for the EU have played an important part in the EU's enlargement policy. The revolutionary events in Eastern Europe, which led to the demise of the Soviet Union and the break-up of the Communist bloc, have fundamentally changed the patterns of security challenges to the EU. In other words, the Soviet military and ideological challenges to Europe have been replaced by other new and potential political, societal, environmental, and security problems (BUZAN, 1990). These parameters and characteristics of the new security challenges to the EU seem to have increased the security interdependence between the core and periphery of Europe. In fact, the resurgence of new national identities among the newly independent states, which have embarked on a nation-state building process, has resulted in many domestic conflicts. These include minority questions to do with ethnic, religious, social and cultural origins and constitutional issues against a background of the relative weakness of pluralist democratic constitutional traditions. The nation-state building process in the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) has fostered regional conflicts, thereby constituting a serious threat to the stability of Europe, as was seen in the civil wars in Yugoslavia (NICOLL / SALMON, 1994: 204-207). Similarly, countries in the Mediterranean region, including Turkey, have also been facing

the emergence of new sources of instability: nationalism, the spread of religious extremism, notably Islamic fundamentalism, political turmoil and economic hardship have caused much political instability in countries of region (BISCOP:2002:3).

In principle, strengthening stability and prosperity in Europe has been the main motive behind the next enlargement policy of the EU. Considering the degree of risks and costs associated with the political and economic instability on its periphery, the EU was bound to launch an appropriate enlargement strategy for the applicant countries, in order to promote stability throughout Europe. The EU has believed that accession commitment with appropriate policy instruments would provide the necessary assets and encouragement for the applicant countries to enhance stability and security in Europe, as it had been in previous enlargement in Southern Europe. It is within this context, the EU considered that failure to launch an enlargement policy towards the applicant countries would seriously undermine the EU's own security in many ways, such as regional conflicts, refugees and immigration, spreads of weapons, spill over of ecological disasters, organized crime and increasing nationalism with aggressive tendencies. The Report of the European Commission states that "enlargement is a challenge, which the Community cannot refuse. The other countries of Europe are looking to us for guarantees of stability, peace and prosperity and for the opportunity to play their part with us in the integration of Europe" (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 1992: 5).

In line with this, the Copenhagen Summit of the EU in 1993 set up an enlargement strategy in such a way as to achieve stability and security in Europe through the construction of common European institutions. Faced with this prospect, the EU has increasingly perceived the next enlargement as essential for the lasting stabilization of the problematic regions in Europe and securing the political stability of the whole European Continent. Thus, the EU has focused on preventing the failure of political transformation through appropriate policy instruments for establishing political stability in the candidate countries and clear accession commitment to encourage policy reforms in these countries.

From this perspective, the EU has built its enlargement policy on two main pillars: comprehensive and strict conditions for EU membership and accession strategy for candidate countries that are designed to help and guide them to satisfy the conditions for the EU membership, before the accession negotiations start. These two instruments essentially have the same objective: to reduce the perceived costs associated with applicant members' relatively underdeveloped political systems and to minimise any conceivable risks associated with the political instability of the applicant countries by offering

them a gradual process of integration with the EU through accession strategy outside the EU system. In the meantime, the EU has sought to secure the perceived benefits of the next enlargement through preparing the candidate countries outside the EU mechanism (ARIKAN, 2003: 45). Therefore, there have been the close parallels between the contents of conditions for EU membership and the instruments of the EU's accession strategy.

To conclude, reducing the degree of security challenges for Europe by providing necessary instruments for the applicant countries to enhance their stability and security constitutes one of the main objectives of the EU's enlargement policy. In this context, the rest of the paper will assess whether the EU's policy towards Cyprus has been compatible with security objectives of its enlargement policy and good neighbourliness conditionality for membership.

Good Neighbourliness Conditionality: Stick/Carrot Policy Instrument of the EU

Closely related to security motivation of the EU's enlargement policy, conditional membership offer has become an effective policy instrument for the EU to influence the candidate countries. In this regards, the conditionality refers to way in which the candidates need to resolve their bilateral issues in accordance with the norms presented by the EU code of conduct. As Karen Smith puts it "conditionality brings an imposition upon the candidate countries to adopt specific development directions according to certain characteristics" (SMITH, 2000:33). In the meantime, a conditional offer has served as an effective foreign policy tool for the EU to exercise considerable influence on foreign policy choices in the applicant states. This is, firstly, because the EU has used the conditionality to force the applicant countries to settle their bilateral disputes with other applicant countries and with members of the EU. In this respect, the candidates' desire to join the EU has provided a political and even a legal-procedural justification for the Union to interfere in settling their bilateral disputes with other applicant countries.

Thus, the next enlargement of the EU has, to a large extent, acted as a decisive foreign policy instrument for the EU to influence domestic and foreign policy developments in applicant states. This is because the EU has stick and carrot instruments to exert pressure on candidate countries to direct their policy orientations in many aspects. To that extent, enlargement policy of the EU has shown the firm commitment of the EU to the applicants' accession to the EU which has forced the candidates to make efforts, not only to resolve their domestic political conflicts, such as minority and human rights issues, but also

to take a constructive approach in settling their outstanding border disputes and other related issues with the states in the region. In other words, the EU's clear accession credibility and strong commitment to the accession of the candidates on the one hand, and expectation of membership by these countries, on the other, has had a considerable effects on developments in the domestic policies of the applicants and also on the settling of their disagreements with one another.

Basically, the accession carrot has acted as a catalyst to settle of political solution for a number of bilateral issues between the candidate countries, because a clear and firm accession commitment to candidates has provided a reward for continuing efforts and progress with the settlement of bilateral issues between the candidate states. Similarly, Gabriel Munuera argues that:

"The appeals of membership to the European Union contribute to the prevention of conflicts in Central and Eastern Europe. It may contribute in two ways: on the one hand by imposing self-restraint on countries that want to show their good intentions and their readiness for membership; on the other hand, this appeal provides the European Union with important external leverage over the behaviour of potential candidates" (MUNUERA, 1994:49).

The European Council at the Essen Summit further developed accession criteria by setting up a good neighbourliness conditionality for the EU membership. This new condition is based upon a mutual recognition of each others borders and settlement of all outstanding political issues in order to achieve the objective of a lasting peace and prosperity. This was a clear signal to candidates in that they could join the EU, if they resolved their bilateral issues. In the same vein, the EU launched the Stability Pact for Europe, which aims to find ways towards the resolution of settlement of bilateral issues between the candidate countries. The Stability Pact forms regional cooperation to reduce political risks in the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs). To that extent, the EU has worked closely with the applicant countries through the Stability Pact in which the EU has focused more on the regional problems, covering such topics as border disputes, minority rights, water rights, citizenship requirements, and other vital matters. This is closely related to the EU's effort to help the candidates to meet the political criterion that applicants not bring unresolved problem of treatment of minorities or unresolved outstanding border disputes into the EU.

Through the Stability Pact, the EU has encouraged the CEECs to settle their bilateral issues. From this perspective, the prospect of the EU membership has clearly been an important element in encouraging better relationships among the applicant countries, as well as applicant countries and the EU

members. In fact, establishing good neighbourliness and friendly cooperation between the applicant countries are one of the main conditions for the EU membership. As Alain Lamassoure, France Minister responsible for European Affairs, puts it: "admission to the EU is only possible for countries that maintain good relations with their neighbours. No country with unsettled border or minority conflicts will be allowed to join" (cited by RAM, 2001a: 2). By implication, the settling of any border disputes with neighbours has become a condition that candidate countries need to satisfy before accession to the EU.

The EU has particularly stressed the importance of the resolution of bilateral issues involving border and minority questions between the acceding members. As the Commission in the Agenda 2000 stated: "before accession, applicants should make every efforts to resolve any outstanding border disputes among themselves or involving third parties" (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 1997:51). Moreover, the EU Council at the Helsinki Summit has reaffirmed this conditionality, and thus, urged all the candidate countries "to make any efforts to resolve any outstanding border disputes and other related issues. Failing this they should within reasonable time bring the dispute to the international Court of Justice". It also stated that "the Council will review the situation relating to any outstanding disputes, in particular concerning the repercussions on the accession process and in order to promote their settlement through the International Court of Justice at the latest by the end of 2004" (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 1999).

In this context, the goal of membership for the applicant countries has been an effective tool for promoting the regional cooperation and has thereby contributed to the finding of resolutions for many bilateral issues among them. This is because they hoped that regional cooperation and establishing good relations would facilitate their objective of achieving the EU membership. For example, expectation of membership was obviously the primary impulse behind the dramatic and historic friendship treaties between Hungary and Romania in September 1996 under the Iliescu Government (RAM, 2001b: 5). Melenia Ram has argued that; "the common incentive of European integration made it possible for entrenched disputes to be resolved peacefully and relatively quickly considering the depth and duration of animosity between the two countries (RAM, 2001a: 6). Furthermore, membership expectation played an important role in brokering the London Accord on Gabcikovo between Slovakia-Hungary. In the case of Slovakia, the accession commitment encouraged policy-makers in the country to take a positive stance on minorities in the country. Moreover, the EU's conditionality has been effective in the case of encouraging moderation in Estonia's treatment of ethnic Russian minorities through discreet diplomatic demarches (CHRISTOU, 2002:4).

This strong conditionality of the EU seems to be appropriate and in harmony with the EU code of policy norms, as common values of the EU regards a diplomatic approach to conflict resolution. Therefore, the EU's policy is reasonable that aspirant members have to resolve all their outstanding differences with their neighbours before joining the EU. All these indicate that applicant countries must be politically developed before their accession to the EU, so that any costs of their admission to the EU resulting from their relatively underdeveloped political system and their unresolved outstanding border disputes would be manageable. Indeed, the EU seems to have been concerned that unresolved political issues between acceding states, as well as between the acceding states and existing member states, would impair the Union's cohesion and its efforts to create the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The Copenhagen political criteria for the EU membership imply that applicants must first prove that they would not import any political and security problems into the EU, in which it might become embroiled.

However, as Karen Smith has noted that the effectiveness of EU's conditionality depends heavily on a two variables: 1) "conditionality will only be effective if it is applied consistently- otherwise, it loses force because third states will question the conditionality why they have been and others not, or vice versa; 2) the use of conditionality will be effective only to the extent that the third country in question desires the carrot on offer or fears the sticks" (SMITH, 2000:39). By implication, the targeted countries need to be convinced that they have been treated fairly and equally. The following section will assess as to whether the EU has not been entirely consistent in applying conditionality of good neighbourliness for Cyprus case.

Cyprus' Accession to the EU and the Question of Good Neighbourliness Conditionality

The Greek Cypriot Administration applied for the EU membership in July 1990. Political and security considerations rather than purely economic concerns played an important role to apply for the EU membership. Supported by Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration believed that the prospect of the EU membership would serve as a catalyst to reach a political settlement in the Cyprus issue (BAHÇELİ, 1999:109). As George Christou wrote: "politically, at the time of the application the Government of Cyprus believed that membership was a natural progression and that involving the EC in the Cyprus issue provided another avenue and another form of pressure in seeking a solution" (CHRISTOU, 2002: 7).

The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and Turkey negatively reacted to the application of the Greek Cypriot Administration for membership on the grounds that its application for membership was illegal because of the 1959 Treaty of Guarantee, which states that Cyprus could not become a member of an international organization, unless both Turkey and Greece are members (MENDELSON, 1997). They also argued that this application was illegitimate on the grounds that the Greek Cypriot Administration is not a sole legitimate authority on the island, and thus, cannot apply for membership on behalf of the entire island. Furthermore, considering that Cyprus accession to the EU would have implication on the development of the EU-Turkey relations and regional security, the application of Greek Cypriot Administration did not receive a welcome support from a number of the EU member states before a political settlement in the island. However, Greece threatened to use its veto power over EU enlargement process, unless Cyprus was included in the first wave of the next enlargement policy of the Union.

The application of Greek Cypriot Administration for membership on behalf of the entire island seems to have been a diplomatically designed strategy by Greece and Greek Cypriots to Europeanize Cyprus issue. They hoped that a political settlement in Cyprus would have a better chance under the auspices of the European Union. Considering that Turkey's desire to reactivate the EU-Turkey relations with a view of becoming a full member, they assumed that Turkey would eventually need to compromise over the Cyprus, in return for the prospective of EU membership. Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration were well aware not only Turkey's desire, but also the EU's determination to develop the EU-Turkey relations (ARIKAN, 2003: 178). This has made the EU more vulnerable to Greek influence.

Hence, Greece sought to place the Cyprus application for the EU membership on the negotiation table to trade against its approval of the EU's new containment policy for Turkey, designed to delay the prospect of membership, while keeping Turkey within the economic, security and political sphere of influence of the EU (ARIKAN, 2003:28). To be fair, the timing of the application of Greek Cypriot Administration did not entirely coincide with the timing of the EU's rapprochement efforts towards Turkey. As a matter of fact, the Greek Cypriot Administration applied for membership in 1990, soon after the Council had declared the need for strengthening EU-Turkey relations and requested the Commission to prepare a report. In this respect, the rapprochement efforts of the EU towards Turkey in the early 1990s was seen by both Greece and Greek Cypriot Administration as a good opportunity to place the Cyprus issue on the negotiating table of the EU-Turkey relations.

Moreover, the timing of the application of Greek Cypriot Administration was also related to its aim to link the prospect of the EFTA enlargement to its application for the EU membership. After the application of Austria for membership in June 1989 and the prospect of the membership applications of Norway and Finland, Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration hoped that the application would be processed with those of the EFTA countries. In fact, Greece tended to use the EFTA enlargement of the EU as a bargaining chip for Cyprus membership. The statement of the Foreign Minister of Greece, Pangholas, supported this observation:

“Cyprus was raised as an enlargement issue before enlargement with the Scandinavian countries. In the normal course of events - if the Cypriot leadership and the Greek leadership hadn't made serious mistakes - it could have been included in the Sweden, Finland, Austria and Norway package and would now be a member of the European Union” (CYPRUS BULLETIN , 15 November, 1996).

Although the EU was anxious about security implications of the application of the Greek Cypriot Administration for membership, its response was seemingly positive. It appears that the EU supported the Greek Cypriots position and therefore promoted the Greek thesis. For example, a number of official documents of the EU have not only suggested that Cyprus' accession to the EU would facilitate political settlement in the island, but also have made an explicit linkage between the resolution of Cyprus question and the prospect of Turkish accession (PRESTON, 1997: 220). This was largely due to the influence of Greece over the member states and the Commission. The Commission Opinion on Cyprus application stated: “ it was convinced that the results of Cyprus' accession to the Community will be increased security and prosperity and that would help bring the two communities on the island closer together.” However, the Commission also noted the need for a political settlement on the island before accession negotiations with Cyprus begins. As the Commission stated that “ as soon as the prospect of settlement is surer, the Community is ready to start the process with Cyprus ” (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 1993:24). This seemed to be short of firm accession commitment to the Greek Cypriot Administration, because the division of the island was seen as an obstacle. As John Redmond and Roderick Pace put it “ the Commission initially linked the issue of membership and the de facto division of the island closely ” (REDMOND AND PACE, 1996: 432).

The Commission proposed that if the inter-communal talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots did not reach agreement, the question of Cyprus' accession to the Community was to be reconsidered in January 1995 (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 1993:24). Obviously, it was not just by chance

that the timing of the completion of the customs union with Turkey by 1995 coincided with that of the reconsideration of the accession of Greek Cypriot Administration to the EU in January 1995. Indeed, it was a package deal policy of the EU. The primary objective of this policy was twofold: while it intended to push the TRNC and Turkey to make an effort to reach an agreement by linking the Cyprus issue to the completion of the customs union, at the same time it provided a considerable leverage for the EU over Greece to reconsider her objection to the establishment of the customs union. Soon after the Commission's avis, it became clear that the EU had been effectively trading off the EU's accession negotiations with the Greek Cypriot Administration for Greece's approval of the establishment of the EU-Turkish customs union.

Within this context, Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration intensified their efforts to influence the EU, by arguing that Cyprus accession to the EU would not only facilitate the resolution of the Cyprus issue, but also benefit both Cypriot communities. Consequently, the EU gave assurance that the Greek Cypriot Administration would join the EU without requiring a prior political settlement in the island. As the EU Council at the Corfu Summit in June 1994 under the Greek Presidency stated that "the next phase of enlargement will involve Cyprus and Malta" (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 1994: 14). This was the first time at the highest level that the EU changed its policy of conditionality over the Cyprus accession to the EU, as the EU detached the Greek Cypriots' application from a settlement of political issue with the Turkish Cypriots. Thus, it was regarded as unusually strong support for Greek and Greek Cypriot position on the issue, because they had made a considerable effort to disregard of political issue for being pre-condition for accession. The European Council under the French Presidency went further in detaching a prospect of Cyprus' accession to the EU from the settlement of issue. The EU at the Cannes Summit in 1995 committed itself to open accession negotiations with Cyprus six months after the end of the intergovernmental Conference (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 1995).

This policy of the EU has been due mainly to the EU's desire to exert a considerable leverage over the TRNC and Turkey with the expectation that both would take a more flexible policy approach towards a settlement. The EU considered that if Turkey and the TRNC were to recognize the fact that they could not exercise a veto over the Cyprus membership, they might accept a compromise package involving economic benefits that the Turkish Cypriots will receive from the EU membership and better prospect for Turkey's membership bid. Neil Nugent points out that "the EU has intensified its long standing efforts to demonstrate to the leaders of both Turkish Cypriots and Turkey that a settlement of the Cyprus problem would be very much in their

interests” (NUGET, 2000:139). The EU has mainly focused on economic incentive to persuade the TRNC to change its position for the EU membership. As Bahçeli has observed: “ the EU has sought to overcome Turkish Cypriots resistance by emphasizing the considerable economic benefits that membership would bring to the island’s poorer Turkish Community” (BAHÇELİ, 2001:204).

Consequently, the EU Council at Helsinki made it clear that “if no settlement has been reached by the completion of the accession negotiations the Council decision on accession will be made without the above being a preconditions” (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 1999). This implies that a solution to the Cyprus problem is not necessary for accession of the Greek Cypriot Administration to the EU. Accession negotiations with the Greek Cypriots were opened in March 1998. Since then, the Greek Cypriot Administration has made a significant progress in fulfilling the various chapters of the *acquis communautaire*, as stated in the Commission’s Progress Report in 2002 (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2002:13). Although there has not been any considerable progress in political settlement over the division of the island, the Greek Cypriot Administration is currently the frontrunner among the candidate states to join the EU on the target date of May in 2004.

The above analysis suggests that the EU’s policy towards Cyprus has been inconsistent with its policy of conditionality and it has been shaped to a large extent by the policy preference of Greece. As Sjursen and Smith argue that “ conditionality has not been applied consistently, as good-neighbourliness has been ignored. The Greek position seems by and large to have prevented the Union from stressing the criteria of good neighbourliness, although other member states also appear to be reluctant” (SJURSEN AND SMITH, 2000:17). Although criteria of good neighbourliness for the EU membership has underlined the importance of resolving any outstanding border disputes among themselves or involving third parties, it pursued an opposite policy approach to the Greek Cypriot Administration by offering a clear accession commitment for their accession, regardless of the political settlement in the island. Particularly, the EU’s approach to the application of Greek Cypriot Administration seems to have been incompatible with its *acquis* in the objective of Common Foreign Security Policy. The Commissioner responsible for the enlargement, Gunter Verheugen, described the accession of Cyprus as being problematic, saying that “ there are a number of big and influential Member States who are already saying that we should not negotiate further with Cyprus because it is clear that Cyprus cannot fulfil the *acquis* in the area of the common foreign and security policy” (cited in NUGENT, 2000:147). As Nugent puts it: “ the accession of Cyprus will import fierce territorial disputes within the EU borders - a dispute

in which the two sides are protected by separate security guarantees from Greece and Turkey ” (NUGENT, 2000: 139). Indeed, it is likely that without the political settlement Cyprus accession to the EU would harm the EU’s cohesion. Considering that the EU is formally regarding the application of the Greek Cypriot Administration on the part of whole island, once Greek Cypriot Administration joins the EU as a full member, the EU will become a part of issue as the island will become an integral part of EU territory, which would add complexity to the security issues of the EU.

Nevertheless, in spite of the security implications of the Cyprus membership, the EU offered a clear timetable for accession for the Greek Cypriot Administration with a substantial political incentive by consistently underlining their European credentials and orientation (CHRISTOU, 2002: 9). This implies that the conditionality of a political settlement in Cyprus seems to have attracted an entirely different response from the EU on the grounds that the EU membership would act as a catalyst for finding a solution to the issue.

The absent of good neighbourliness conditionality in the EU’s policy towards Greek Cypriots Administration can be explained by two factors: first, the EU realized that despite all efforts made by the international community, including the UN, to resolve the issue, no actual improvement had been made. In this vein, the EU has, to a large extent, condemned Turkey for its rigid and uncompromising policy stance towards the issue. Indeed, the EU perceived that Turkey has failed to comply with an obligation to contribute to the search for a political solution. Within this line, the EU came to the conclusion that it would be unfair to delay Cyprus accession on the grounds of political dispute between two communities in the island. Besides, the Union asserted that Turkey should not be allowed to veto the accession of a European country, which fulfils all other accession criteria (BISCOP, 2002: 27; NUGENT, 2001: 134). For example, on 17 April 1998, the former European Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, Hans Van De Broek, openly stated that “ Cyprus cannot remain a hostage of Turkey forever and the EU will look after its own interests without external pressures and threats ” (PAPAGRIGORIOU, 1998). The second reason for which the EU was obliged to change its policy of conditionality for Cyprus accession has been due to the trade off politics played by Greece. That is, Greece repeatedly warned the other EU member states that it would veto the next enlargement of the EU, if Cyprus’ accession were delayed. In this context, the next enlargement of the EU to include Central and Eastern countries provided an immense opportunity for Greece to use it as a bargaining chip to set a timetable for the start of accession negotiations with Cyprus regardless of the political condition.

However, with the removal of conditionality, Greek Cypriot Administration has not found itself obligated to show flexibility in settling the issue. Indeed, there is no reason why Greece and Greek Cypriots should find themselves obliged to take a constructive approach towards resolving the issue, as the EU's approach to the question of the proposed Cyprus accession has been in harmony with their policy objectives. This has limited the EU's own leverage over Greek Cypriots to persuade a constructive approach to the settlement of the dispute. As one scholar observed that since the EU has made it clear that resolution of the conflict would not be a precondition for the Cyprus' membership, the incentive for the Greek Cypriots to negotiate the issue with the Turkish Cypriots has decreased (OĞUZ, 2002: 11).

The paradox is that, the EU's policy towards Turkey seemed to be extremely critical, and far from compatible with its policy of Cyprus. It has continued to exert pressure on Turkey by making a solid link between the settlement of Cyprus issue and the prospect of Turkish membership. In fact, the EU's policy towards Turkey regarding Cyprus issue seems not only to have been inflexible and stricter, but also has lacked necessary incentives to encourage Turkey and TRNC to make a compromise over Cyprus. Jolanda Van Westering argued that:

"The EU, on numerous occasions, has stated that its relations with Turkey cannot be seen separately from the Cyprus question, though it justifies separating its relations with Turkey when dealing with Cyprus. Yet the two countries and their problems are intrinsically linked and can only be approached as a unity. The Union's rather inconsistent attitude towards Turkey can indeed be better understood while assessing its relationship with Cyprus" (2000: 95-118).

The EU's policy approach to the Cyprus issue seems to have been inadequate to generate sufficient incentives for Turkey and the TRNC to take a more conciliatory approach towards the settlement of the Cyprus issue (ÖNIS: 2002:17). This is probably one of the main reasons why the EU has been less effective at influencing policy development in Cyprus. Indeed, it is a lost of opportunity: the EU might have been a catalysed effect on political settlement in the island, had it consistently applied good neighbourliness conditionality for Greek Cypriots. A case in point is the particularly relevant effort by Romania and Hungary to resolve their minority issues and their expectations of membership of the EU. With the common goal of joining the EU as an incentive, they signed a cooperation and friendship treaty, the so-called Treaty on Understanding, Cooperation and Good Neighbourliness (RAM, 1999:45). The expectation of the EU membership was the motivation for its conclusion and it remains a prime cause of the current and future cooperation between

Romania and Hungary. This provides clear evidence that the EU could effectively apply neighbourliness conditionality to persuade the applicant countries to contribute to the diplomatic settlement of their bilateral issues, so long as conditionality is applied consistently.

At the present, the EU considers the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's plan, the so-called Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem, as a framework for a settlement. The plan is a carefully phrased document designed to satisfy both the Turkish Cypriot community and Greek Cypriot community. As Nathalie Tocci stated:

"The UN plan satisfies the first basic need of the Turkish Cypriot community: political equality with their Greek Cypriot compatriots through the formation of a common state composed of politically equal component states enjoying legal equality with the central level and exercising sovereign powers in their areas of competence. The trade-off in this win-win settlement is that the Greek Cypriots will witness the reunification of the island (although in a very loose form) and regain control over a large portion of territory. The territorial readjustment will respect more closely the demographic balance on the island, and allow the return of a large number of Greek Cypriot refugees under Greek Cypriot administration" (TOCCI, 2002:1).

The European Council at the Copenhagen in 2002 declared that "the UN proposals offer a unique opportunity to reach a settlement" (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2002:3). The European Council also stated that:

"The Council invites the Commission, in consultation with the government of Cyprus, to consider ways of promoting economic development of the northern part of Cyprus and bringing it closer to the Union" (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2002:3).

This implies that the EU has offered conditional economic incentives for the Turkish Cypriots: noting that there is a huge economic disparity between the northern part of the island and the southern part of Greek Cypriots, these economic incentives would imply a considerable financial aid to the Turkish Cypriots (GÜVEN-LISANILER / RODRIGUEZ, 2002: 181-202). The EU has believed that the carrot of EU entry with economic incentives would attract the Turkish Cypriots to compromise.

Nevertheless, the EU's policy towards Cyprus has ignored to a large extent security implications of the accession of the Greek Cypriot Administration to the EU. Indeed, the EU's policy towards Cyprus has been incompatible with the security objectives of its enlargement policy, which aims to stabilize and strengthen stability and prosperity in Europe. Enlarging the EU to include the Greek Cypriot Administration would not only bring its internal

security problems into the EU, but would also undermine the EU's objective to establish a coherent foreign and security policy. Meltem Müftüler argues that "the EU is in a very delicate position; if it accepts Cyprus as a member, then it will incorporate an unstable, unpredictable political and security problem of the Eastern Mediterranean into the European ranks" (MÜFTÜLER-BAC, 1999:573). Furthermore, the absence of a prior political settlement, Cyprus' accession to the EU would also severely undermine the EU-Turkey relations. As David Barchard suggests:

"If southern Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus, is admitted into the European Union in 2003/2004 before negotiations are opened with Turkey, it will certainly use a vote of veto for the foreseeable future to prevent Turkish negotiations being opened. If that happens of course the question [of Turkish accession] would recede into the indefinite future and there would be a climate of extreme bitterness and confrontation" (BARCHARD, 2002:28).

Considering the record of a number of dangerous confrontations between Turkey and Greece, including the near war over the Kardak crisis in 1996 and confrontation in relation to the proposed purchase of a Russian S-300 air defence system by Greek Cypriot Administration show that Cyprus' accession to the EU would undermine the regional stability (AKIMAN, 2002:22). Indeed, the Greek-Turkish conflict over the Cyprus is one of the greatest sources of potential instability in NATO's southern flank and in Eastern Mediterranean. To this extent, the United States of America (USA) has particularly directed its focus to the Greek-Turkish conflicts. However, the USA's policy appears to be designed to prevent a possible Greek-Turkish war and general hostilities between the two parties, rather than developing a realistic framework for a settlement (STEARNS, 1992: 36).

Apart from the USA, the United Kingdom (the UK) has also tremendous security interest in the region. There seems to have been a policy convergence between the UK and the USA in preventing military conflict in Eastern Mediterranean. In particular, the UK has compelling reasons to play a leading role in the Cyprus issue. This is because it is not only the former colonial power, but also it has two large military bases in the South of the island. These bases, which constitute a very important bridgehead in the Middle East, are also extensively used by the USA (BISCOP, 2002: 20). In addition, the UK is concerned with the security implications of the accession of Cyprus. Having said that the UK has made efforts to resolve the conflict through the UN and the EU. Furthermore, the UK has sought to get support from the USA in order to convince the Turkish-policy makers about the benefits that a settlement in Cyprus would bring to Turkey, not only in terms of EU accession, but also in terms of regional stability and neighbourliness. To that extent, the UK and the

USA have also made efforts to mitigate Turkey's security concerns over Cyprus accession. In this vein, Turkey is particularly concerned with the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) involvement in Cyprus. Once Greek Cypriot Administration joins the EU as a full member, the island will become an integral part of the EU territory. As a result, the EU might regard Turkey as an occupying force of the EU territory. The security concern of Turkey was firmly related to the possible use of NATO capabilities by the Greek Cypriots under the framework of European Security and Defense Policy.

To ease Turkey's concerns, the United Kingdom, Turkey and the United States signed Ankara Document, providing that the European Army under the ESDP would not be used against other NATO allies. Under this agreement, Turkey has been assured that the ESDP will not be used in any action involving Cyprus and Aegean. This implies that the main principles of Ankara Document has, to a large extent, agreed at the European Summit in Brussels on 24-25 October 2002, which stated non-EU European Allies, such as Turkey, would be able to raise concerns, if an autonomous EU operation was conducted in its geographic proximity or risked affecting its national security interests (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2002a). This is enhanced further by the Declaration of the Copenhagen European Council, which stated:

"At present, Cyprus and Malta will not take part in EU military operations conducted using NATO assets once they have become members of the EU will not, within the limits of the EU Security Regulations, affect the right of their representatives to participate and vote in EU institutions and bodies, including COPS, with regard to decisions which do not concern the implementation of such operations" (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2002b).

Despite these developments, Turkey still oppose to Cyprus accession to the EU without a political settlement. Turkey also considers that Cyprus membership would further strain the EU-Turkey relations: once Cyprus becomes an EU member, Greek Cypriot Administration, alongside with Greece, is likely to exercise her veto power to make both the improvement of the EU-Turkey relations and Turkey's membership bid conditional on the political settlement of Cyprus. For example, Henri J. Barkey and Philip H. Gordon underline implications of the accession of the Greek Cypriot Administration on EU-Turkey relations:

"The accession of the Greek part of Cyprus in 2004 to the European Union will trigger a severe crisis between Turkey and the West... Unless something is done to alter the current course of events, the entry of a divided Cyprus into the EU will reverse much of the cooperation that has developed recently between Greece and Turkey, increase tensions on the island, further alienate Turkey from

Europe and generally worsen Turkish domestic political conditions. The resulting crisis could lead to Turkish annexation of Northern Cyprus, the permanent division of the island, a deep rupture between an aggrieved Turkey and Europe, and a possible military confrontation between two NATO members” (BARKEY / GORDON, 2002:1).

Moreover, the EU’s policy towards Cyprus seems to have been inadequate for the security needs of Turkish Cypriots. Indeed, for the Turkish Cypriots, physical and societal security concerns more important than economic incentives provided by the EU (DIEZ, 2000). The main security concern for the Turkish Cypriots is the belief that they would be extremely vulnerable to the Greek Cypriots dominance in a re-united Cyprus. As Christou George has noted:

“ This belief manifests itself in various forms. First, through the historical experience of the Turkish Cypriots. Second, through the belief that if a reunited Cyprus entered the EU without Turkey being a member, then this would effectively negate the power of Turkey *vis-à-vis* intervention and protection of the Turkish Cypriots on the island. Turkish Cypriots do not accept EU assurances that Turkey’s role as guarantor power of the island would not be affected by EU membership. Third, there is also a fear in the north that the fundamental EU principle of the freedom of movement and the application of the EU’s *acquis* will mean that many Greek-Cypriots will infiltrate and swamp the North” (CHRISTOU, 2002:11-12).

To conclude, it is inevitable that membership of a divided Cyprus would have a considerable security implications not only for Cyprus and South-eastern Europe but also for the EU-Turkey relations. Accession of Cyprus without a political settlement could undermine security co-operation between Turkey and the EU. Such a development would hamper the EU’s aim to create an effective security and defence policy. Heather Grabbe suggests that “ Turkey is the litmus test for the EU. It is a key partner, whose stability affects both Europe and the Middle East. If the EU cannot forge a more constructive relationship with Turkey, and use its soft power to effect fundamental changes in that country, it has little hope of becoming a serious foreign policy actor on the world stage” (GRABBE, 2002:1).

Conclusion

The EU’s unconditional policy applied to the Greek Cypriot Administration seems to have lost its credibility in influencing at Greek Cypriots and Greece to make any compromise over the Cyprus issue. Indeed, the degree of the EU’s conditionality of good neighbourliness has been less

visible in Cyprus case, as the EU seems to have ignored the political issue in the island. Consequently, the policy makers in Greece and Greek Cypriot Administration have not found themselves obligated to show flexibility in settling the issue. On their part, the TRNC and Turkey have found the EU's Cyprus policy and its carrot for Turkish Cypriots unattractive and inadequate to encourage them to make any concession over the issue. Thus, the analysis of the EU's policy towards Cyprus throughout this article leads to the two conclusions:

1. The EU has been less effective than what it should have been in influencing the settlement of the issue. Accordingly, it could be argued that an EU's alternative policy that attempts to locate the accession negotiations of the Greek Cypriot Administration within more rigid good neighbourliness conditionality might have been more effective. This might also have generated productive incentives for Turkey and the TRNC to take a more conciliatory approach towards the settlement of the conflict.

2. The EU's policy approach to accession of the Greek Cypriot Administration to the Union does not seem to have been compatible with the security objective of the EU's enlargement policy, which is to create political stability throughout Europe. Enlarging the EU to include the Greek Cypriot Administration not only would bring its internal security problems into the EU, but also severely undermine the EU-Turkey relations with considerable security implications. That is, Turkey could take a hard-line response to the accession of the Greek Cypriot Administration to the EU. In this case, the EU-Turkey relations might easily fade away to a rhetoric commitment, and thus, the prospect of eventual Turkish membership could no longer be maintained. This scenario would also have adverse and destabilizing economic and political implications for the EU-Turkey relations. It might not only undermine security co-operation between the EU and Turkey, a country that has been playing an important role in European security, but also would have destabilizing effects on the EU.

The implication of these two conclusions is that although the EU's policy towards the Cyprus case has so far failed to accelerate process of settlement of the conflict acceptable by the involved parties, it still has a capacity and opportunity to encourage and even direct the process of settlement through a more balanced policy for the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots.

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