

ORGANISATION OF RELATIVES OF MISSING CYPRIOTS (UK)
ΟΡΓΑΝΩΣΗ ΣΥΓΓΕΝΩΝ ΚΥΠΡΙΩΝ ΑΓΝΟΟΥΜΕΝΩΝ
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The R. H. Caroline Flint
Minister for Europe.

4th February 2009.

Dear Minister,

We have heard, during your interview with London Greek Radio that you would be visiting Cyprus next week and that you and the UK Government support the efforts of the two leaders to find a solution for the Cypriots. We hope you would agree, that while the two leaders are very likely to find common ground in many areas, some issues they cannot tackle by themselves, such as the removal of the Turkish troops from Cyprus and the solution to the Missing Persons problem.

We know that you are familiar with the Missing Persons issue, based on your written replies to MPs, A. Meale and A. Dismore, recently. But, we detect from your replies the false assumption that the CMP is in a position to resolve the whole problem and thus supporting the CMP financially is the only appropriate thing to do. However the solution of the problem lies with Turkey. That is the conclusion of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in its judgments of May 2001 and January 2008: *"ECHR affirms its previous finding that the Committee of Missing Persons (CMP) could not be considered a satisfactory replacement for Turkey's obligation to carry out an effective investigation into the whereabouts of the missing persons"*. Instead of this, Turkey prevents even the basic investigation by the CMP when information leads to potential graves in areas which the Turkish army uses as military camps in Cyprus

You will no doubt agree with us that with the continued violations of human rights in Cyprus and the suffering of the relatives of the missing being perpetuated, financial contributions towards the work of the CMP, although gratefully welcome, should nevertheless not be the main focus of our interest. A country with EU membership aspirations and considered by the UK to be a friend, continues to violate international law and human rights in Cyprus, for decades. This is the direction to which our attention should be focused.

In recent days, the relatives are again in turmoil following the admission of a Turkish ex-soldier, being involved in the execution of prisoners of war during the invasion of Cyprus in 1974, and the many similar stories that appear in the papers. We know that atrocities took place at the time and that many of our relatives were killed either in battle or during their captivity. With the continuing uncertainty and the non-closure of each individual case we are forced to relive these killings on a daily basis for the last 34 years and more. We urge the UK Government, for the umpteenth time, to support our human right to know and help to end this ongoing nightmare.

With your impending visit to Cyprus, we urge to raise these matters in the right quarters. We also urge you to meet with our sister Committee of the Pancyprian Organization of Parents and Relatives of Undeclared Prisoners and Missing Persons who will supply you with further relevant information. We would also recommend a visit to the CMP.

We look forward to your reply and we would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you upon your return.

Yours sincerely



pp Nick Neokleous
President.