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Question of Cyprus

Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 18 March 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letter of the Greek Cypriot Administration's representative dated 12 December 2018 (A/73/651), I would like to bring to your attention the following considerations.

First and foremost, I would like to reiterate once again that, as the country with the longest continental coastline in the eastern Mediterranean, Turkey has already submitted to the United Nations (see notes verbales No. 2004/Turkuno DT/4739 of 2 March 2004 and No. 2013/14136816/22273 of 12 March 2013, as well as my previous letters addressed to you, which have been published on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and in the relevant *Law of the Sea Bulletins*) that she has ipso facto and ab initio legal and sovereign rights in the maritime areas of the eastern Mediterranean that are west of meridian 32°16'18"E. Based on international law, it is Turkey's well-established position that the outer limits of the Turkish continental shelf in the above-mentioned maritime areas follow the median line between the Turkish and Egyptian coastlines to a point to be determined in the west of 28°00'00"E, in accordance with the outcome of future delimitation agreements in the Aegean Sea, as well as in the Mediterranean, among all relevant States, taking into account all prevailing parameters and special circumstances.

Within this scope, the activities of the Turkish research vessel *Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa* and its supporting vessels under reference fall entirely within Turkey's continental shelf in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, where Turkey exercises ipso facto and ab initio exclusive sovereign rights and jurisdiction stemming from international law.

Furthermore, I would like to reiterate that there is no single authority which in law or in fact is competent to represent both the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots and, consequently, Cyprus as whole. Hence, the Republic of Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus concluded a continental shelf delimitation agreement in 2011 on the margins of the General Assembly in New York. The Greek



Cypriot Administration should focus primarily on settling its long overdue issues with its immediate neighbour, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

It goes without saying that Turkey stands ready today, as it has in the past, to give its full support to ensuring a just, equitable and peaceful resolution to all pending issues, including the equitable delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas with all relevant coastal States that it recognizes and with which it has diplomatic relations, in accordance with international law, in order to further contribute to the stability and prosperity of the whole Mediterranean basin.

In the light of the foregoing, Turkey refutes all the allegations contained in the letter of the GCA representative.

I would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 45 and 78, and published on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, as well as in the next edition of the *Law of the Sea Bulletin*.

(Signed) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative
