

13-Jan-17 World View — Peace conference to reunite Cyprus adjourns without a deal

Description

This morning's key headlines from GenerationalDynamics.com

- Peace conference to reunite Cyprus adjourns without a deal
- History of Cyprus suggests that there is little hope for permanent reunification

Peace confere



A Turkish army tank passes through the Turkish section of Nicosia in 1974. (AP)

Negotiations in Geneva to reunite Cyprus ended on Thursday evening without a deal, but with plans to resume after January 18.

Almost two years of peace talks between leaders of Greek side and the Turkish side of the island of Cyprus have led to what Europe and Turkey will be the final negotiations leading to a united Cyprus.

Cyprus has been bitterly divided since a 1974 war, with Greek Orthodox Christian Greeks governing the south, and Muslim Turks governing the north. The two sides are partitioned by a “no-man’s land,” a strip that stretches 112 miles across the entire island.

The capital city Nicosia is in the center of Cyprus and is partitioned as well. While partitions of other cities, including Beirut, Belfast and Berlin, have disappeared in the last few decades, the partition remains in Nicosia.

It's not known whether Thursday's negotiations brought the two sides close together, but the two most difficult issues are these:

- **Security.** There are 30,000 Turkish troops in northern Cyprus, to protect the Turkish population from the Greeks, a vestige of the 1974 war. The Turks would like them to remain, but the Greeks would like them to be gone. At any rate, the question of protect the Greeks from the Turks and the Turks from the Greeks would have to be resolved for a unification deal.
- **Right of Return.** Many people were forced to flee across the "no-man's land" border during the 1974 war, and had to give up their homes. In most cases, it was Greeks that lost their homes in this way. Questions to be negotiated are whether people can reclaim their homes, or whether they should be compensated in some way.

According to U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres, the talks on Thursday showed progress, but there is no "quick fix." [Cyprus Mail](#) and [AP](#) and [Cyprus Mail](#)

History of Cyprus suggests that there is little hope for permanent reunification

Because of its strategic location in the Mediterranean Sea, Cyprus has been repeatedly conquered throughout history by different groups, including the Greeks, the Assyrians, the Egyptians and the Persians. It was annexed by the Ottoman Empire in 1571, but was conquered by Britain in 1878 and annexed in 1914.

Cyprus gained independence from Britain in 1960 under a power-sharing agreement between the Greeks and the Turks. Three countries — Britain, Greece and Turkey — would be responsible for guaranteeing security in the new country.

Violence erupted soon after. In 1974, Greece's military junta backed a coup against the president of Cyprus, leading to a civil war. Turkey responded by invading northern Cyprus. About 165,000 Greek Cypriots fled or were driven from the Turkish-occupied north, and about 45,000 Turkish Cypriots left the south for the north.

Since ancient times, at least as far back as the time around 1200BC that the face of Helen of Troy launched a thousand ships, Greece and Turkey (Anatolia) have been at war repeatedly, in one of the most violent ethnic fault lines in history. Turkey's greatest victory over Greece occurred in 1453, when the Ottoman's conquered Constantinople (Istanbul) and destroyed the Greek Byzantine Empire. None of these wars has been forgotten by the participants. [Guardian \(London\)](#) and [BBC](#)

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KEYS: Generational Dynamics, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Nicosia, António Guterres, Helen of Troy

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