

Cyprus

Despite a decrease in military violations and increased civilian contact between the north and south of Cyprus in 2012, peace negotiations failed to produce a settlement on political and territorial questions. The UN has two presences in Cyprus, the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), which has been on the ground since 1964, and the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Cyprus, who since September 2008 has facilitated negotiations between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders and liaised with other stakeholders, including Greece, Turkey, and the European Union.

An internationally administered buffer zone stretches across the island of Cyprus, dividing it into a predominantly ethnically Greek south and an ethnically Turkish north. The Republic of Cyprus controls the south, while only Turkey recognizes the autonomous north. UNFICYP observes and patrols the buffer zone, monitoring maintenance of the military status quo, and keeps up essential services for Cypriots.

The buffer zone has been largely peaceful, with a downward trend in military violations continuing through 2012. The majority of incidents are civilian activities such as unauthorized farming and hunting, but long-standing unauthorized military positions persist on both sides. UN mine-clearance activities are currently suspended, as both sides continue to withhold access to the four remaining mined areas in the buffer zone.

The mission maintains crossing points along the buffer zone and supports education, infrastructure, and other services in the area. UNFICYP controls permits for civilian activities in the zone, including construction, farming, and other

UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)	
• Authorization and Start Date	4 March 1964 (UNSC Res.186)
• SRSG	Lisa Bутtenheim (United States)
• Force Commander	Major-General Chao Liu (China)
• Budget	\$56.1 million (1 July 2012–30 June 2013)
• Strength as of 31 October 2012	Troops: 852 Police: 65 International Civilian Staff: 38 National Civilian Staff: 106

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Special Adviser on Cyprus	
• Authorization Date	21 April 1997 (SG Letter S/1997/320)
• Start Date	28 April 1997
• SASG	Alexander Downer (Australia)
• Budget	\$3.9 million (1 January 2012–31 December 2012)
• Strength as of 31 October 2012	International Civilian Staff: 14 National Civilian Staff: 3

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commercial ventures. The number of projects proposed by members of both communities and approved by UNFICYP continued to rise in 2012. Trade between north and south also rose significantly in 2012. The crossings generally function well, but there are some restrictions on movement by both sides and no progress has been made on choosing new crossing points.

UNFICYP helps divided families maintain contact across the island, facilitates religious and commemorative events either held in or that require crossing the

buffer zone, addresses legal and humanitarian issues affecting minority members, and liaises with authorities to provide proper welfare services, medical care, and education. UNFICYP civilian police cooperate with both Cypriot and Turkish police forces on intercommunal matters, assist in investigations, and escort civilians and humanitarian supplies through the buffer zone. The mission's Joint Communications Room facilitates exchange of information and cooperation between the two sides on criminal matters.

Cyprus (continued)

The mission also supports the Committee on Missing Persons, a bicomunal body that exhumes, identifies, and returns the remains of missing persons to their families. The committee's access to military areas in the north, however, continues to be circumscribed by Turkish authorities.

Negotiations to achieve a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus facilitated by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Cyprus, Alexander Downer, have focused on core issues such as how to

design a powersharing model for a united federal Cyprus and how to manage property and territorial issues related to unification. Talks, however, have reached an impasse and the two leaders have not met face to face since the end of March 2012. In April, Downer stated that no further trilateral meetings were scheduled, while the Secretary-General canceled plans to hold an international conference on unification. In May, Cypriot president Demitris Christofias announced he would not seek reelection to the

presidency in 2013, citing lack of progress in unification negotiations as a key factor in his decision. Turkey objected to negotiations with Cyprus while it held the EU presidency from July 2012 through the end of the year.

The most recent renewal of UNFICYP's mandate was delayed due to disagreement over a British request to review the mandate in 2013. As a compromise, the text was amended to include a review "at the appropriate time." Such a measure may result in personnel cutbacks.