



CANADIAN HELLENIC CONGRESS ΕΛΛΗΝΟΚΑΝΑΔΙΚΟ ΚΟΓΚΡΕΣΟ CONGRÈS HELLÉNIQUE CANADIEN

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CANADIAN HELLENIC CONGRESS STATEMENT ON SOMBRE 52ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE TURKISH INVASION AND OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS

Toronto, July 20, 2026 - Fifty-two years after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus, a sovereign and independent member state of the European Union, remains divided and partially occupied by over 40,000 heavily armed military forces. Despite repeated United Nations Security Council resolutions, UN-led negotiations and decades of international appeals, Turkish occupation forces remain on Cypriot territory.

On this solemn anniversary, the Canadian Hellenic Congress remembers and honours the fallen of the 1974 invasion, the missing persons, the refugees, and all Cypriots and Greeks who defended the territorial integrity, sovereignty and freedom of Cyprus.

We also recognize and pay tribute to the Canadian peacekeepers who served in Cyprus under the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. Canada's historic contribution to peacekeeping on the island gives our country a special moral responsibility to continue speaking clearly in defence of peace, justice, human rights, rule of law and international law.

We remember the thousands of Canadians who served in Cyprus and honour the Canadian service members who lost their lives in the service of peace.

The Canadian Hellenic Congress does not forget the consequences of the illegal invasion and continuing military occupation: the uprooting of communities, the unresolved tragedy of missing persons, the displacement of refugees, the violation of property rights, the desecration of Christian churches and cultural monuments, the forced division of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, the continuing militarization of the occupied areas, and the demographic alteration caused by the transfer of settlers from mainland Turkey into the occupied territory.

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The Canadian Hellenic Congress is a national democratic communal institution that represents, advances, advocates and promotes the interests and concerns of Canadians of Hellenic descent and Hellenism in general. The Congress is the national voice of Hellenes and their communities and/or organizations across Canada.



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This is not only a Greek or Cypriot issue. It is an issue of international law, sovereignty, human rights and the rules-based international order. If the international community is to defend the territorial integrity of sovereign states consistently, it cannot remain silent when the Republic of Cyprus continues to live with the consequences of invasion, occupation and forced division.

The United Nations Security Council has spoken clearly. Resolution 353 called for the withdrawal of unauthorized foreign military personnel from Cyprus. Resolutions 541 and 550 rejected the unilateral declaration of the so-called “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” and called upon states not to recognize any Cypriot state other than the Republic of Cyprus. Resolution 550 also addressed the issue of Varosha and rejected attempts to settle any part of the area by persons other than its lawful inhabitants.

For more than five decades, Turkey has ignored the spirit and substance of these resolutions. At the same time, many Western democracies, including Canada, have too often treated the Cyprus issue as a frozen conflict rather than an ongoing violation of sovereignty, human rights and international legality.

The Canadian Hellenic Congress therefore calls upon the Government of Canada to take a more active and principled position on Cyprus, including by:

1. reaffirming Canada’s full recognition of the Republic of Cyprus as the only legitimate state on the island;
2. reaffirming Canada’s non-recognition of the illegal secessionist entity in the occupied north;
3. calling clearly for the withdrawal of Turkish occupation forces from Cyprus;
4. supporting the lawful return and protection of Varosha in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions;
5. raising the Cyprus issue more visibly in Parliament, with allies, and in international forum;
6. supporting a just and viable settlement based on the relevant United Nations resolutions, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus, and the rights and security of all lawful citizens of Cyprus;
7. impose economic sanctions against individuals or entities that contribute to the continuation of the occupation or the exploitation of occupied Cypriot property.

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Canada has a proud peacekeeping history in Cyprus. That history must not be reduced to memory alone. It should guide Canada's present policy and its commitment to justice, peace, accountability and the rule of law.

On this 52nd anniversary, the Canadian Hellenic Congress stands with the people of Cyprus. We honour the fallen, we remember the missing, we stand with the refugees and their descendants, and we call for an end to the occupation.

Cyprus must be free, reunited, sovereign and secure.

We do not forget.

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