

7. Summary and Conclusions

Many participants agreed that the context for resolution of the Cyprus conflict has changed remarkably in the past year. Turkey's candidacy for the accession to the EU, UN-sponsored proximity talks, better relations between the Greek and Turkish governments all contributed to this shift. While impasse on the political level may continue to defy solutions for some time, as the two leaders negotiate their differences, chances at reconciliation on the grass-roots level appear more optimistic. This tendency mirrors the Canadian approach to foreign policy in trying to bring about change from the bottom-up. Attention should be paid to education (children in particular) development of civic groups, capacity building and other people-centred initiatives. The Canadian rich experience with peacekeeping, formal and informal federalism and constitutionalism, as well as living together could be helpful in a post-conflict situation.

Tareq Ismael, University of Calgary, evaluated the day's discussion as intense and useful. He stressed the value of the Canadian experience with civil society and the need to focus on the young generation of Cypriots in changing the divisive "culture" on the island. The participants signalled the need to continue the discussion and calls were made to further develop relationships established during the roundtable. **Roger Hill**, Canadian International Institute for Applied Negotiations, identified the need to closer examine mediation and conflict resolution as well as the questions surrounding the Aegean Sea resources.

To summarise the day's cross-cutting themes and key recommendations:

- The value of "social peacebuilding," as supposed to "political" and/or "economic" peacebuilding, and reconciliation from the bottom-up was emphasised. Bringing the two communities together through joint projects and teaching conflict prevention skills often breaks prejudice and builds capacity within societies to prevent hostilities from reoccurring. Here the important role of Track II Diplomacy was promoted.
- Breaking down the reproductive cycle of violence, hatred, and mistrust, often perpetuated through nationalist ideologies (narratives), was also perceived as useful. Renegotiating these ideologies and reinterpreting ideologically charged historical accounts could contribute towards reconciliation on the island. In this respect, the importance of education and the messages children receive from birth about themselves and their neighbours was highlighted. Participants often recalled that the impetus for the Greek-Turkish detente was provided by the outpouring of material and emotional support for the earthquake victims (first from the Greeks and soon after from the Turks). This "people-to-people diplomacy" points to the importance of civil society in bringing about change. After all, lasting solutions hinge on the collective will of the people of Cyprus to live together in harmony. Official solutions should be reflections of this will.
- Canada could draw on its experience in peacekeeping and peacebuilding to help with police training, conflict resolution training and water problems in a post-conflict