

needs/context and a long-term commitment to build trust. The aim of the Institute in Cyprus is to build a critical mass of trained people who could prevent conflicts from reoccurring. These efforts are coming to fruition as the number of trained Cypriots increases (2 500 up to date). A steering committee comprising both Greek and Turkish Cypriots now also exists. There may be some difficulties with evaluating the results of Track II Diplomacy, but the real test is how people work and live together, said McDonald.

4. Three Analyses of the Current Situation

The three regional analyses of the Cyprus problem demonstrated that despite recent shifts in public perceptions and in Greek-Turkish relations, ideas about possible solutions remain diverse. **Costas Melakopides**, University of Cyprus, argued that the candidacy of Turkey for EU membership, "Europeanised" the Cyprus problem. Therefore, the solution should be rooted within a legal/normative context recognised by the European Union, which favours a unified state. According to him, the Turkish Cypriot view, advocated by Rauf Denktas and his supporters, contradicts international law/norms. It calls for a confederation backed by the legal recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Since the EU-endorsed UN resolutions condemn the Turkish military intervention of 1974 and the creation of the independent Republic, Melakopides argued, Rauf Denktas's demands are illegal.

Ozay Mehmet, Eastern Mediterranean University, pointed out that the idea of a unified state may imply a *de facto* absorption of the Turkish Cypriot minority into southern Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriot leaders argue that historical circumstances do not allow such a "reunification." They believe that a two-state confederation would be the best solution, given the *de facto* existence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Be it internationally recognised or not, the TRNC has elements of an independent state, including a separate political system with parties and elections, he said.

In the short term, Mehmet argued, the third round of UN sponsored negotiations is scheduled to take place in May. However, these talks largely depend on the result of the April 15th elections in northern Cyprus and the re-election of Rauf Denktas (the alternative being worse). In the medium term (6-12 month from now), the proximity talks could lead to a confidence-building stage in which the leaders would directly talk to one another. In this stage people-to-people contacts should increase and cross-border trade intensify. Ultimately, the Turkish Cypriot side could concede on Varosha Resettlement (land for sovereignty) while the Greek Cypriots could lift economic embargoes imposed on northern Cyprus.⁴ He stressed the difficulty of moving into the second stage if some observers continue to perceive the Turkish Cypriot view as "illegal." He noted that while the UN recognises the legality of the Greek

⁴See Appendix 1. for a summary table of issues under consideration in the Proximity Talks.