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# Statements and Speeches

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## THE QUESTION OF CYPRUS

A Statement to the Plenary Meeting of the Thirty-second Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, by Ambassador William H. Barton, Permanent Representative of Canada, November 8, 1977.

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Canada joined with a great majority of member states in supporting the resolutions adopted by this Assembly on the question of Cyprus in 1974 and in 1975. We have supported, as well, the mandate of the Secretary-General to provide his good offices to the two communities in Cyprus. We have continued to support the work of both the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross on the island.

But the principal focus of Canada's direct interest in the situation in Cyprus has remained the presence on the island for the past 13 years of Canadian soldiers as part of the United Nations Force in Cyprus. Over 19,000 Canadians have served in Cyprus during this period. We are proud of the contribution these men have made — along with their comrade soldiers and policemen from Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Austria, Ireland and Australia — to the practical implementation of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

I personally had the privilege of visiting the island in March of this year and can add my own testimony to that of others as to the efficiency, dedication and competence of the members of all contingents in the United Nations peacekeeping force in Cyprus. We were, therefore, pleased to note that the draft resolution recorded in Document A/32/L.16 of November 4 includes, in its operative Paragraph 6, a renewed call for the parties concerned to co-operate with the United Nations peacekeeping force in Cyprus.

Canada's involvement in Cyprus stems primarily from our membership in the United Nations and our readiness to assist the organization to maintain peace and security. It also stems from concern for the national integrity of a fellow Commonwealth member and for the harsh fate that has befallen countless individual Cypriots. In this connection, further attention needs to be focused on the matter of individuals who have been unaccounted for since the conflict in 1974. This question was considered at the thirtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, and the international concern over this humanitarian issue was reflected in the language of Resolution 3395 (XXX). Yet the situation persists and we must once again urge that "the tracing and accounting for missing persons" be conducted as effectively as possible on an urgent basis.

The Canadian Government has, on many past occasions in this forum, expressed its reservations about certain aspects of the United Nations role in Cyprus. We have always believed that peacekeeping should be accompanied by peacemaking. Despite

the fact that the existence in Cyprus of a United Nations peacekeeping force has lessened the tensions on the island with the effect of improving the atmosphere for a negotiated settlement, we nevertheless remain disappointed that the presence of UNFICYP has not led to significant progress in achieving a political solution to the problems of Cyprus.

In the Canadian intervention in the Cyprus debate last year, we also underlined our concern about the growing deficit in the UNFICYP account and called upon member states to provide a larger number of voluntary financial contributions. In the past few months, Canada, in association with the other troop-contributing nations, has been actively involved in assisting the Secretary-General, through our own representations, in support of his appeals for new and/or additional contributions to the UNFICYP account. The contributions which have actually materialized to date, in response to these appeals, fall far short of the total need, but we are hopeful and optimistic that, in the course of the coming months, our efforts will bear significant fruit in helping to reduce the ever-increasing deficit in the UNFICYP account, which — I must once more reiterate — is now being largely financed, owing to the short-fall in voluntary contributions, by the troop contributors themselves. As the co-sponsors of this year's draft resolution have themselves recognized, UNFICYP continues to play an important role on the island and it is difficult to imagine what the consequences would be if the Force, already recently reduced by the withdrawal of the Finnish contingent, were to be trimmed even further because of financial considerations.

Turning now to the political situation, I should like to reaffirm the Canadian Government's continuing support for the Secretary-General and his representatives in their efforts to stimulate a resumption of the intercommunal talks....

As for the intercommunal talks themselves, the Canadian Government has every sympathy concerning the frustrating position in which the United Nations Secretary-General has been placed. Nevertheless, we wish to encourage him to persist in his good-offices role with respect to the negotiations between the two communities in Cyprus. The international community was encouraged earlier this year by the resumption of the intercommunal talks in February and held high hopes that significant and mutual concessions would be made by both sides. Unfortunately, however, our hopes were not sustained and we are fully aware that, before meaningful talks can be resumed, certain preconditions will have to be met, at least implicitly. The Turkish Cypriots will have to demonstrate their willingness to make territorial concessions and the Greek Cypriots their willingness to discuss new constitutional arrangements. We also hope that the other parties directly concerned will demonstrate a similar willingness to assume a helpful and catalytic function. However important international debate on this issue may be, it is through resumed intercommunal talks that progress will come about, as the draft resolution recognizes in its operative Paragraph 3. Needless to say, we also remain convinced that any political solution to the question must include the preservation of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus.

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