

CYPRIOTS AGAINST WAR! SPEAK-UP FOR CYPRUS! FULL DEMILITARIZATION NOW!

Cyprus Action Network (www.cyprusaction.org)

As the Bush administration and its allies intensify their drive to war, they are preparing to utilize military bases in the region as staging posts for the assault on Iraq. Two of these bases are situated on the strategically placed Mediterranean island of Cyprus.

Despite gaining its independence in 1960, political turmoil and the interference of outside powers has resulted in the separation of the 2 communities of Cyprus. Today the island is split between a Turkish Cypriot north and a Greek Cypriot south and has become one of the world's most heavily armed regions.

Turkey maintains a force of 30,000 troops, alongside Turkish Cypriot armed forces, in the north. In the south, Greece has an Army contingent and provides the officer corps for the 10,000 strong Greek Cypriot National Guard. The United Nations maintains 1,200 troops, mostly from Britain, patrolling a buffer zone between north and south, and since 1960 the British government has maintained two large Sovereign Base Areas (Akrotiri and Dhekelia) in the south of the island, along with 5,000 troops.



On December 26th 2003 over 30,000 and on January 14th, over 60,000 Turkish Cypriots (over a quarter of the population) rallied in north Cyprus for reunification and a solution to the Cyprus problem.

In the south most Greek Cypriots oppose a war in Iraq, despite this the government there has pledged its support for the U.S.-led war effort. The largest British naval flotilla assembled in 20 years has anchored off the coast of Cyprus before it set sail for the Gulf. Turkish Cypriots share similar anti-war sentiments; many are opposed to the strong Turkish Army presence in north Cyprus.

The plan presented by the UN in November 2002 to reunify Cyprus offers an opportunity for the reduction of military presence on the island. While still insufficient, we believe that it can act as a starting point towards a full demilitarization of Cyprus. We ask everyone concerned about the consequences of militarism and war to add their voices to the tens of thousands that are holding massive demonstrations in Cyprus for reunification.

Cyprus Action Network is part of the new mass movement demanding a solution to the problems on our island. Among our demands are:

- x A federal solution to the Cyprus problem that satisfies the common and competing interests of all Cypriots based on UN resolutions and principles**
- x The full demilitarization of the island as part of any solution agreement.**



We ask all concerned people globally to join our struggle and show solidarity. Please visit <http://www.cyprusaction.org/protests/> for more information about this global coalition.

For local activities contact:
martyn@cyprusaction.org