Turkish Foreign Policy and Security in Cyprus: Greek-Cypriot Security Perception

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INTRODUCTION

Turkey’s policy vis-à-vis Cyprus has always been the most important issue for Greek-Cypriots in the context of the Cyprus conflict. Despite the fact that Turkish policy in Cyprus is characterized by a great degree of continuity and is seen as essentially negative, it has been argued that there have been exceptions as well, such as Turkey’s support of the United Nations (UN) Annan Plan during the 2004 referenda in Cyprus. Arguments like this fell within a broader debate about Turkey’s post-2002 foreign policy, which many believed was changing for the better because of the election of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) to power in 2002.

In reality, Turkey – which during the 2000s and 2010s went through a historic transformation – remains a central actor in the Cyprus Problem and a fundamental obstacle to its resolution, at least from the perspective of Greek-Cypriots. After all, Turkey is still one of the three guarantor powers under the Treaty of Guarantees of the Republic of Cyprus (RoC), along with Greece and the United Kingdom, and has a strong military presence in the island’s north. Against this background, this report examines the relationship between Turkish foreign policy (not least in the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus) and Greek-Cypriot security perceptions. Surprisingly, even though Turkey is considered an integral part of the Cyprus Problem and the attitudes of Greek-Cypriots towards Turkey are sometimes taken for granted, not enough research has been done in this respect. Similarly, our understanding of Greek-Cypriot security perceptions in general is also rather limited.

In order to address the above issues, this report is divided into two main parts. The first part provides a brief overview and assessment of Turkish foreign policy (TFP) as expressed particularly in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean (MEEM) region. The same section examines the role of Cyprus in Turkey’s overall regional policy, thus explaining the external

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1 The reasons behind Turkey’s decision at that juncture are not examined here. See, e.g., George Kyris, “Turkey, Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot Political Parties: The Ephemeral Catalyst of EU?,” Turkish Policy Quarterly 10, no. 2 (2011): 97-105.


3 For an exception to this rule, see, Rebecca Bryant and Christalla Yakinthou, Cypriot Perceptions of Turkey (Istanbul: Tesev Publications, 2012).

4 This gap has been mitigated by the work of the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development – SeeD and its SCORE Index. See, https://www.scoreforpeace.org/.
geopolitical environment in which contemporary Greek-Cypriot security perceptions are shaped, especially in regard to the Cyprus Problem. The second part discusses Greek-Cypriot security perceptions based on a broad and more inclusive concept of security; i.e., by taking into account various security sectors and looking beyond traditional military and state security. Thus, the extent to which Turkey has an important place in Greek-Cypriot security perceptions becomes clear, even as other significant security perceptions come to the fore.

The concluding section of the report analyses the role of Turkey in relation to other factors that shape Greek-Cypriot threat perceptions and discusses the implications for conflict resolution in Cyprus.
TURKEY’S DOMESTIC TRANSFORMATION & REGIONAL FOREIGN POLICY

Understanding and predicting TFP has become increasingly difficult in recent years because of the rapid and radical socio-political transformation the country is undergoing and the region’s unstable geopolitical environment. In this context, Turkey’s foreign policy is affected by both external geopolitical imperatives and domestic politics—a complex equation that has exacerbated regional instability, particularly in Iraq and Syria. Moreover, it has also had repercussions for inter-state relations in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In order to assess any prospects of conflict or cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean, and in the Middle East more generally, and given Turkey’s geostrategic significance, it is important to understand to the extent possible the drivers and goals of TFP. This becomes even more necessary when it comes to the Cyprus peace process and the political future of the Island, and not only because Ankara plays a key role in the resolution of the Cyprus problem but because Turkey’s domestic and foreign policies influence security perceptions and decision-making in both the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities.

As such, this section starts by briefly examining contemporary TFP from the rise of the AKP to today, noting domestic developments and the outbreak of the so-called Arab Spring, which is regarded as an important turning point. It then moves on to look at the impact of Turkey’s foreign policy on regional geopolitics and particularly the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus. Lastly, it draws parallels between TFP, security perceptions in Cyprus especially with regard to the Cyprus Problem, and prospects for a settlement.

The Rise of the AKP: Towards a Post-Kemalist Turkey

After a surprising electoral victory, the AKP came to power in November 2002. At that time, the AKP was the most recent in a long line of political parties affiliated with Milli Görüş, a political-Islamic movement dating to the late 1960s and early 1970s and led by Necmettin Erbakan. In 1996 Necmettin Erbakan became Prime Minister in the context of a coalition

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5 Milli Görüş usually translates as National Outlook or, more accurately, Religious Outlook. That is because “milli” can have different meanings: either national in the traditional sense or national in the religious sense, which points to the “Muslim Nation” or “Ummah.” The latter is the one implied by members of the Islamic movement and that to which AKP members allude today when referring to milli.
government between his Welfare Party (RP) and Tansu Çiller’s True Path Party (DYP). With the so-called post-modern coup of 1997 Erbakan was forced to resign by the Kemalist military establishment. In 1998 the RP was closed down and succeeded by the Virtue Party (FP), which did not last for long due do an internal schism between traditionalists and modernists. As a result, the FP split into two parties in 2000: the Felicity Party (SP) represented the traditionalist strand and Erbakan’s traditional ideas, while the AKP, under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, represented the modernists.  

The AKP was in many ways a pioneering political party in the history of Turkey’s politics and the political Islamic movement. Not so much because of its ideology or political programme, since they were not entirely new, but because of how it managed to effectively apply them in Turkey’s domestic and foreign politics to consolidate its power and essentially transform Turkey on multiple levels. The AKP soon made efforts to get rid of the stain of traditionalist political Islam that came with its Milli Görüş past. It branded itself as modernist-reformist and adopted a “conservative democratic” ideology that allowed it to remain faithful to its cultural values while incorporating modern, secular, liberal-democratic elements – akin to those of the Kemalist ideology. Hence, this shift was also marked by a pro-European Union (EU) and pro-Western (USA, NATO) foreign policy, thus highlighting the AKP’s growing divergence from its political predecessors.

The early ideological development of the AKP was followed by significant improvements in the political and economic domains. Among other things, the AKP government managed to achieve great economic growth; indicatively, from -5.7% in 2001, the GDP growth rate reached 9.36% in 2004, gradually decreased to -4.83 in 2009 and returned to 9.16% in 2010. Politically, the AKP furthered the country’s democratic reforms and significantly developed sectors such as health, education, science, technology, communication and transportation. Moreover it improved indicators such as infant/child morality and life expectancy. At the same time, it redefined civil-military relations, “bringing the once-dominant military under its control as well as Turkey’s elites—including the staunchly secular courts, business community, and the media—into its camp.”

In terms of foreign policy, the better part of the AKP’s first two terms in office were characterized by efforts both to develop and apply “soft” power, as well as to take a mediating role in the region, particularly in cases such as the Syria-Israel, Israel-Palestine, Pakistan-
Afghanistan disputes and the crisis over Iran’s nuclear programme. These efforts took place in the context of a “zero problems with neighbours” foreign policy principle, among other principles, inspired by then chief advisor to Prime Minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, who in 2009 became Foreign Minister and later Prime Minister.

“Back to the Future”?
In spite of Turkey's impressive steps forward under the AKP, its later years in government were marked by a reversal of the early success on many levels domestically and also in foreign policy. In fact, these changes led many analysts to observe that the AKP policies and rhetoric moved away from its modernist character and resembled more and more the traditionalist political line of the RP under Erbakan and the Milli Görüş ideology more generally. According to Hakan Yavuz, this ideology can be treated, as an eclectic and amorphous mixture of competing lifestyles, ideas and politics based on different interpretations of Islam, nationalism and the state. The party [RP] did not see Islam as a fixed doctrine that would obviate the need for politics but searched for ways to integrate Islamic identity and symbols into the politics sphere.

One could argue that, to a large extent, this description fits the AKP today. However, at the same time, many of the AKP’s policies seem to be closer to those of the RP. Since the mid-2000s, the AKP has applied constitutional amendments three times, first in 2007, later in 2010 and lastly in April of 2017— the first two of which allowed the party to consolidate its power significantly. Interestingly, at around the same time institutional reforms in Turkey slowed down, with negative implications for corruption, government effectiveness, the rule of law and beyond. Given that most of the AKP’s reforms were backed by the EU within the framework of Turkey’s post-1999 accession process, the slow-down could partially be explained on the basis of the deteriorating Turkey-EU relations and the eventual deadlock in Turkey’s EU accession process in 2006.

The AKP and Erdoğan’s conservative shift were particularly salient after the 2010 referendum on constitutional amendments. Among other things, these amendments gave the president and the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA, i.e., the parliament, in which the

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AKP has the majority of seats) unprecedented power in electing the members of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Board of Judges, as well as rendered “the closure of political parties more difficult by requiring the approval of a parliamentary commission and a two thirds majority in the TGNA.”\(^\text{16}\) In addition, the overall assertiveness of the AKP – which increased along with its consolidating power and growing public support – led many during the early 2010s to accuse the party of authoritarian tendencies and Erdoğan of “behaving like a dictator and trying to impose strict Islamic law.”\(^\text{17}\) Since then, domestic politics in Turkey has only gotten worse and become more polarized, with the “Gezi Park” protests in the summer of 2013 being perhaps one of the most indicative examples of how negatively the shift in AKP’s policies has been received by a large segment of the population.\(^\text{18}\)

Retrospectively, one could argue that this polarization that followed the AKP’s growing authoritarianism is a product of Erdoğan’s end goal: a fundamental constitutional change that would also transform Turkey’s parliamentary political system into a presidential one. In 2016, long before such a transformation was even put to a vote, Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım described Turkey’s political system as a *de facto* presidency (pending a “*de jure*” confirmation), stating that, “The people chose their president [Recep Tayyip Erdoğan]. This is already the *de facto* situation. Now we need to make the new constitution according to the preferences of the people. Whether it be a presidency with a party or a semi-presidency.”\(^\text{19}\) Erdoğan’s drive for a presidential system is proof for many that the AKP is not much different from its *Milli Görüş* predecessors, insofar as presidentialism was central to Necmettin Erbakan’s rhetoric and his first party’s (National Order Party, MNP) political programme ever since 1969.\(^\text{20}\)

During the first MNP Congress in 1971 Erbakan remarked: “A presidential system will be established [after constitutional changes] where the persons of President and Prime Minister will be one.”\(^\text{21}\) This and other statements from the past seem, indeed, as if they were taken directly from speeches and statements of AKP officials.

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21 Quoted in, Christos Teazis, *Η Δεύτερη Μεταπολίτευση Στην Τουρκία [The Second Political Changeover in Turkey]* (Athens: Patakí, 2013), 81. It’s worth noting that other constitutional changes pursued by the AKP, such as the aforementioned regarding the Constitutional Court, date back to the political programme of the MNP. See Teazis, *The Second Political Changeover*, 75-77.
Turkey’s Domestic Transformation & Regional Foreign Policy

Democracy as a Means to Authoritarianism

Developments between 2016 and 2017 made it even clearer that Turkey’s political trajectory is moving away from democratization towards a more centralized, leader-centric, and authoritarian reality. Both the 15 July 2016 coup attempt as well as the 16 April 2017 constitutional referendum became milestones in AKP’s accelerated transformation of the country through top-down social engineering. Using the coup attempt as a pretext, president Erdoğan dismissed more than 150,000 employees across governmental departments and institutions, not to mention the government’s crackdown on schools, media outlets, hospitals, associations, trade unions, etc. At the same time, the AKP government deepened its efforts to restructure state institutions and mechanisms such as the armed forces, the Supreme Military Council and military academies, thus increasing civilian control – and by extension, political and governmental control – over them. This change is as much political as it is ideological, and is the same type of change that has been taking place, for example, in the sector of education since 2014.

In light of these events and the deteriorating political dynamics within Turkey over the past decade or so, many analysts remembered Erdoğan’s words from his early political years as mayor of Istanbul: “democracy is like a train; you get off once you have reached your destination.” And, indeed, from today’s vantage point it looks like all the democratization progress of the early and mid-2000s was used as a tactic for power consolidation, and sacrificed on the altar of power maximization and ideological hegemony. This shift, one could argue, was eventually sealed with the re-election of the AKP and President Erdoğan in the snap, and double – general and presidential – elections of 24 June 2018, for it put the constitutional amendments voted in 2017 into effect and officially established a presidential system with all-powerful Erdoğan at the helm of the state.

The altered political and ideological identity of Turkey by the mid-2010s has also played into Turkey’s foreign policy decision-making calculations and influenced its perceptions of the region, which was undergoing its own dramatic changes due to the “Arab Spring” and the Islamic State.

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The outbreak of the “Arab Spring” created a whole new reality not only for the Middle East but for Turkey as well. And even though former Foreign Minister and Prime Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, seemed to have expected it,26 Turkey was caught by surprise and struggled to adjust to the new geopolitical reality. The breakout of the Arab uprisings reversed Ankara’s regional plans in that they disturbed the relations it had built with the different regimes and overturned its economic and political clout in the region. Nonetheless, at the beginning Turkey seemed to be successful in finding ways to manage the geopolitical shifts by supporting the popular uprisings and providing financial, technocratic and other aid to some of these states.27

The rising Islamic conservatism in countries like Egypt, Libya and Tunisia was rather favourable for Turkey’s regional vision and its aspiration to become a model for other countries – a kind of a “big brother.”28 The salience of this vision in the early 2010s was a by-product of the AKP’s consolidating power domestically and its growing independence from the strategic imperatives of the previous Kemalist establishment as analysed above. Indeed, by the 2011 general elections, where the AKP once again won the parliamentary majority, then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s grip on power as well as the weakening of the Kemalist and other political opposition were indisputable.29

What the Turkish government under Erdoğan envisioned was to elevate Ankara to the leadership of the Middle East, an area they consider to be a natural extension of Turkey – the successor of the Ottoman Empire – and part of its vital geopolitical space.30 Referring to Turkey’s role in the Middle East amidst the Arab uprisings in 2012, Davutoğlu made some interesting remarks:

> If we speak of a return to the Middle East borders of 1911, if walls were thrown up [between Turkey and the Middle East] between 1911 and 1923, and if we experienced problems with some peoples there at that time—we must overcome all that now and embrace those peoples, show respect for the borders between us. But we also have to diminish the meaning of those borders and build new regional orders…Our economic and cultural borders will extend beyond our political borders, but this is a function of geography, it’s not some kind of hegemony.31

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31 Quoted in, Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey and the Arab Spring: Leadership in the Middle East* (USA: Bozorg Press, 2014), 126.
About four years later, in 2016, President Erdoğan went one step further to dispute the very Treaty of Lausanne (1923) that had established the Turkish Republic, making a particular reference to Mosul, Thrace, Cyprus and Crimea, saying that Ankara “cannot ignore its kinsmen” in those places. According to Erdoğan, “for years, they [the founding fathers of the republic and their successors] have tried to show Lausanne as a victory for us by comparing it with the Treaty of Sèvres.” Perhaps most importantly, he said that, “We cannot draw boundaries to our heart, nor do we allow it,” meaning that the boundaries drawn in the region by the Treaty of Lausanne (which in effect also ended the Ottoman Empire) cannot be accepted – at least emotionally.  

In the statements of both Davutoğlu and Erdoğan the pattern of their geopolitical vision is evident: Turkey under the AKP has perhaps unrealistic revisionist geopolitical aspirations that go so far as to seek the alteration of regional borders; Turkey’s invasion of Syria, and its military presence in Bashiqa, Iraq, despite Baghdad’s protests, are some examples of this policy. Through this role, Turkey seeks not only to maximize its power and increase its influence but also to play a leading, hegemonic role in the region and beyond. Turkish officials in the past used a number of terms to characterize this aspiration, such as “natural leader,” “historical ‘big brother,’ and ‘the protector’ of the Muslim minorities.” Moreover, it has been also described as an effort by Turkey to become a “little America,” which “encapsulates an aspiration for national greatness characterized by economic entrepreneurship and prosperity, dynamic political and social pluralism, and an assertive foreign policy.”

When a leadership or hegemonic role like this is assumed by a – usually great – power, it is more often than not accompanied by the capability and willingness to become a regional or global security provider. The US foreign policy since the end of the Cold War and particularly during the 1990s is perhaps the most indicative example, though one could also look at efforts of other rising powers (e.g., Russia, India, China, etc.) to assume such a role in the 21st century. Similarly, Turkey since the early 2000s has been increasingly projecting its

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power in the greater region on various levels (i.e., political, economic, cultural, security), particularly focusing on its culturally similar neighbouring states and other Turkish or Muslim minorities in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean, with some arguing that its role “as a security provider and mediator would be undeniable in regional conflicts,” while also acknowledging that there are limitations.36

**Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean in Turkey’s Vision**

Within this context, the Eastern Mediterranean in general and Cyprus in particular have an important role in Turkey’s geopolitical vision and strategy. Cyprus has been forming partnerships with other countries of the area (i.e., Greece, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon) not least with the prospect of energy and other collaboration.37 Thus far Turkey has been effectively left out of this emerging international network mainly because of its troubled relations with most of these states. Today, its military presence in northern Cyprus since the invasion of 1974 seems to be an important reason Turkey is able to maintain some of its power and influence in the area. According to Can Kasapoglu, Turkey’s military presence in northern Cyprus can be seen as part of a broader, “forward-basing” strategy that also includes bases in Iraq, Syria, Qatar and Somalia, and entails “better contingency response capabilities” and the development of “robust security cooperation and partner capacity–building opportunities.”38

Geopolitically speaking, Cyprus gives Ankara an upper hand in the Eastern Mediterranean military balance that almost all Turkish administrations have sought to protect regardless of ideological differences.39 As Kasapoglu goes on to note,

> The Turkish contingent in Cyprus has for instance been viewed as an offensive deterrent in the military balance between Greece and Turkey. Within this context, it is argued that militarization of the Aegean islands by the Greek Air Force provides Athens with an invaluable advantage in conducting surprise deep strike capabilities. Yet, the Turkish Air Force lacks a reactive deterrent due to its air-bases’ geostrategic posture, which cannot rapidly generate enough sorties over the Greek mainland. Furthermore, the Thracian corridor is both too narrow and too distant from strategic Greek targets, which rules out a decisive land incursion by Turkey in response to a surprise air attack.

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39 Ibid., 10.
Besides, the Turkish–Greek naval balance, as well as the geographical features of the Aegean, don’t allow conducting full sea-control by the Turkish Navy. Therefore, the Turkish deployments in Cyprus are regarded as a way of establishing a clear offensive superiority through fielding a massive numerical advantage over the Greek forces.40

Moreover, one could argue that Cyprus could in the future also help Turkey expand its peace and aid operations abroad especially in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), thus rendering it more influential as well as more useful to international players such as the UN, NATO, the EU, OSCE, etc.41

Though the military balance aspect has always been a central component in Turkey’s Cyprus policy, developments in the energy sector that took place in the 2000s and 2010s – natural gas discoveries offshore Israel, Cyprus, and Egypt – increased the island’s importance for Ankara and its energy strategy. Among the many energy strategic goals publicized by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, three pillars stand out: the realization of the country’s energy security by diversifying its sources and ensuring secure and low-cost supplies for domestic demand; the liberalization of its energy market; and rendering itself a transit state and energy hub.42 The first and third pillars (energy security and a transit role) in particular can be favoured by the energy routes under consideration or development (e.g. the TANAP-TAP and Turkish Stream pipelines) that will carry natural gas through Turkey to Europe.

This dynamic involves an EU that is eager to diversify its energy sources, a Turkey that is more than willing to transport natural gas to Europe from multiple exporters in accordance to the above-mentioned strategic goals, and an Eastern Mediterranean that is arguably witnessing the emergence of a regional energy complex, particularly between Cyprus, Israel and Egypt.43 In a perfect world these could have been pieces of the same puzzle, but history and geopolitics are making things difficult.44 Turkey seems to be, in part at least, driving two paradoxical realities: a) the deepening relations of Israel, Cyprus, Egypt and Greece; and b) its

40 Ibid., 11.
own exclusion from the plans for energy or other regional cooperation. Ostensibly, neither serves Turkey’s interests. However, it is possible that Ankara is calculating things differently and based on a plan that might eventually allow it to participate in the Eastern Mediterranean developments, not least through policies of coercion and imposition; thus Turkey will not necessarily have to accept an Eastern Mediterranean gap in energy security strategy.

Even in this context, Cyprus remains a key actor for Ankara. The Cyprus Problem seems to be the one problem that, once solved, could open up all sorts of possibilities, be it for regional stability and integration, or energy security and cooperation more specifically. Importantly, Turkey’s inclusion in the Eastern Mediterranean energy complex in question seems to be a scenario that both Turkey and the EU examine. And yet, unless the “Eastern Mediterranean gap” is somehow addressed, Turkey’s inclusion in the Eastern Mediterranean energy plans will prove challenging.

In the meanwhile, Turkish regional policy seems to be rather firm in terms of the pursued goals and employed tactics. Ankara’s wish to play an agenda-setting role in the region and the Eastern Mediterranean more specifically is evident. Beyond its operations in the Middle East, Turkey made its intentions clear regarding developments in the energy sector when in February 2018 the Turkish navy blocked ENI’s drilling ship (SAIPEM 12000) from moving towards Cyprus’s maritime block 3 (“Cuttlefish” field) in order to perform more exploratory drillings. Saipem 12000 remained effectively under Turkish naval blockade from 9-22 February, and eventually left the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) toward its next scheduled drilling destination in Morocco. The crisis affected the already negative climate in the Cyprus peace process but, more importantly, it caused an outcry among Greek-Cypriots.

Seen from this perspective, Turkey’s role in, and impact on, the security and security perceptions in Cyprus becomes clearer and so does the need to take Turkish policy into account when looking at Greek-Cypriot security perceptions generally and in terms of the Cyprus Problem more specifically. The following section scrutinizes the concept of security and security perceptions in the context of Cyprus and the Greek-Cypriot community.
THE CONCEPT OF SECURITY & SECURITY PERCEPTIONS

Any study that aims to research and analyse theoretical and/or practical aspects of security must acknowledge from the outset that the concept of security itself is highly contested. As such it is a notion that must be critically examined before it can be narrowed down and defined for research and analytical purposes. For these reasons, this section first looks into the theoretical debates on the concept of security and also sets the framework of analysis. It then moves on to the analysis of security perceptions at the official and non-official levels in the Greek-Cypriot community. Among other things, the analysis brings out the significance of Turkey in the security perceptions.

Framework of Analysis: A Wider Concept of Security

Our understanding of security has changed rather radically over the last few decades and especially since the end of the Cold War.\(^{45}\) The concept itself has expanded to include new security priorities and threats that became salient in more recent years due to a host of global changes. During the Cold War security had a much narrower meaning associated primarily with national security. In other words, it prioritized the state as the most important referent object and agent of security even as it focused on (national) strategy and the use of military force/threats, particularly in the international arena, as a means of obtaining security.\(^{46}\) From this perspective the dominant notion of (inter-state) security was understood as the state of peace – or absence of war – in the international system.

But with the Soviet Union collapsing and the Western camp winning the Cold War, the overemphasis on international war and peace was bound to change. Inevitably the primacy of the narrow and traditional concept of national security made way for referent objects\(^{47}\)

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other than the state, and to threats other than military conflict, to enter the debate and the hierarchy of security priorities. Barry Buzan’s work, *People, States, and Fear*, was instrumental in this evolution of security studies. In the second edition of this book, he goes beyond state security to refer to the security of (human) “collectivities,” which may include the state as well as other groups. Other authors followed with concepts such as societal security, and the security of individuals that considers “all sorts of hazards – from bankruptcy to unemployment.” The latter approach was also in line with a perceptual and policy shift regarding security at the international level that was reflected in the United Nations *Human Development Report* of 1994. Among other things, the report stated that, “The threats to human security are no longer just personal or local or national. They are becoming global: with drugs, AIDS, terrorism, pollution, nuclear proliferation.”

Despite the lack of consensus among scholars as to what is the most important referent object of security, individual and human security are drawing increasing attention. In this context of multiple security referent objects, the landscape of threats becomes more complex as well. For example, Buzan argues that “the security of human collectives is affected by factors in five major sectors: military, political, economic, societal and environmental” and their respective threats. It would not be far-fetched to argue that threats coming from all these sectors are posed at the same time to one or more referent objects of security. As Brian Job writes, “in principle, four or more distinct securities may be at issue simultaneously: the security of the individual citizen, the security of the nation, the security of the regime, and the security of the state.” It should however be noted that, depending on the referent object, the nature and/or the prioritization of threats differ.

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52 According to one definition, “Human security is not a concern with weapons. It is a concern with human dignity. In the last analysis, it is a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, an ethnic tension that did not explode, a dissident who was not silenced, a human spirit that was not crushed.” See, Mahbub Haq, *Reflections on Human Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 116.


The Importance of Security Perceptions

Moreover, it should be acknowledged that ideational – psychological and perceptual – factors play a big role in how an individual or a group defines or understands its security and, by extension, the threats posed to it. As Buzan puts it, “Perceptual problems are rooted in human psychology” while “perceptions vary according to where the observer is located in relation to the thing viewed, and according to the internal constitution of the viewer.”

Therefore, for all the above-mentioned reasons, the plurality of actors (referent objects) can complicate politics and policy-making. Additionally, “For a society composed of communal groups with distinctive ethnic or religious identifications,” like Cyprus, “their perceived securities may also be at stake, making the interplay and competition among the various players even more complex and unresolvable.”

Researching Security and Security Perceptions in Cyprus

Indeed, security needs and security perceptions are not always one and the same, while they may also vary from actor to actor, be they individuals, states, social or political groups (i.e., the referent objects of security). This part of the report addresses these complexities in the context of Cyprus and the Cyprus Problem by looking at the security and threat perceptions in the Greek-Cypriot community at the official and non-official levels. Furthermore, it aims to identify the role of TFP in these perceptions and to understand the implications this analysis may have for the ongoing efforts for a settlement to the Cyprus Problem.

The research ultimately identifies perceptions of security and threat priorities in Cyprus along the lines of Buzan’s five “security sectors”: military, political, economic, societal and environmental. To that end data have been collected from focus groups, individual interviews, and structured questionnaires with stakeholders at the official and non-official levels in the Greek-Cypriot community. To the extent possible, these actors correspond to or represent different “human collectivities” in the community, namely, different referent objects. There is thus pluralism in security perspectives and priorities. In addition the report draws upon other primary literature, such as public opinion surveys and secondary literature.

The first aim has been to ascertain how the different actors understand security and identify the specific referent object of security that each actor prioritizes, as a non-governmental group or an individual may not prioritize itself but, instead, a community, the state or the individual. The second step has been to determine the perceptions of what threatens the security of the stated referent object(s), and then to record perceptions of who is seen as the most relevant security provider. The prioritized referent objects, threats and security providers for each actor in the Greek-Cypriot community are grouped based on the

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57 Job, 15.
above-mentioned security sectors (see Table 1). The classifications and hierarchies that were revealed allow us to better determine and compare the security perceptions at the official and non-official levels of the community. The linkage between state security and the security of other referent objects in different sectors is one trend that stands out, and the one that demonstrates the salience of Turkey’s role. Lastly, it should be noted that scrutinizing other factors that may be involved in the construction of security or threat perceptions falls outside the scope of this report which is focused on the perceptions themselves, as identified in the collected data, vis-à-vis different referend objects and security sectors.

Table 1: Referent Objects and Threats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referent Object of Security</th>
<th>Security Threats$^{58}$ (prioritization depends on referent object)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Military (inter-state/intra-state conflict)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic (poverty, access to resources)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Societal (national/cultural/religious identity)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Identities</td>
<td>Social &amp; Political (infectious disease, healthcare,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., ethnic/religious groups,</td>
<td>crime, stability &amp; functioning of state institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bureaucracies, geographic regions, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implications for Conflict Resolution

There are certainly no easy answers for deciding how to address, much less reconcile, the various and often conflicting security perceptions. And yet, a good way to start is to identify the (common) perceived or real security needs of the most important stakeholders across communities and work towards finding some common ground.$^{59}$ This might conceivably be accomplished through an inclusive political settlement that would address the concerns of the parties involved across security sectors. This strategy would also keep in mind that perceived threats in one security sector by each of the parties in conflict may be linked to insecurities in other sectors. For example, political insecurities can be linked to economic insecurities, societal insecurities to political ones and so on.

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58 See also, UN, Secretary-General’s High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change: A More Secure World - Our Shared Responsibility (New York: UN, 2004), 2.

SECURITY CONCERNS AND PERCEPTIONS IN THE GREEK-CYPRIOT COMMUNITY

It is well established in academic literature that there is a significant gap between the political elites and the masses in terms of both political culture and perceptions. It is therefore necessary to consider both levels, and then identify their convergences and divergences in terms of security perceptions in Cyprus. As mentioned earlier, this is accomplished for the Greek-Cypriot community along the lines of official and non-official perceptions.

The official and non-official levels are here defined in a straight-forward way. The official level is defined as “those who in any society rank toward the top of the... dimensions of interest, involvement, and influence in politics.” Moreover, because the research has focused on security and security perceptions (broadly defined), military perceptions have also been taken into account at the official level. The non-official level includes various societal and civil society actors, ranging from political parties to business associations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

**Official Level**

As is usually the case, the official level has a more traditionalist perception of and stance towards security. That is, officials place the state at the epicentre, thus classifying national security as a top priority. Likewise, for Greek-Cypriot officials the security of the state as well as peace and stability within it are central values, and this is closely linked with their security perceptions. What is more, they understand peace and stability foremost in a military way, namely, the absence of military threats such as offensive war, military power imbalance and, to a lesser extent, terrorist attacks.

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61 Putnam, 651.

62 It is worth clarifying that political parties can be seen as having two dimensions: one official, which refers to their association or relations with the official level, and one non-official, that refers to their social activities and role of representing segments of society. This report focuses on the latter dimension.

63 Interview with anonymous Greek-Cypriot political official no. 1, 08 June 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus.
Evidently, the prioritized values (i.e., national peace and stability) are directly related to the prioritized threats (e.g., war). Indeed, for Greek-Cypriot officials, these seem to be the priorities in terms of security in Cyprus generally—not necessarily only with respect to the Cyprus Problem. At the same time, the relationship between national (in)security and Turkey's military occupation of Cyprus's northern part is for them an inescapable reality when it comes to analysing the island's security and contemplating its future.\textsuperscript{64} Turkey ranks first in their perceptions of threat, and not merely in military terms. As former Greek-Cypriot Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides put it in reference to the “Security-Guarantees” chapter of the peace negotiations,

The essence of the subject of security is to make all citizens of both communities feel equally safe. And in order for them to feel equally safe, a balance needs to be in place within the island, which will always lead the two sides to a continuous consensus… We need to make it [the settlement] viable and sustainable. And the best way for it to be viable and sustainable is by striking a balance. That is, no side should be in a better power position than the other. For the side that will be in a position of power will never be prone to consensus and will demand everything from the other side.\textsuperscript{65}

As such Turkey and its military presence in Cyprus play a substantial part in Greek-Cypriot political calculations of (national) security in general and in the efforts for a peace settlement in particular. Another example comes from one of the interviews of Greek-Cypriot Foreign Minister, Nikos Christodoulides, who characterized Turkey's behaviour towards Cyprus and the broader region—including the blockade of the ENI drilling ship—as “destabilizing” and noted that Turkey's role in the resolution of the Cyprus Problem is crucial.\textsuperscript{66}

Similarly, it is no surprise that military officials subscribe to the same perceptions and articulate the same concerns, often in a more explicit way. From their perspective, Turkey is most certainly an existential threat that needs to be handled with more resolve both diplomatically and in terms of military balance.\textsuperscript{67} These notions are not only found at the top levels of military leadership but are salient in the lower ranks of the military-security institu-

\textsuperscript{64} Interviews with anonymous Greek-Cypriot political officials nos. 1, 2, 3; 08, 13, and 21 June 2016, respectively, Nicosia, Cyprus.


security concerns and perceptions in the greek-cypriot community. This points to the prevalence of certain security perceptions at the lower and higher levels within these bodies that reinforce each other and constitute a rather rigid system of ideas. Within the broader scheme of things, it could be argued that these opinions can apply direct or indirect pressures, thus affecting official policies and decision-making.

While political and military officials perceive the Turkish threat very similarly, their proposed strategies to manage this threat are quite different in that the political establishment adopts a more benign approach that favours negotiation and the resolution of the Cyprus Problem, as opposed to military balance and power-increase strategies. There is, however, a common understanding that diplomatic and foreign policy efforts should be stepped up as a means of mitigating this threat. Such strategies include establishing inter-state partnerships and foregrounding the European Union (EU) framework. Other options, such as participation in Partnership for Peace (PPF) and a future accession to NATO are more popular among military officials, less so among political leaders.

In terms of the Cyprus Problem, threat perceptions go beyond the sector of military security, although some remain connected to the Turkish occupation. Such perceptions relate to economic security and how the status quo or the settlement of the Cyprus Problem will affect it – be it in terms of development, the business sector, employment, labour conditions, the standard of living or international economic and trade relations. Indeed, economic concerns also stemmed from the financial crisis in the Greek-Cypriot economy, ongoing since 2013. In addition, there is the perception of a cultural threat that has to do with the Islamization of northern Cyprus and how this could negatively impact not only the Greek-Cypriots but the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity and the whole island as well.

In this vein, Christodoulides has remarked that Ankara’s stance towards the Cyprus Problem and its actions do not serve the interests of the Turkish-Cypriots but the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity and the whole island as well. In terms of the Cyprus Problem, threat perceptions go beyond the sector of military security, although some remain connected to the Turkish occupation. Such perceptions relate to economic security and how the status quo or the settlement of the Cyprus Problem will affect it – be it in terms of development, the business sector, employment, labour conditions, the standard of living or international economic and trade relations. Indeed, economic concerns also stemmed from the financial crisis in the Greek-Cypriot economy, ongoing since 2013. In addition, there is the perception of a cultural threat that has to do with the Islamization of northern Cyprus and how this could negatively impact not only the Greek-Cypriots but the distinct Turkish-Cypriot identity and the whole island as well. In this vein, Christodoulides has remarked that Ankara’s stance towards the Cyprus Problem and its actions do not serve the interests of the Turkish-Cypriots.

68 Discussions with a total of eight lower ranking officers and non-commissioned officers.

69 Klokkaris; Andreas Pentaras, Λανθασμένες Επιλογές Στην Άμυνα Και Ασφάλεια Της Κύπρου (Mistaken Choices in Cyprus’ Defense and Security) (Nicosia: Epiphaniou, 2012).


It is worth mentioning that other security concerns are not disregarded. In fact, the notion that the Cyprus Problem and everything that comes with it is not the only – albeit the most important – issue that the political leadership has to deal with has been gaining ground over the past few years. Other concerns have found their place in official Greek-Cypriot security perceptions, not least because of geopolitical developments in Cyprus’s external environment. These include issues like terrorism, particularly Hezbollah, which has a history of operations in Cyprus, (irregular) migration and refugee waves due to the conflicts in the Middle East; and organized crime, especially human trafficking, which is also connected with the issue of migration.

Finally, it should be noted that the dominant perception at the official level is that the state should be the main provider of security, namely, it should act as a counter to the various threats posed to the values of the community. However the role of the EU is also acknowledged as important in supporting the community’s capacities, while other international partnerships are thought to be necessary for limiting and balancing out the Turkish threat. Table 2 summarises the security sectors, values, threats, and security providers in terms of the official level.

Table 2: Security Sectors, Values, Threats & Security Providers at the Official Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prioritized Security Sectors</th>
<th>Prioritization of Values to be Secured</th>
<th>Prioritization of Threats to Values</th>
<th>Preferred Security Means and Security Providers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military Security Sector</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Military threats (primarily Turkey)</td>
<td>The state as a primary security provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political-Military Sector</td>
<td>Stability (political, social)</td>
<td>Turkey’s economic influence in northern Cyprus.</td>
<td>The resolution of the Cyprus Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Security Sector</td>
<td>Economic prosperity</td>
<td>Economic inequalities, poverty, unemployment, etc.</td>
<td>Participation in International Organizations (e.g., EU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal Security Sector</td>
<td>Culture-Identity</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>Inter-state partnerships (e.g., Greece, Israel, Egypt)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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73 Interview with anonymous Greek-Cypriot official no. 1, 8 June 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus.

74 Katy Turner, “Suspect Admits to Being Member of Hezbollah,” *Cyprus Mail* (16/06/2015), http://cyprus-mail.com/2015/06/16/suspect-admits-to-being-member-of-hezbollah/.

Non-Official Level

The non-official level is considered primarily through the perceptions of three segments of the society that are representative, to the extent possible, of different societal, economic and political interests. These are political parties, businesses and civil society – as reflected through interviews, questionnaires and focus groups with NGO representatives, individual questionnaires and public opinion surveys.

Political Parties. Starting with political parties, it is important to note that there is not one single understanding or perception of security among them although there are at least some convergences. Although analysing the position of each political party falls outside the scope of this study, it would be helpful to draw a rough distinction regarding security perceptions and threat prioritizations along the lines of A) centre (centre-left or centre-right) and far-right parties, and B) parties with progressive orientation.76

Regarding values that need to be secured generally speaking, political parties prioritize stability in terms of economic prosperity and development, national-military security, peace, democratic freedoms, human rights, the rule of law, the good functioning of the state, social welfare, environmental/energy security and individual security; in other words, the sectors of political, military and economic security. Although there is no disagreement that all of these values should be secured, parties of category A ascribe more importance to military security as opposed to parties of category B that prioritize political or economic security – without of course disregarding military security.77

Despite this divergence, the two political party categories agree in classifying Turkey as the number one security threat, which, according to their perception, has both an external and an internal dimension. The often-cited reason is Turkey’s occupation of northern Cyprus as well as the prominent concern regarding Turkish settlers and the alteration of northern Cyprus’s demographic synthesis.78 From this perspective, it could be suggested that when

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76 The second category basically includes left-wing AKEL and right-wing DISY; the first category refers to almost all other parties (e.g., EDEK, Green Party, DIKO, Symmamax Politon, ELAM, etc.). This classification should by no means be considered as oversimplification of each party’s ideological particularities or complexities; there are many policy issues on which they have different opinions. This classification is here put forth merely for practicality purposes when it comes to the issue of security perceptions.


78 Focus group discussion with political party representatives conducted, 06 July 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus.
thinking of security in general terms, parties – especially progressive ones – are more likely to prioritize sectors other than military security and threats other than Turkey. Once the Cyprus Problem comes into the picture, the prioritization of threats and values changes in their security perceptions. Further, party representatives also mentioned economic threats (e.g., financial crisis), geopolitical instability, inequality, far-right nationalism (and the likelihood of political violence), environmental degradation, nepotism, unregulated competition of markets, and inadequate governance (in sectors like health and education).

With regard to the management of these threats, the two categories of political parties agree that a strong and functional state can have a decisive role. It can be the “answer to the insecurities of a people,” as one participant put it. However there is again a difference of opinion concerning the nature and role of the state: category A generally advocates for the strengthening and shielding of the Republic of Cyprus, while category B considers that a well-functioning federal Cyprus would be the best answer to many of the aforementioned insecurities. On the other hand, there is broad agreement that the formation of international alliances and Cyprus’s participation in the EU and the United Nations work in favour of its security and that more such alliances are desirable.

Businesses. For business people security is also understood in rather broad terms. Values that came up during focus group discussions and interviews include the individual’s well-being, personal safety and health, prosperity and economic security – not least the “uninterrupted conduct of business activities.” In addition, business people, and particularly the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), were the first to raise the issue of cyber security (the absence of cyber threats) with specific regard to economic transactions and electronic business systems. Overall, the economic and political security sectors were prioritized, in this order.

The identified threats to these values ranged from war, geopolitical instability and terrorism to organized crime, cybercrime and economic challenges (e.g., unemployment, poverty and low economic growth). However the Cyprus Problem and Turkey’s role are seen as central threats to all values, while Turkey is considered a factor of instability. There is a fear
that it will continue to be so even after the solution of the Cyprus Problem, unless the agreed settlement plan reduces Ankara’s influence – political, economic and military – over the island to the minimum.82

In this sense business people, much like political parties of category B, see the resolution of the Cyprus Problem as a crucial move towards securing values that are of prime importance for the sustainable political, economic and social development of Cyprus as well as for the avoidance of future military problems. In their perceptions it is a security and prosperity imperative. After all, Cypriot business associations (particularly CCCI and the Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation – OEB) have long been involved in pro-solution initiatives, as they see great economic potential in a federal Cyprus.83 As the president of CCCI wrote in the organization’s 2015-2016 annual report:

We believe that a good solution… will help our country and people in various ways. With reunification, Cyprus will be able to utilize better and more effectively its comparative advantages, to seize new opportunities for its economy thus creating new prospects for the future strengthening its regional role even further.84

However, as mentioned earlier, the arrangements of the solution matter a great deal if Cyprus is to be independent from external control and influence (political, economic or otherwise) or if the federal economy is to be creating equal opportunities for all citizens and healthy competition in the various sectors.85 In conjunction with the significance that is ascribed to the state (and a future federal state) as a security provider against the threats that have been mentioned, the EU is also considered to have an important role, but secondary to the state nonetheless.86

Civil Society. When it comes to civil society, security perceptions among “average” Greek-Cypriots vary as well. When asked about what security meant to them, focus group participants emphasized the sectors of political and economic security as well as personal safety. Among the values that ought to be secured they mentioned democratic freedoms and human rights (e.g., right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, etc.), political stability, personal well-being, prosperity, and the environment.

82 Focus group discussions with business representatives on 20 May 2016 and interviews conducted between May and October 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus.
85 Focus group discussions with business representatives, 20 May 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus.
86 Focus group discussions with business representatives (20 May 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus) and interview with CCCI senior director, Leonidas Paschalides, 15 June 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus.
A number of threats to the stated values were identified. These included corruption, inadequate welfare, state and health services, the mentality and decisions of political elites, nationalism, populism, and the Cyprus Problem; or, according to one participant, “the current political status quo in combination with the political way of thinking across the existing divide is a threat.” What is interesting is that even though Turkey and the Cyprus Problem did not come up often when participants tried to define what “security” meant to them and what values they would consider most important to be secured, things changed when the discussion moved on to threats. There was a shift of focus from the political and economic sectors of security to the inclusion of the military security sector as well. Furthermore, even though there were opinions such as that “young people feel more financially insecure than threatened by Turkey,” very few were ready to compromise – or think about compromising – when it came to Turkey’s presence on the island in a post-solution Cyprus.

There were in fact some strong opinions regarding the negative role of Turkey for the security of Greek-Cypriots and Cyprus as a whole, be it in the context of the status quo or in the context of a future Federal Cyprus. One focus group participant put it bluntly when they said that, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s way of doing politics in Cyprus and the region can be a great source of instability while Turkey “is a threat to the existence of both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots.” Such fears along with the concern that Turkey guides and directs the politics of the Turkish-Cypriot community, and that it will continue to do so after the solution, constitute salient perceptions among a significant part of the Greek-Cypriot community.

Much like other segments of the non-official level, civil society actors prioritized the state and a democratic, well-functioning political system as the main agents for providing security against most of the identified threats. This applies to the case of a post-solution Cyprus where political stability and security were associated with the absence of Turkish guarantees and military presence. More generally, participants also mentioned the UN and the EU as security providers even as they acknowledged the importance of Russia and the US in the maintenance of regional security.

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88 From focus group discussions with civil society representatives, 13 July 2016, Nicosia, Cyprus.

89 The Cyprus Problem and the domain of economy, in this order, also topped the list of areas of interest for the Greek-Cypriot public in a late 2015 survey. The domains of unemployment, health and education came next. See, “Ερευνά: Αισιοδοξία Για Οικονομία, Απαισιοδοξία Για Κυπριακό [Survey: Optimism for Economy, Pessismism for the Cyprus Problem],” Phileleftheros (03/12/2015), http://www.philenews.com/el-gr/top-stories/885/288666/erevna-aisiodoxia- gia-oikonomía-apaisiodoxia-gia-kypriako-pinakas; also, Bryant and Yakinthou, 75-76.


Summary. Drawing upon the security perceptions of different social segments at the non-official level, one could suggest that priority is given to the political and economic sectors of security (see Table 3). Nonetheless, political and economic insecurities are exacerbated by and expand to the military sector as well, particularly the role of Turkey in Cyprus. Further, there is a broad consensus that the state — its political system, its institutions, and the rule of law — should be the primary actor to deal with and alleviate the (perceived) threats. In terms of long-term security in Cyprus, it almost seems to be common sense for actors at the non-official level to refer to the resolution of the Cyprus Problem as a security policy, provided that a well-functioning and federal state will emerge independent from external influence.

Table 3: Summary of Security Sectors, Values, Threats & Security Providers at the non-Official Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prioritized Security Sectors</th>
<th>Values to be Secured</th>
<th>Threats to Values</th>
<th>Hierarchy of Preferred Security Providers and Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Security Sector</td>
<td>Political stability, functioning institutions, democratic freedoms, rule of law, human rights</td>
<td>Corruption, human rights violations</td>
<td>1. The state; a well-functioning federal state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Security Sector</td>
<td>Economic development, prosperity, employment</td>
<td>Economic problems, unemployment</td>
<td>2. The resolution of the Cyprus Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Sector</td>
<td>Absence of conflict and external intervention</td>
<td>Turkey (as external &amp; domestic threat), terrorism</td>
<td>3. European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal Security Sector</td>
<td></td>
<td>Turkish settlers and demographic alteration of occupied Cyprus</td>
<td>4. United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Security Sector</td>
<td>Environmental sustainability</td>
<td>Environmental degradation &amp; natural disasters</td>
<td>5. Great powers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Official Level vs Non-Official Level

By comparing the two levels of analysis one can trace a notable difference in the hierarchy of security sectors and, therefore, of threat perceptions. At the top of the official level, priorities are the military and political sectors of security, along with the relevant threats (particularly Turkey) as outlined above. On the other hand, the security priorities of actors at the non-official level could be summarized in the political and economic sectors; the military security sector is not neglected but is generally seen as less fundamental than the other two (see Table 4).92

92 It should be clarified that these hierarchies or prioritizations present a rough summary and overall estimation regarding the security perceptions of each segment, based on the comparison of collected data. Therefore, although different hierarchies may exist within each segment, they cannot be seen here.
There is of course some overlap between the two levels and their security concerns, especially when it comes to imagining Cyprus after the solution of the Cyprus Problem. In that context, there is general consensus between the two levels not only on the importance of the political security sector but on the importance of the military sector as well. As mentioned, the main threat associated with both of these sectors is Turkey and its policies – be they security, political, economic or societal policies. However, there is some disagreement in terms of how this particular threat could be dealt with: the political leadership, some political parties, businesses actors and (to an important degree) civil society believe that the threat can be pre-empted via a good federal constitution and functioning political system. Military officials and other political parties believe that a federal solution will not only fail to alleviate the Turkish threat but will exacerbate it. Alternative policies that these actors propose relate mostly to security and foreign policy solutions such as formulation of alliances, lobbying with great powers, etc.

### Table 4: Comparative Summary-Hierarchy of Security Sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy of Security Sectors</th>
<th>Official Level</th>
<th>Non-Official Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military-Political</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Political-Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Economic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Political</td>
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<tr>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>Environmental</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

All in all, it is evident that for Greek-Cypriot security concerns and perceptions, Turkey’s presence, role and policy in the island constitute an inescapable reality. The existence of the Cyprus Problem itself is seen as a threat that is, nonetheless, interlinked with the very policy of Turkey. And because for most Greek-Cypriots at both the official and non-official levels (in)security in Cyprus is linked with the Cyprus Problem, they can hardly dissociate their broader understanding of security from the various – threatening – extensions of Turkey’s politics, behaviour and role (see Figure 1 for a rough depiction of this cognitive process).

Figure 1: Cognitive Process of Greek-Cypriot Security Perceptions vis-à-vis Turkey

What is more, it seems that the domestic and external politics of Turkey in recent years, as analysed in the first half of the report, have done little to calm the Turkey-related security concerns and perceptions in the Greek-Cypriot community. The four main determining and exacerbating factors of Greek-Cypriot security perceptions towards Turkey, and with regard to the Cyprus Problem more specifically, can be summarised as follows:

- The traditional issue of Turkish occupation and military presence on the island
- The increasing influence and control Turkey is exerting in northern Cyprus as well as the latter’s growing dependency on the former
- Turkey’s more extrovert and revisionist regional policy (including in the Middle East) that is often seen as provocative, threatening and destabilizing
- Domestic socio-political and economic changes in Turkey and the country’s transition towards authoritarianism and away from the West
Indeed, the instruments and goals of TFP may be out of Greek-Cypriot and even Turkish-Cypriot control. Yet every effort for the settlement of the conflict must take into account these salient trends in Greek-Cypriot security perceptions just as it must consider the Turkish-Cypriot ones. On the other hand, this study has demonstrated that there are concerns regarding other security sectors as well – such as the political, economic and environmental sectors – and that the non-official level in particular is not solely focused on state security concerns. Some of these sectors are certainly less sensitive and easier to manage than that of hard security. This can provide fertile ground in the relations between the two communities, not merely for collaboration but also for identifying and addressing common security concerns even as they develop a better understanding one for the other.

Given the difficulty of either the Greek-Cypriots or the Turkish-Cypriots to deal with Turkey by themselves, a closer cooperation and the development of a joint vision regarding the future of Cyprus, including hard and human security on the island, could be the key to alleviating the threats and threat perceptions that exist between the communities. The formation of a more common political understanding about security and the Cyprus Problem could, in turn, lead to the better management of relations with Turkey and addressing security concerns that may stem from TFP.

But in order for such processes to bear fruit, they need to be pursued at both the official and non-official levels, and not only through Track I negotiations but through a multileveled societal and political approach.93 To realize tangible results, Cypriot society must take real ownership over the (formal and non-formal) peace process.

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93 See also, Zenonas Tziaras, “Pre-Conditions for Peace: A Civil Society Perspective on the Cyprus Problem,” PRIO Cyprus Centre Report 1 (2018).

Aliriza, Bulent, and Deni Koenhemsi. “Erdogan’s Referendum Victory and Turkish Politics.” Center for Strategic & International Studies Turkey Project (2010).


Aliriza, Bulent, and Deni Koenhemsi. “Erdogan’s Referendum Victory and Turkish Politics.” Center for Strategic & International Studies Turkey Project (2010).


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http://www.cna.org.cy/webnews.aspx?a=83e09e85df8948c9b47085db86ba78c0.


“Ερευνα: Αισιοδοξία Για Οικονομία, Απαισιοδοξία Για Κυπριακό [Survey: Optimism for Economy, Pessimism for the Cyprus Problem].” Phileleftheros (03/12/2015).

“Το ΚΕΒΕ Ιδρυτικό Μέλος Του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Για Την Ασφάλεια Στον Κυβερνοχώρο [CCCI a Founding Member of European Cyber Security Organization].” Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (13/07/2016).
http://news.ccci.org.cy/%CF%84%CE%BF-%CE%BA%CE%B5%CE%B2%CE%B5-%CE%B9%CE%B4%CF%81%CF%85%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8C-%CE%BC%CE%AD%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%81%CF%89%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%8A%CE%BA%CE%BF%CF%8D/.

“Υλοποιείται Ήδη Η Αναδιοργάνωση Της Εθνικής Φρουράς, Δηλώνει Ο ΥΠΑΜ [the Reorganization of National Guard Is Already Being Implemented, States the Defense Minister].” Cyprus News Agency (21/03/2016).

Even though Turkey is considered an integral part of the Cyprus Problem and the attitudes of Greek-Cypriots towards Turkey are sometimes taken for granted, not enough research has been done in this respect. Similarly, our understanding of Greek-Cypriot security perceptions in general is also rather limited. Against this background, this study aims to examine the relationship between Turkish foreign policy (not least in the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus) and Greek-Cypriot security perceptions. It provides a brief overview and assessment of Turkish foreign policy and examines the role of Cyprus in Turkey’s overall regional policy thus explaining the external geopolitical environment in which contemporary Greek-Cypriot security perceptions are shaped, especially in regards to the Cyprus Problem. In addition, the analysis deals with security perceptions in the Greek-Cypriot community based on a wider and more inclusive concept of security.

As far as Greek-Cypriot security perceptions are concerned, Turkey’s presence on, role and policy in the island constitute an inescapable reality and certainly a very difficult obstacle to overcome in the inter-communal relations on the island as well. However, as the study demonstrates, there are concerns regarding other security sectors as well – such as the political, the economic and the environmental ones – while the non-official level in particular has a wider understanding of security. Some of these sectors are less sensitive and difficult to manage than that of hard security. This realization could provide fertile ground in the relations between the two communities, not merely for collaboration purposes but also for identifying and addressing common security concerns even as the communities develop a better understanding for each other.