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One Hundred Twelfth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
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March 22, 2012

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The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

The reunification of the Republic of Cyprus is of critical importance to the stability of the Eastern Mediterranean, a vital U. S. interest. That's why I am deeply disturbed by two Cyprus-related developments – one ongoing for decades, the other of more recent vintage – that threaten that vital interest. These developments directly undermine longstanding elements of the U.S. position in support of Cyprus reunification and call into question our ability to sustain that position.

The first, and more recent, of these developments is Turkey's threatened military action in response to Cyprus' exploration for hydrocarbons in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and its agreement with Israel regarding hydrocarbon development. American positions on reunification proposals must make clear our country's strong support for all of the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus, including its right to the natural resources of all its legal territory, including its EEZ. By any interpretation, Turkey's threats constitute bullying and are way out of line.

The second – and ongoing – development that concerns me is Turkey's increasingly draconian efforts to alter the demographic composition of Cyprus. According to both Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot press reporting, Turkey has sent hundreds of thousands of Turkish citizens to Cyprus since 1974; meanwhile, the number of authentic Turkish Cypriots living in the occupied area has actually declined over the past 38 years and is now dwarfed by the number of Turkey-origin Turkish residents. Related to this, a Turkish cabinet minister has now publicly discussed the possibility of Turkish annexation of the occupied territory. For decades, proposals for a Cyprus solution have been at least partly predicated on the assumption that the sizable, longstanding Greek Cypriot majority

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would endure. Now Turkey is trying to change that demographic fact – at best, because it seeks to gain advantage in negotiations, at worst because it seeks to justify holding onto all the occupied territory or possibly even expanding it. American support for the demographic integrity of the Republic of Cyprus, heretofore merely an occasionally expressed concern, must now be clearly and forcefully expressed as a bedrock element of America's position on Cyprus reunification.

Turkey's threats against the Republic of Cyprus and its ongoing efforts to alter Cyprus' demography call into serious question Turkey's commitment to reunification. As the United States of America, we should be uncompromising in opposing Turkey's efforts to trample on the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus – whether through military threats or through colonizing Cyprus with Turkish citizens. In light of these dangerous developments, we urge a thoroughgoing re-assessment of our Cyprus policy, taking fully into account Turkey's threats and its colonialist transfer of population from the Turkish mainland.

Sincerely,



HOWARD L. BERMAN
Ranking Member