

'Clear understanding' in ongoing talks between Greek Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot sides – UN

1 July 2017 – [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres has met with the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and their backers at the Conference on Cyprus in Switzerland, saying there is now an understanding of what is needed for a possible settlement on the Mediterranean island.

In a statement from his spokesperson, the Secretary-General said he held a “positive, results-oriented meeting” last night with the heads of the delegation, including Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci.

“A clear understanding emerged of the essential elements of a package that might lead to a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus,” the spokesperson said, adding that the talks are continuing today at the political level.

“The Secretary-General remains fully engaged in these efforts to deliver a comprehensive settlement to the people of Cyprus,” said the spokesperson.

Also attending the UN backed Conference, which began on 28 June in the Swiss town of Crans-Montana, are the three guarantor powers – Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom – and a European Union representative, as an observer.

Cyprus has been divided since 1974. The negotiations have come down to six main areas, which include new territorial boundaries, power-sharing and the economy.

Women scientists and youth take centre stage at UN-backed technology forum

30 June 2017 – As an international conference on science and technology wrapped up in Vienna, the head of a United Nations partner organization that works to end nuclear testing stressed that women have a “powerful voice” in the global scientific community.

“We cannot build a world that is just, a world that is fair, a world that is peaceful, without the contribution of women,” stated Lassina Zerbo, the

Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization ([CTBTO](#)).

In an interview with *UN News* during the CTBT: Science and Technology 2017 Conference, Mr. Zerbo said: “If women are at the heart of solving problems domestically in their respective families, and socially, why don’t we use them on big issues that require heart, feeling and vision, which they have already?”

The Conference, the sixth of its kind, focused on nuclear test monitoring technologies and their various applications. In addition to the participation of women scientists, Mr. Zerbo also noted the “youth strand” that had been integrated throughout the programme.

The CTBTO Youth Group was launched last year with only nine members. Today there are around 200, about 70 of whom attended the conference, held at the Hofburg Palace.

“I’ve watched them take advantage of the opportunity we offer them to be acquainted on issues of non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as the threat of nuclear weapons. They have decided they do not want their generation and future ones to have to deal with this,” said the Executive Secretary.

The biggest contribution of young people, he added, was to spread the message about the importance of the CTBT on social media networks and their blogs.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, adopted by the General Assembly in September 1996, has not yet entered into force. For this to happen, ratification is required from the so-called Annex II countries. Of these, China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, and the US have yet to ratify.

Mr. Zerbo noted that using the right words to get to the heart of those who know that nuclear test monitoring is important to ban nuclear test explosions, once and for all.

“The ban on nuclear testing is a low-hanging fruit in our fight towards banning nuclear weapons.”

[‘Important work ahead,’ Security Council says, as UN mission in Côte d’Ivoire concludes](#)

Côte d'Ivoire ([UNOCI](#)) in promoting peace, stability and development, the UN Security Council today marked the closing of the mission by underscoring the importance of action by the Government to address the remaining challenges in the country for the benefit of all Ivorians.

In a statement read out by Ambassador Sacha Sergio Llorentty Solíz of Bolivia, which holds the Council presidency for June, the 15-member body also emphasized that the departure of the mission did not mark the end of the UN's support to the country.

In addition, the Council welcomed progress in the West African nation, including the consolidation of peace and stability, improvements in economic prosperity and the successful holding of presidential and legislative elections in 2015 and 2016, respectively.

At the same time, it noted that "there is important work ahead" in tackling remaining challenges – including in the fight against impunity, the advancement of national reconciliation and social cohesion, security sector reform and other critical areas.

It also noted that the Government had indicated that the UN would continue to be an important partner in the next phase of Côte d'Ivoire's development, and in that regard, encouraged the international community, including bilateral and multilateral donors, to assist the activities of the UN Country Team – the group of all UN agencies working in Côte d'Ivoire – and to consider providing funding for its transition plan.

SEE ALSO: [Secretary-General voices support for sustaining 'hard-won peace' after UNOCI's closure](#)

Also in the statement, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to undertake a study on UNOCI's role in Côte d'Ivoire, and expressed its intention to take its findings into account in ongoing efforts to enhance the overall effectiveness of UN peacekeeping efforts.

The UN mission was deployed to Côte d'Ivoire in 2004 when the country was divided in half by an armed conflict. During its time in the country, the mission helped protect civilians, enabled inclusive political dialogue and supported the Government in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of nearly 70,000 former combatants.

It also supported social cohesion through about 1,000 quick impact projects, resulting in the decrease in inter-communal conflicts by 80 per cent.

[**UN chief urges Greek Cypriot and**](#)

Turkish Cypriot sides to seize 'historic' chance for peace

30 June 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres today called on the leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus to grasp “an historic opportunity” to reach a comprehensive settlement to the conflict that has divided the Mediterranean island for more than four decades.

“The road back to Switzerland has not been easy, but the path to lasting peace never is,” Mr. Guterres [told](#) a press conference in the Swiss town of Crans-Montana, where the UN-facilitated talks are taking place.

The Conference on Cyprus, which began on 28 June, brings together Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci, as well as the guarantors – Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The European Union is attending as an observer.

“To get to this point, the leaders have overcome significant challenges and making unprecedented progress, and I salute the determination and common vision which has led them here,” the Secretary-General stated.

He added that the reconvening of the Conference offers “an historic opportunity to reach a comprehensive settlement to the conflict that has divided Cyprus for too many decades.”

Cyprus has been divided since 1974. The negotiations have come down to six main areas, which include new territorial boundaries, power-sharing and the economy.

“I firmly believe that, through determination and political will, it will be possible to clear this final hurdle and reach a comprehensive settlement,” Mr. Guterres said, recognizing that some sensitive and difficult issues remain to be resolved, including in the area of security and guarantees.

Asked what the UN would do if the sides failed to produce a settlement at the Conference, the Secretary-General said that the Organization is “not impatient” and its role continues to be providing support for the parties to find a solution.

Security Council adopts first-ever resolution on mine action

30 June 2017 – The United Nations Security Council today adopted its first-

ever resolution on mine action, noting the serious and lasting threat posed by landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices, while also recognizing the positive contribution of mine action to sustaining peace and stability.

Resolution 2365 “calls on all parties to armed conflicts to end immediately and definitively any indiscriminate use of explosive devices in violation of international humanitarian law.”

The 15-member body unanimously adopted the resolution, noting the danger that they pose to civilians, including children, as well as refugees returning home, peacekeepers, aid workers, law enforcement, and other personnel.

Given the positive contribution of mine action to efforts to sustain peace and stability, the new resolution stressed “the importance of considering mine action during the earliest stages of planning and programming in peacekeeping operations and special political missions,” as well as in humanitarian responses.

The Council encouraged the international community to provide assistance for the care, rehabilitation, and economic and social reintegration of victims and persons with disabilities maimed by mines.

In addition, the Secretary-General has been requested to provide information on threats posed by landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices, and efforts to mitigate these threats, when reporting on peace operations and humanitarian responses.

Today’s adoption comes just two weeks after the Council held a debate on mine action and mitigating the risks associated with mines.