

**VERY URGENT**

**Agenda Item 12.c: Toponymic data files and gazetteers – Data services, applications and products**

**Response by Mr Andreas Hadjiraftis, Head of Delegation of the Republic of Cyprus to the 11<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNGEGN), 8-17 August 2017, New York**

I would like to express my regret and my strong objection for the content, as well as the nature of the statement by the distinguished delegate of Turkey, who has time and again chosen to politicize the deliberations of the UN Conference of UNGEGN for the Standardization of Geographical Names, by pursuing to undermine the status of the internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus, a member State of the United Nations and of the European Union and to upgrade the secessionist “trnc”, which it has set up in the occupied part of Cyprus since 1983, which since then is not recognized by any State other than Turkey, has been condemned by United Nations Resolutions (SC 541/83 and SC 550/84), that call upon “all States not to facilitate or in any way assist this secessionist entity”, and has been described also by European Court Decisions as “Turkey’s subordinate local administration”.

Any reservation on the part of Turkey regarding the international personality of the Republic of Cyprus has no legal effect, does not in any way affect its status, nor does it attribute any status to the legally invalid “trnc”.

It is time for Turkey to understand that such attempts are completely futile and anachronistic and merely prove its unwillingness to abide by International Law, including the UN Resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, since it has arbitrarily and illegally changed over 35,000 geographical names in the occupied territory of Cyprus, in violation also of the cultural heritage of Cyprus.

It is also noted that, Greek Cypriot properties in the northern part of the island, are currently being used illegally, in violation of the owners’ rights and without their consent. The displaced persons were forced to flee their properties in 1974, due to the Turkish invasion, and subsequent occupation, and are still deprived of their right to return.

The reference given by the distinguished delegate of Turkey, regarding document E/CONF.105/34/CRP.34, is completely irrelevant to Agenda Item 12.

We therefore expect that the UNGEGN secretariat will fully ignore the contents of the statement made by the distinguished delegate of Turkey regarding the Republic of Cyprus.

We kindly request that the unacceptable assertions of the delegation of Turkey will be dismissed, as befits such unlawful acts, and that you will not permit that they intrude in any of the papers or web documents of our Conference.

Thank you.

Andreas Hadjiraftis

Head of Delegation of the Republic of Cyprus to the 11<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNGEGN)

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