

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1444/04  
by Ioannis Marinos (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject:           Referendums in Cyprus

On 24 April 2004, two referendums were held in which Greek and Turkish Cypriots expressed their views on the Annan plan. The Greeks rejected the plan by an overwhelming majority (76%), whereas the Turkish Cypriots approved it by 65%. Quality studies published in the press note that the Greek Cypriots rejected the plan owing to the total lack of guarantees obtained that the plan would be implemented by Turkey. Clearly, not even the European Union, which was directly affected, undertook to give such guarantees, which weighed heavily when voters in the free areas of the island made their decision. The Greek Cypriots' rejection of the plan by an overwhelming majority showed that it did not provide for the needs of a people suffering the consequences of the Turkish invasion of 1974, i.e. the occupation of 37% of the territory of Cyprus, the 200 000 refugees, the seizure of 70% of the Republic of Cyprus' resources, and the 1 619 missing persons about whom Turkey has never provided information as to whether they are dead or alive. All of this is contrary to UN Security Council resolutions which call for the immediate withdrawal of the Turkish occupation forces and the settlers. Certain EU representatives applied pressure (often in an utterly crude manner) to obtain a vote in favour of the Annan plan, which ultimately produced the exact opposite result, whilst indulging in fierce criticism of the democratically elected President of the Republic of Cyprus, without taking account of the appeals (from Cypriot leaders and the author of this question in the European Parliament on 21 April 2004) for a postponement of the referendum.

In what other instance of a country's accession to the EU has the even temporary presence of an occupying army on its territory been accepted? In the case of the accession of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, was the presence of the Russian army, which had been stationed on their territory over decades of communist tyranny, accepted? Is the colonisation not a crime in terms of international law? Does the Commission know exactly how many settlers voted? Why did the Commission not demand the immediate withdrawal of the occupying forces and the immediate implementation of Community law following the foundation of the 'United Republic of Cyprus', as provided by the Annan plan? Is the EU examining the possibility of intervening with its own plan for a settlement which will give top priority to the implementation of Community law? Would not the immediate accession of the Republic of Cyprus to NATO be sufficient guarantee of the security of both communities in order to make it unnecessary to maintain the right to unilateral intervention of the three guarantor powers who, moreover, bear the main responsibility for the trials and tribulations of the island's two communities?