

A Viable Solution to the Cyprus Problem - Lessons from Political Economy

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The author is currently a professor of Political Economy at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. The book is based on the author's 1999 PhD dissertation and on subsequent papers published in the course of the year 2000. Professor Kyriacou presents eight models used in the analysis of the Cyprus problem, and bases his analysis on the political economy model.

The focal of the book is on the search for a viable solution of the Cyprus problem and on the issue of institutional viability. Attention is given to the accession of Cyprus to the EU. Primary documentary emphasis is on the 1992 UN plan, known as the "set of ideas", and on the revised plan presented by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in December 2002. Both documents are included in an appendix, along with a statement on the EU position towards a solution of the Cyprus problem.

The author argues that a stable and viable solution must provide protection from tyrannical majorities and/or minorities. In this context, he finds that the 1992 "set of ideas" was more effective in minimising this risk than Annan's revised plan. The author also advocates the case for a bi-communal functionalist based federation rather than the bi-zonal, bi-communal scheme proposed by the Secretary-General. In a functional federation political units are defined by the services they provide rather than by geographic boundaries and territory. He concludes that this model will serve better the needs of the Turkish Cypriot community as it would allow greater political autonomy in areas important to them without seriously undermining the three freedoms. On the financial question Kyriacou calls for a redistributive federal scheme where the wealthier pay regardless of their ethnic origin. In his conclusion, the author stresses that the perceived fairness of the proposed settlement and the presence of unambiguous penalties if cooperation fails will be critical to any solution of the Cyprus problem.

Books of this type are often superseded by events. Since the publication of this book there have been presidential elections in the Republic of Cyprus, the Secretary-General presented a third revised plan on Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus acceded to the EU, conditional movement is allowed across the "green line", and massive Turkish Cypriot demonstrations have taken place against Turkish

Cypriot leader Raouf Denktash. One does not have to agree with the author's recommended solution or assumptions about the Cyprus problem. However, the thesis advocated by Professor Kyriacou can be one additional means of analysis of any future plan for the resolution of the perpetuated Cyprus problem.

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