

# *The Cyprus issue: a heretical solution*

*by Stavros Lygeros*

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Ten years after the rejection of the Annan Plan for the reunification of Cyprus, the process for the imposition of a solution based on the formula of the Annan Plan is already under way. Stavros Lygeros explains how this development was to be expected after the Cypriot Government missed a golden opportunity in 2004 to utilize the resounding “no” vote (76 percent) as the impetus for undertaking a complete overhaul of its negotiation strategy. The framework of negotiations aimed at a “bi-zonal, bi-communal federation” will inevitably lead to solutions similar to the Annan Plan – in other words, the establishment of an irregular, non-viable confederation. These proposed solutions, although cultivating the illusion of the reunification of Cyprus, serve in reality to legitimize Ankara's control over the occupied Cypriot north and lay the groundwork for Turkish claims to the south.

According to the author, a necessary prerequisite to change the framework of the peace negotiations is to broaden the discussions regarding the content of the proposed solution and examine every alternative, without taboos, while remaining conscious of the fact that the choices are limited and painful from a national standpoint. The only way for the Greeks of Cyprus to avoid the implementation of a final solution resembling the Annan Plan would be to come up with a counterproposal capable of finding resonance and support within the international community.

The first two parts of the book offer an analysis of the determinant and strategic parameters of the Cyprus issue, so that the reader may form a clear picture of the actual dilemmas. In the third part, Stavros Lygeros provides a detailed breakdown of his proposal for a “velvet semi-divorce.” Its intent is to distance the arising small Turkish-Cypriot state from Ankara's stranglehold, forcing it to

conform to European policy. In other words, the aim of this proposal is to remove Turkey from Cyprus.

The author engages in a point-by-point comparison of the “velvet semi-divorce” plan with the Annan Plan. He refers to it as *velvet* because it interlinks the essential “demands” of both the Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. It is called a *semi-divorce* because, although it envisions the formation of two independent Cypriot states that will arise from “the return of occupied territory in exchange for recognition,” it does not stop there. It not only includes statutory laws mandating the close cooperation of the two emerging states, but foresees that they retain a multifaceted balance between themselves.

### About the Author

Stavros Lygeros is one of the most credible journalists and political analysts in Greece. He was a member of the coordinating committee at the Athens Polytechnic Institute student uprising in November 1973, and has written books on a wide variety of topics, including: the student movement and class warfare in Greece, the decline of Greece's social democratic party, the regional problems arising from FYROM's unsubstantiated claim to the name Macedonia, the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the Balkans, Neo-Ottomanism, Islamic terrorism, and their relationship to the United States, the role of corruption and the Greek economic crisis, and a forecast of Turkish politics in the post-Erdogan era.

He has participated as a contributing author in several collective volumes and has written dozens of studies on international relations, European unification, as well as Greek foreign and domestic policy issues. In addition, he has worked for newspapers, as well as radio and television stations.