

After successive meetings and careful study by a group of Cypriots, who were deeply concerned about the causes of the tragedy of 1974 and became conscious of their guilty silence during the years preceding the disaster, a declaration was published, in January 1975, outlining the basic principles and aims of the group. The tragic events of 1974 demonstrated the need of undertaking and implementing the correct action, which would assist in healing the wounds of the war and the conscious effort for the realisation of the natural and always alive desire of our people, for brotherhood and mutual understanding among all Cypriots, irrespective of their ethnic origin.

With the initiative of the group on 19th March 1975, the founding meeting of the New Cyprus Association was organised: as a non-party organization without any ambition in the political life of the country. It would enlist in its membership people with public spirit and the primary interest to struggle for the spread of ideas and the implementation of the aims of the original declaration of the group, which revolved around the following interrelated parameters :

THE CYPRIOT STATEHOOD

The restoration of respect and consolidation of the establishment of the Cypriot statehood (which had been undermined by Hellenocentric nationalism), as a precondition for unity among Cypriots and the common struggle to put an end to occupation and division.

The independent Cypriot state is currently running the risk of the occupation/division becoming permanent and the possible gradual extinction of our people, beginning from a large community of Cypriots living in the occupied part of the island, who will soon be assimilated or replaced by mainland Turkish settlers. In addition, the mutilation of the Cypriot homeland, for the first time in its millennial history.

UNITY AMONG CYPRIOTS

Fostering solidarity among all Cypriots, by focusing on the emotional, cultural and political aspects of the Cypriot homeland and the recognition of a collective Cypriot identity, while discarding the concept of the "motherlands" and the nationalist partitionist culture, which this idea reproduces.

The negative condition of unity among Cypriots is compounded

by the fact that, there is no understanding of, or there is a deliberate ignoring of, important current social, political and civic realities, such as: a) The near certain permanence of geographical division for the foreseeable future;

b) The demographic change with the artificial and intentional increase in the percentage of Turkish Cypriots;

c) The necessary and solely internationally acceptable federal structure, of the new Cypriot state under discussion, and

d) The equally necessary functioning of two equal federal state entities.

The threat to unity is further strengthened and grows, due to initiatives and mobilisations of political forces and informal groups that, either openly or implicitly, reject the agreed form of reunification of the country and the equal participation of both communities in the governance of the new federal state that is envisaged.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The main objectives of the Association are:

a) The promotion of ideas and the creation of conditions, in order to cultivate among all Cypriots, irrespective of their ethnic origin, sentiments of love for their country and loyalty to a unified Republic of Cyprus.

b) The fostering of contacts and communication and the continuous cultivation of understanding between the communities, in a manner which highlights and develops the common features and characteristics and smoothens out the differences.

c) The development of perceptions that can assist in consolidating a democratic lifestyle, in order to eliminate the use of armed, or other forms of violence to achieve political goals, to ensure peaceful coexistence and the prosperity of the Cypriot people as a whole and to ensure the respect of human rights.

d) The promotion of the development of a collective Cypriot identity.

e) The cultivation of understanding and acceptance of some irrevocable facts, which were a consequence of the inter-communal conflict, the Greek coup and the Turkish invasion, and of the two main communities having to live apart for the foreseeable future.

f) The reunification of the country and the reconstitution of Cypriot society on sound footing.

THE MEANS

To achieve its aims, the Association uses all the lawful and peaceful means at its disposal. In particular, and as stated in its statutes, the Association uses the following means:

A) Investigates the various aspects of Cypriot society, as well as its internal interrelations.

b) Publishes articles, issues public statements and circulates texts relating to the objectives and activities of the Association.

c) Organises and participates in discussions, seminars, lectures and other peaceful events.

ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE

The executive body of the New Cyprus Association is the Coordinating Committee, which is elected by the Annual General Assembly. To achieve the objectives of the Association, the Committee may appoint working groups and encourage the establishment of local/regional Committees.

MEMBERS

Membership to the Association is decided by the Coordinating Committee, provided that the candidate member accepts, without any reservation, the principles and aims of the Association and is recommended by three existing members.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Given that, following the coup and the invasion, matters have become complicated over time, and on account of the imposed separation, efforts to reunify the country are not easy. Neither is the reconstruction and integration of Cypriot society.

However, the Association is convinced that, with the development of systematic cooperation between the two communities, the tolerance of diversity and, especially, the recognition that Cyprus is the homeland of all Cypriots, the unification of the country under one federal roof is feasible and will be realised.