



July 21, 2015

The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Europe and
Regional Security Cooperation
Committee on Foreign Relations
SD-444
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Europe and
Regional Security Cooperation
Committee on Foreign Relations
SD-446
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member Shaheen:

On behalf of the **American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA)**, the nation's largest and oldest association of American citizens of Greek heritage and Philhellenes, I am writing on the occasion of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Europe Regional Security Cooperation's nomination hearing for U.S. Ambassador-designate to the Republic of Cyprus Kathleen Ann Doherty. AHEPA respectfully requests that key matters pertaining to U.S. policy toward Cyprus are addressed during the line of questioning with Ambassador-designate Doherty, who we contend will be an upstanding ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus based upon her distinguished career in the Senior Foreign Service and her knowledge of economics and conflict resolution skills.

Recent developments have elevated the geostrategic importance of the Republic of Cyprus. AHEPA vigorously applauded the historic visit of Vice President Joe Biden to Cyprus in May 2014. There, the vice president conveyed statements of encouragement for the settlement process, and in addition, he bolstered the U.S.-Cyprus relationship, calling it, "**a genuine, strategic partnership**," and "**a key partner in a challenging region**." Moreover, hydrocarbon reserves have been discovered within Cyprus' exclusive economic zone (EEZ) by a U.S. energy firm, and Cyprus has worked in cooperation with Israel to explore these energy reserves, signing an agreement that defines the boundaries of their respective EEZs. Finally, the overarching issue, achieving a solution to the 41-year division of Cyprus caused by an illegal invasion and subsequent occupation by the Republic of Turkey, has regained optimism after settlement talks resumed in mid-May. For seven months, talks were stymied due to Turkey's incursion into Cyprus' EEZ that unnecessarily elevated tensions in the eastern Mediterranean.

Therefore, we request the following questions that address AHEPA's concerns about Cyprus be raised during Ambassador-designate Doherty nomination hearing to ascertain the Obama Administration's policy toward the Republic of Cyprus.

- In 2014, we saw significant engagement by the United States with the Republic of Cyprus, including several meetings involving high-level U.S. government officials from the administration. Now that settlement talks have resumed, will we see a return to the high-level engagement of U.S. government officials on Cyprus?
- As a confidence-building measure for a settlement, does the Obama Administration support the immediate removal of 40,000 illegally-stationed Turkish troops from the Republic of Cyprus?
- What is the Obama Administration's position on lifting the United States arms embargo on Cyprus?

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- Does the Obama Administration support the Republic of Cyprus's sovereign right to explore for hydrocarbon reserves and other natural resources in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ)?
- The Republic of Cyprus has expressed an interest to join NATO's Partnership for Peace. *Although unfortunately any attempt by the Republic of Cyprus to join the Partnership for Peace will be vetoed by Turkey, what can the United States do to ensure Cyprus continues to pursue this path or at least, actively contribute to building and promoting peace and security in the eastern Mediterranean?*
- Because Cyprus has experienced economic challenges, where does Ambassador-designate Doherty place fostering the development of U.S.-Cyprus trade/investment/commerce relations on her agenda?
- The destruction of Cyprus' cultural and religious heritage in Turkish-occupied Cyprus under the administration of Turkey is well documented by the Law Library of Congress, U.S. Helsinki Commission, and the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom and is in violation of international agreements. *Please provide how you view the role of the U.S. Embassy, and how you as ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus, can help to foster greater religious tolerance in occupied Cyprus?*
- AHEPA has taken a great interest, and applauded, the work to restore the historic Apostolos Andreas Monastery located in occupied Cyprus. The restoration work has been performed by bi-communal efforts under the lead of the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage and implemented by the Programme's Partnership for the Future. In addition, USAID is one of the financial contributors to the project and the U.S Embassy in Nicosia has been actively engaged. *Can AHEPA count on Ambassador-designate Doherty to continue the embassy's engagement on the project to ensure it becomes fully restored?*

In sum, we look forward to working with Ambassador-designate Doherty when she assumes her post in Nicosia as we have with her predecessors.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

John W. Galanis
Supreme President