

>> [HEC Home Page](#) >> [HEC Projects](#) >> [HEC-MEDIA](#) >> [HEC-MEDIA](#) >> [HEC-MEDIA 2006 Letters](#)

>> >>Reply to Student's Paper dated 12/06/06

//

The following letter was in response to the Daily Aztec, a student's paper, at San Diego State University which has established an exchange with the so called Eastern Mediterranean University inside the Turkish occupied territories of Cyprus. http://www.thedailyaztec.com/home/index.cfm?event=displayArticle&uStory_id=cadfa4be-3c26-452e-a0ae-7afeadb7c5

Hellenic Electronic Center (HEC)

A Non-Profit Organization Registered in the US
Representing 35,000 Hellenes and
34 Hellenic associations in the US and abroad

December 9, 2006

"Cyprus Study abroad deals with opposition," (Dec. 6th) stumbles when it attempts to explain opposition to this program by confusing democracy and the rule of law in the free areas of the Republic of Cyprus with the rule of the

Turkish military in the occupied territories, which has turned this part of Cyprus into a haven for fugitives from international justice including the extreme nationalist MHP Grey Wolves whose members are wanted by INTERPOL for the murder of Greek Cypriot refugees, money laundering, and funding for terrorist groups. Al-Qaeda, according to the State Dept. (March 2002), supplied Muslims in the Balkans through channels in the "TRNC" with 700 million dollars in 6 years. (State Dept. estimates place the cost of the Sept. 11th attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon at under \$500,000.) The "First Merchant Bank in the "TRNC" is still on State Dept. watchlists.

The only misrepresentation of the political realities of Cyprus come from those supporters of the program who completely ignore the humanitarian aspects of the Turkish occupation and the human rights abuses which persist even today. The idea that this exchange program which assists the Turkish occupation in depriving Greek Cypriot refugees of their basic human rights and dignity, furthers the cause of academic freedom is preposterous, as can be seen by the repressive and anti-democratic actions in the Turkish occupied territory, which include racially motivated killings of Greek Cypriot demonstrators and the systematic destruction of Byzantine Churches and Monasteries of great historic and spiritual value.

We dispute Ms. Sinclair's assertions that the University's policies are not pro-Turkish, and the interpretation of comments by State Department official Matthew Bryza about bringing the communities together. He most certainly does not endorse locating exchange programs on illegally seized land or one sided initiatives which do not include or have the support of the Greek Cypriots. How can SDSU claim that its is furthering the goal of conflict resolution when it is clearly biased towards the Turkish side and tramples over the human rights and dignity of the Greek Cypriots.

The conflict in Cyprus is not one of intercommunal strife, but of invasion, occupation, and violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus by the Turkish military. The beneficiaries of this trip are neither members of the Greek Cypriot majority or the Turkish Cypriot minority, but the Turkish government which does not intend to ever return the territories of Cyprus were seized in the brutal invasions that resulted in the ethnic cleansing of over 200,000 Greek Cypriots. Therefore, the University becomes both a partner and enabler of Turkey's atrocities in Cyprus and condones the violation of Article 49 of the Geneva Convention since the vast majority of the students at the so-called "EMU" are part of Turkey's civilian population who have been transferred to Cyprus illegally.

If Ms. Sinclair is concerned about her students, she should refrain from criticizing the protests directed at the University's unethical policies. University students are being sent into a territory that lacks legal or political legitimacy to reside under Turkish military rule. Furthermore, the anti-American climate in Turkey these days, and continued strife in the Middle East provide further reasons American students should not be in the Turkish-occupied territories of Cyprus. We would like to emphasize that the Republic of Cyprus made known its good will and friendship toward the people of the United States last summer when it earned the praise of Mr. Bryza and others for the crucial assistance the Cyprus Republic provided in the evacuation of Americans from the Middle East following the outbreak of hostilities in Lebanon.

The aggressive and illegal policies of the Turkish government and military in Cyprus can be seen by United Nations Resolutions 353, 361, 365, 3212-XXIX, 367. In addition, the involvement of SDSU with entities under Turkish military occupation in Cyprus conflicts with United Nations Resolution 541 which denounces the attempt of the occupation to legitimize itself under the guise of establishing an independent entity. **Resolution 550 makes it eminently clear** to member States of the United Nations **that any form of recognition of the occupation is an illegal act and must be denied**. By aligning itself with the Turkish military invader and occupier of Cyprus, SDSU has involved itself in a venture that carries with it very serious international consequences of a diplomatic and political nature. The fact that all governments have respected United Nations Resolution 550 up to the present time exposes the outrageousness of what SDSU is attempting to do. That the University is willingly

violating international laws to assist in upgrading the status of the "TRNC" is incomprehensible.

On behalf of Hellenic Electronic Center (HEC) www.greece.org Theodore G. Karakostas
TKarakosta@aol.com

Member of HEC Executive Council