



AtidMUN 2022



# ATIDMUN 2022



## Special Political and Decolonization Committee



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## CHAIR LETTERS

*MELILAH SINCLAIR*

Dear delegates,

Welcome to the SOCHUM committee!

My name is Melilah, and I'm a student at Atid Lod High School.

I've been in MUN since 7th grade. I love MUN and strongly believe in its goals and values. Participating in various conferences has given me many life skills and amazing experiences, from which I have learned a lot, and also enjoyed very much. I hope your MUN experience in our committee will be as fun and as positive as mine have been!

If you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact me - [melilah.sinclair@gmail.com](mailto:melilah.sinclair@gmail.com) or 0532297174

I look forward to seeing you all at the conference!

Yours,

Melilah Sinclair





## TOPIC A: ASSESSING THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF PRIVATE MILITARY COMPANIES

### *BACKGROUND TO THE TOPIC*

#### WHAT ARE PRIVATE MILITARY COMPANIES?

Private military companies, also known as PMCs, are private businesses that offer services related to conflicts. These services may include combat training, field operations, strategic and logistical support, information and intelligence gathering, security services, and regular maintenance practices.

PMCs differ from regular militaries in multiple ways. For example, they are known and registered as corporations or businesses with corporate structures and provide their services for financial gain rather than political or ideological motives. PMCs range from minor firms that offer a limited set of skills to enormous corporations, all with different origins and services. PMCs have been in use since around World War II, yet their employment and numbers have skyrocketed since the end of the Cold War..

Names and terms such as "mercenaries" and "private security companies" (PSCs) are often used to identify and discuss PMCs, although their exact definitions differ somewhat in meaning. Until recently, "mercenary" was the regular and formal term for actors involved in a conflict generally motivated solely by financial gain. This form of the term appeared in some international treaties, which were later criticized for lack of precision – as those focus on the motivation for actions, which are, in most cases, unclear and hard to identify. For example, American PMCs that operated on Iraqi soil have claimed that their motivation was patriotism and that they did not take action only for financial purposes (Beyani & Lilly, 2001). Many companies specializing in protection and security, instead of engaging in combat activities, identify themselves as PSCs. Even though, in most cases, their actions are essentially the same as those of PMCs. When protection has a severe impact on the outcome of the current situation, it is hard to distinguish between combative and protective roles.

#### PMSCs TODAY

The prevalence of PMSCs in both developed countries and international organizations is unprecedented. The U.S. Department of Defense cannot specify the number of contractors it



employs in Iraq, but estimates range between 100,000 and 180,000 (Singer 2003, 245). In a domestic capacity, the U.S. government hired Blackwater to provide emergency services after Hurricane Katrina (Ehrenberg 2005). The Canadian Army has outsourced its military logistics support to PMSCs (Singer 2003, 183). The Executive Outcomes offshoot Saracen provides de-mining operations support to the United Nations in Angola (International Campaign to Ban Land Mines 1999), and the PMSC DynCorp provided police to the UN peacekeeping mission in Bosnia (Lilly 2000, 57). In 1996, the UNHCR proposed that PMSCs be used to maintain security at the camps for Rwandan refugees in Goma (Vaux et al. 2001, 11), and NGOs such as CARE use PMSCs to provide armed escorts for food convoys (Vaux et al. 2001, 11). These examples show that PMSCs have gained a footing in domestic militaries and with other transnational actors.

PMSCs have undergone significant evolution in the aftermath of the Cold War, which is likely to continue since the PMSCs of today are flexible entities that respond to customer demand. An example of PMSC's response to market forces is Blackwater's recent re-branding exercise, whereby the company changed its name to Xe to avoid the effects of the bad publicity incurred by its activities in Iraq (Associated Press 2008). The changes in PMSCs are not only in image but also in substance. Saracen began de-mining activities to profit from a gap in the market in Angola. Similarly, the increase in PMSCs in Iraq reflects a response to market forces. Without a regulatory framework, the future of PMSC activity will be shaped by customer demand.

### USAGE OF PMCS

The PMC's clientele varies significantly – States, international organizations, NGOs, humanitarian and development agencies, multinational corporations, and even individuals may acquire the services of PMCs for various reasons. In the case of states or national bodies, these companies are used mainly to compensate for the lack of national capacity. PMCs are capable of offering high-tech skills in domains where the state's forces cannot afford to train personnel or provide the necessary resources for the completion of a task.

Other groups use PMCs to help them function in dangerous, remote, or distant areas. For example, PMCs have unique potential for use by the UN, as their deployment may imply less political controversy than deploying troops under the UN flag (though it is important to note that the use of PMCs by the UN is not in positive consensus). On the other hand, individuals and groups sometimes use PMCs for more insidious purposes, such as the overthrow of current governments or the protection of illegal activity.



Currently, there are more than one hundred and fifty active PMCs around the globe in more than fifty states and territories. According to the Iraqi-Afghanistan War Treaty Commission (Cimini), at least \$117 billion had been spent entirely on private contractors in the last two decades.

### PMCs IN THE 21ST CENTURY

PMCs have received growing attention in the last few decades (Baum & McGahan, 2011), primarily due to their growing usage in international conflicts and war zones, such as Iraq and southern Africa. A pivotal point in the growth of the PMCs and their place in modern 21st-century politics and international affairs occurred in March 2004, after the ambush and brutalization of four employees of the American PMC "Blackwater" in Fallujah, Iraq (Gettleman, 2004). US President Bush declared that "the United States could not stand idly by" and responded by escalating the Baghdad offensive, which was deemed essential from both a military and an ideological perspective, as the strength of US military operations in Iraq depended critically on the presence of PMCs. Another major incident that shaped today's global standpoint regarding PMCs is the killing spree that ended the life of 17 innocent Iraqi citizens in 2007 – a massacre by four American PMC employees (The Guardian, 2014).

Sovereign militaries now routinely use PMCs as sorcerers whose battlefield capabilities make other initiatives and plans possible. Without them, those armies will not be able to execute their plans in a desirable way. PMCs are widely used worldwide, and yet, there are no clear rules and regulations for them because of their status as "private companies." This major issue had brought many controversies among major powerhouse countries, such as in the UK when it was discovered that PMCs employed by the British government outside of the UK did not have to follow regular British rules and regulations.

### PREVIOUS ACTION

Many countries have recognized the issue with PMCs and are trying to draft international guidelines for their activities. However, the results of these debates have not yet been binding worldwide. Certain documents, such as the Montreux Document, try to provide clear guidelines for nations' use of PMCs: The document calls upon countries to take accountability, take appropriate measures designed to prevent misconduct by PMCs, and ensure the liability of criminal behavior. The document also stresses the importance that PMCs are also bound by international law, and must especially respect it during instances of conflict and war. The burden of criminal responsibility is divided into multiple facets: the individual, their employer (the PMC), and their customer (the



nation that hired them). While the document is extensive, it is not binding – currently, it only serves as a recommendation to the international community. In an attempt to strengthen the influence of the Montreux Document, the "International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers" was created – a document that lists all PMCs who comply with the Montreux Document's rules and regulations.

Both these documents provide a leading example for future UN decisions and international regulations on the topic.

### *CURRENT SITUATION*

One of the significant problems in dealing with PMCs is the lack of national and international regulations surrounding their actions (Kees, 2011). In all countries where PMCs are legalized and have operated in the past, legislation governing them is weak and not inclusive of all types of actions that PMCs carry out. In most countries, such legislation is severely indecisive and includes loopholes and unclear messages to PMCs and to the bodies hiring them. Therefore, national regulations on the topic are currently missing the relevant and effective eyesight of the issue.

Another worth mentioning is that many countries use PMCs to bypass military laws that apply to their national troops (Cameron, 2006). Moreover, PMCs are not always required to reveal the extent of their operations or the details of their expenses. PMC employees are not generally subject to service discipline or even trained to conduct operations following the Laws of Armed Conflict. Furthermore, PMCs can easily dissolve their operations, making their personnel challenging to trace in case of legal violations. Using PMCs also gives countries more human resources without needing further expenses (such as healthcare benefits or insurance).

Some countries further escalate the situation of the non-clear national laws by separating PMCs and PSCs. For example, under China's laws, all kinds of PMCs are prohibited inside China's borders. Still, the country constantly hires private security companies within China and along the BRI trade route.

This lack of clear distinction between different types of private contractors who provide combat and conflict assistance also stands in the way of regulating and handling all forms of PMCs in the international and state-internal spheres.



Currently, a legally-binding international document about the rules and regulations of PMCs published by the UN doesn't exist. The international community still does not agree on many key ideas concerning PMCs:

- What are PMCs?
- Should PMCs be placed under international regulation, or is national regulation enough?
- Which bodies should enforce said regulation? Should they be international or relatively private?
- What are the consequences of a violation of said regulations?

The confusion around key ideas of PMCs, the many legal loopholes in current regulation, and the lack of a single binding international document have caused many crises and escalated existing ones. Let's take the Wagner Group (see Appendix 1) as an example: a PMC employed by Russia that has attempted to assassinate Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy several times and has been highly influential in the recent invasion of Ukraine. Neither the ICJ nor the ICC can prosecute PMCs seeing as they are private contractors and not individuals or states. Military violations of international law are usually investigated by the ICJ, but PMCs will be judged on the national level – which gives room for corruption and abuse.

While tackling the issue of PMCs is complex and requires extensive knowledge of the topic, the outcome of this committee will shape the attitude toward PMC regulation going forward. We urge you all to research the ISSUE further to grasp the intricacies of this highly debated issue fully.

## ***QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER***

### FAMILIARIZING QUESTIONS

- Does your country use PMCs?
- Are there any state laws regarding the usage of PMCs in your country? What are they, and how do your country's government and parliament address those regulations?
- What types of PMCs are being used, and where?

### CLASH-ORIENTED QUESTIONS

- What is the definition of a PMC? Who shall provide the criteria for the term?



- Should the global community urgently implement practical policies to regulate PMSC intervention, or should we remain blind to their presence and risk the lives of innocent civilians?
- Should there be regulations on PMCs? Who should enforce those, and how?
- Which bodies should provide supervision on PMCs? Will they supervise them on the national or international level?
- Should countries with PMCs that have committed war crimes be given retroactive punishments by international bodies? If so, in what ways or forms?

### *APPENDIX 1: THE WAGNER GROUP*

The Wagner Group started operating in Ukraine in 2014. Military intelligence estimated that 1,000 mercenaries supported the pro-Russian militias fighting for control of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions. The group has been active in Ukraine, Syria, and African countries. In 2015, the Wagner Group started operating in Syria, fighting alongside pro-government forces and guarding oilfields. Wagner has been active in Libya since 2016, supporting the troops loyal to General Khalifa Haftar. Up to 1,000 Wagner mercenaries took part in Haftar's advance on the official government in Tripoli in 2019. In 2017, the Wagner Group guarded mines in the Central African Republic (CAR) to guard diamond mines. It was also reported to be protecting gold mines in Sudan.

In the weeks leading up to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it was thought Wagner Group mercenaries were involved in several so-called "false flag" attacks in eastern Ukraine designed to give Russia a pretext for attacking. Three Wagner Group mercenaries are alleged by Ukrainian prosecutors to have committed war crimes like murder and torture in Ukraine alongside regular Russian troops (their bases are always located next to each other). Currently, the Wagner Group is fighting (killing, murdering, and torturing) alongside regular troops in the Donbas region and has played an active role in invading some Ukrainian cities and villages. It is an unofficial Russian army unit with no casualties reported.

The Wagner group was established by a 51-year-old veteran of the Chechen wars, a former special-forces officer, and a lieutenant colonel with the GRU, Russia's military intelligence service. Running a mercenary army is against the Russian constitution; yet, Wagner can get involved abroad, and the Russian authorities can deny any connection. There are speculations that Russia's military intelligence agency, the GRU, secretly funds and oversees the Wagner Group.



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## TOPIC B PRESERVING PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

### *BACKGROUND*

#### THE ORIGINS OF MODERN CYPRUS

Throughout most of its documented history, Cyprus has been subjected to foreign powers whose natural resources and strategic importance was of great interest to them. Two of those early powers are Ancient Greece and the Byzantine empire, whose modern predecessors are still highly involved in Cyprus and are critical stakeholders in the issue at hand.

Cyprus had known many naval battles between great powers. These battles greatly influenced the island's history, often resulting in a transition of powers. One critical transition of powers happened in 1571. After relentless attacks, the Ottoman Empire was able to exhaust the Venetians that ruled the island.

The Ottomans maintained their grip on Cyprus for roughly 300 years. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the slowly collapsing empire faced a bitter war against Russia and was thus forced to pass control over Cyprus to the UK informally. As opposing sides in WWI, Cyprus was annexed to Britain in 1915, and 10 years later, Cyprus has eventually declared a British colony.

At that time, 75% of the population in Cyprus were Greek Cypriots, and the rest were Ottoman Cypriots. The British reign, conceived as a continuation of the Ottoman reign, caused a great divide between these two groups – the Ottoman Cypriots was quite contemptuous of Britain, while the Greek Cypriots were dissatisfied.

Greek Cypriots claimed that Britain was not interested in developing the island and supported the Enosis – a union between Greece and Cyprus. Greece has tried making numerous offers to “buy” Cyprus; however, they were unsuccessful. This situation catalyzed radical nationalist movements and guerrilla organizations in Cyprus. The most prominent of which was EOKA, a Greek-Cypriot far-right guerilla movement.

In April 1955, EOKA started a ruthless guerilla campaign against the British. The sheer intensity of the attacks caused the British to declare an emergency. The Turkish-Cypriots sided with the



British, and a Turkish-Cypriot guerilla organization fought with the British army against EOKA. After four vicious years, Cyprus received its independence.

### Independent Yet Divided

The newly independent Cyprus was left divided after the war. Despite many attempts to create a stable political ecosystem that is fair and preferable to both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, ethnic tensions only continued to aggravate, and the involvement of Greece and Turkey grew more prominent.

Many Greek Cypriots were still hoping for the Enosis, while Turkey advocated for a division (“Taksim”) of Cyprus into two separate entities. In 1971, a new guerrilla group called EOKA-B was formed. EOKA-B was supported by Greece and deemed a terror organization by Turkey, the UK, and the government of Cyprus.

After the death of its leading general, the Greek influence over EOKA-B intensified, causing further escalation. On July 15, 1974, EOKA-B, backed by Greece, overthrew the newly formed regime in Cyprus. Just five days later, Turkey invaded Greece, starting a short yet deadly war in which Turkey defeated Greece, conquering roughly a third of the island. Cyprus was then partitioned, with a UN buffer zone called “The Green Line.”, which remains until today, and thus Cyprus was split politically, ethically, and physically.

Shortly after the war, Turkey declared the Turkish Federal Country of Cyprus, a declaration that no other country recognizes. After 8 years of back-and-forth negotiations, no progress was achieved. Greek Cypriots who lived in the north moved south, and Turkish Cypriots who lived in the south moved north.

Since then, many reunification efforts have been made. One notable effort was the 2004 EU-sponsored reunification plan. The plan was tested using two referendums – one on the Greek side and one on the Turkish side. While most Turks voted for the plan, most Greeks opposed it, and as a result, this failed endeavor improved the legitimacy of Turkish Cyprus. Nonetheless, still, no country other than Turkey recognizes its independence.

### THE AEGEAN DISPUTE

Greece and Turkey are close neighbors, geographically speaking. Both countries have islands in the Ionian Sea, sometimes a few kilometers apart. Greek and Turkish islands are scattered around the

Ionian Sea, which inherently makes it difficult to properly determine the territorial waters of both countries and settle opposing claims over Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), fishing rights, and rights over natural resources.



***Figure 1:*** Map of Greece and Turkey.

As expected, under such Geopolitical circumstances, Greece and Turkey are intensely disputed over these issues. This dispute was called “The Aegean Dispute.” Based on the 12-century Seville map, Greece claims full territorial waters (12 nautical miles) and EEZ rights (200 nautical miles) to all Greek islands. Turkey disapproved of this claim, as it inherently harmed the territorial waters of the west coast of Turkey, as defined by the UNCLOS, and nonetheless, it was approved in the EC in the early 2000s. It is essential to mention that Turkey is not a signatory of UNCLOS, a legal issue in Turkey’s claim.

Turkey’s aspirations in the Mediterranean stem from a doctrine called the Blue Homeland Doctrine (Mavi Vatan). This doctrine seeks to increase Turkish involvement in the Eastern Mediterranean to provide Turkey with energetic independence, economic growth, and nautical might.



## The Economist

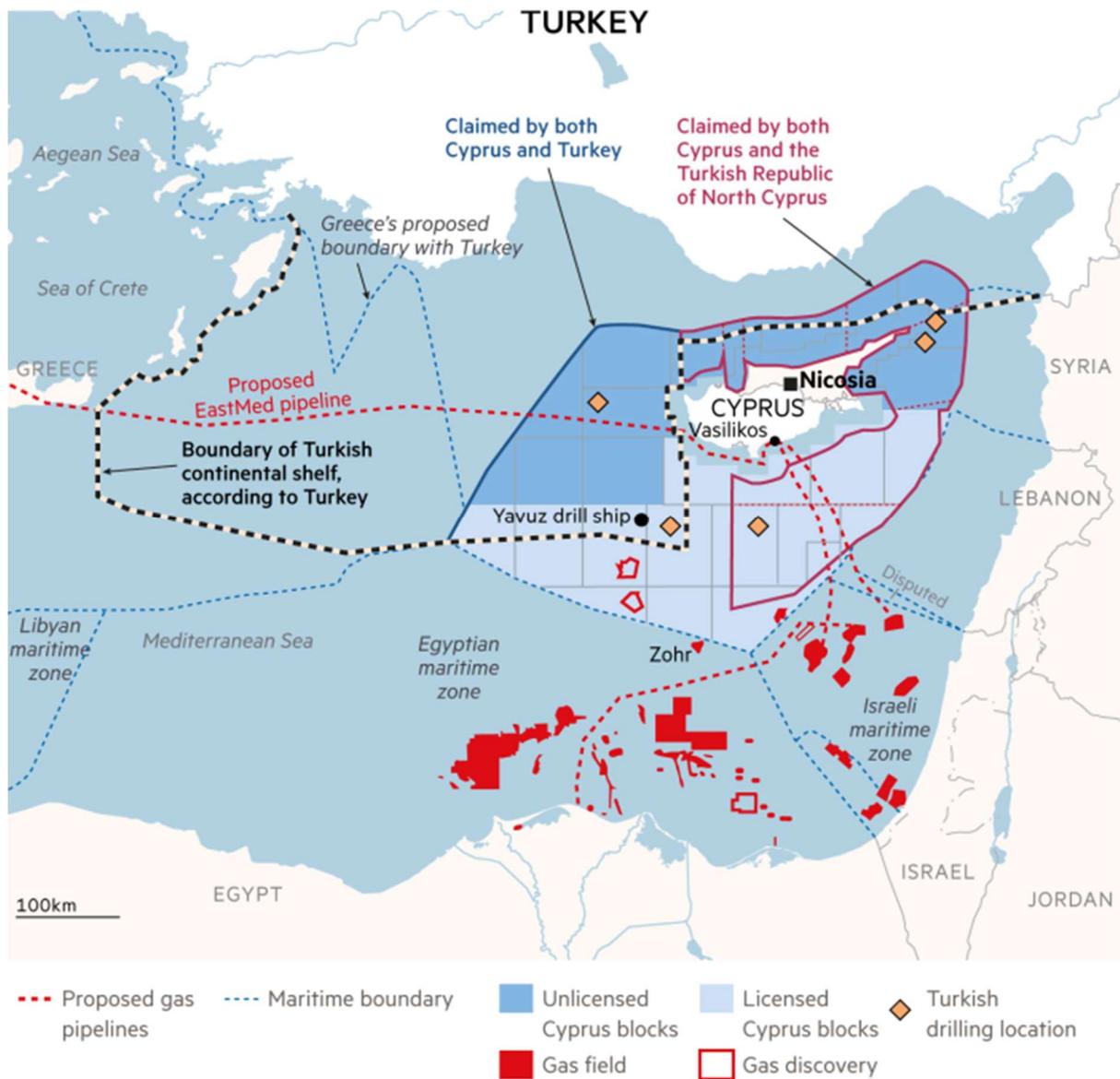
**Figure 2:** *Troubled waters – a map of Greek and Turkish claims over nautical rights.*

### **DISPUTES OVER NATURAL GAS DEPOSITS**

One of the critical motivations for the Turkish Mavi Vatan Doctrine is to obtain nautical rights for natural gas deposits in the Eastern Mediterranean. In February 2018, Turkey publicly rejected a joint agreement with Cyprus from 2003, determining the maritime border between the two countries. Shortly afterward, Turkey sent its navy to block a drilling ship operating on behalf of Cyprus inside its agreed-upon EEZ. Additionally, Turkey has begun drilling inside Cyprus' EEZ.

In 2019 the EU strongly criticized Turkey and requested that Turkey respect the sovereignty of its neighbors. Backed by the EU, Cyprus has suggested starting negotiations for the delimitation of the EEZ. However, no progress was made.

### The dash for gas in the Eastern Mediterranean

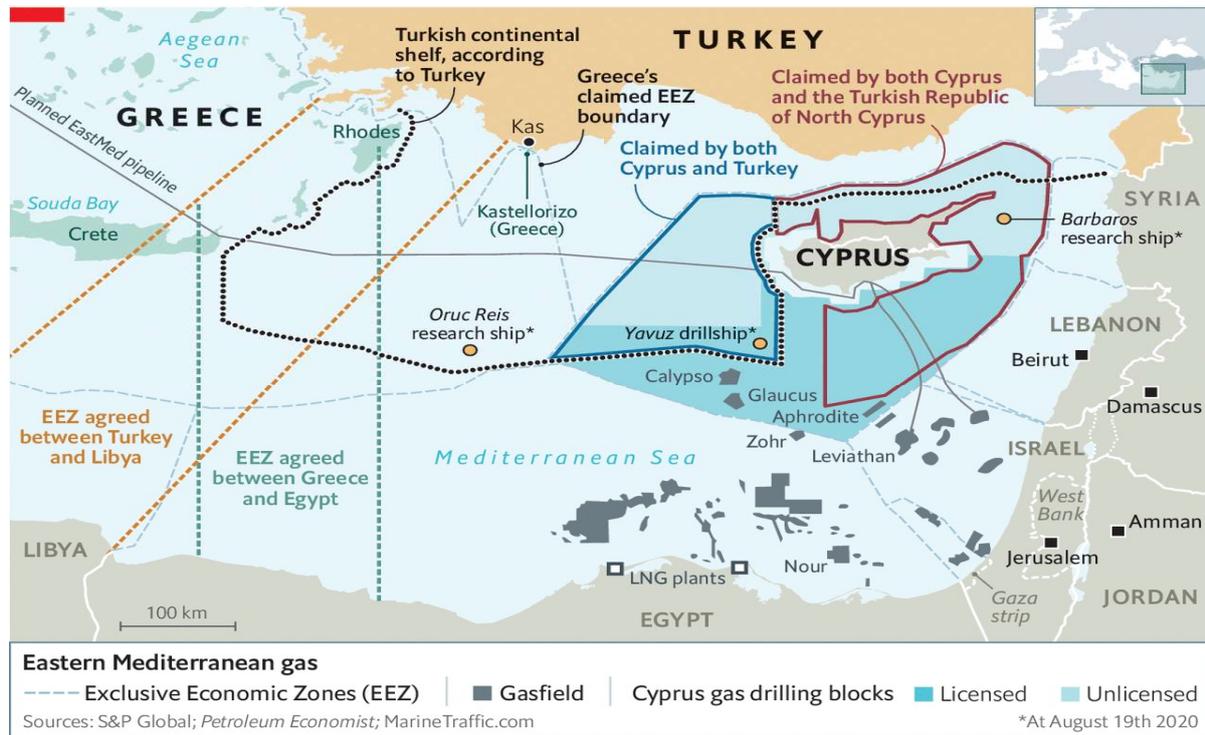


**Figure 3:** Turkish drilling outside its EEZ.



## *PAST ACTIONS*

1. In Late November 2019, Turkey reached an agreement with the Libyan GNA to establish a joint EEZ between the two countries, thus hindering the nautical rights of the island of Crete.
2. In early 2020, Cyprus, Greece, and Israel declared the EastMed pipeline project, aimed at connecting Italy and Europe to natural gas from the Levant via Cyprus and Greece. This pipeline project is expected to provide roughly 10% of Europe's demand for natural gas and reduce Europe's dependence on Russian gas, which currently flows through Turkey.
3. In June 2020, Greece and Italy signed an EEZ agreement, which improved the legitimacy of Greek nautical policy.
4. In August 2020, Greece reached an agreement with Egypt to establish a joint EEZ, which overlapped with the EEZ declared by Turkey and the GNA. In response, Turkey sent a research ship to the Greek island of Kastellorizo, just off the shores of Turkey, which further aggravated tensions between Greece and Turkey.
5. In October 2020, Greece and Turkey agreed to participate in talks to resolve their maritime conflicts. Turkey abandoned the negotiations after 3 days and sent another research ship near the island of Kastellorizo. Later that week, Turkey extended its Search and Rescue area (SAR).
6. In September 2021, Turkish frigates prevented a French research vessel from conducting surveys at the Greek EEZ, just 6 miles off Crete, whose waters Turkey claims as Turkish, based on the widely criticized joint EEZ it has created with the GNA.
7. A few days after the incident, Greece and France signed a joint defense deal. France and Greece are obligated to defend one another in case of third-party attacks. France also supplied navy frigates worth roughly 2 billion euros. This agreement is a landmark and the first of its kind ever signed between two NATO allies.
8. In early 2022, the US has withdrawn from the EastMed pipeline project, causing the cancellation of the endeavor.



The Economist

**Figure 4:** A map of the Aegean conflict.

## CURRENT SITUATION

During the past year, Turkey has taken a harder line and a far more confrontational stance against Greece as part of the revisionist concepts of Mavi Vatan. The first explicit attempt to contest Greece's sovereignty was made by the Turkish Prime Minister in December 2021, when he claimed that Greece must not militarize some of its islands, otherwise, it loses sovereignty over them.

The aforementioned claim was highly criticized by many parties. For instance: the EU claimed that "the sovereignty of Greece in these islands is indisputable" and that "the international agreements must be respected."

In July 2022, Turkish officials were photographed with a map showing Crete and many Greek islands as Turkish territory as a part of the Blue Homeland doctrine. The Greek PM demanded his Turkish counterpart clarify and explain his intentions, which he never did. In August 2022, Turkey claimed that Greece's defense systems were locked on Turkish fighter jets. A claim that was never proven and widely believed to be fake news propaganda.



Lastly, September 2022 is the climax in this evolving conflict. On September 3, Erdogan referred to multiple Greek islands as occupied and threatened a Turkish invasion. Greece responded by reiterating its sovereignty over the islands and its right to defend them and reported to NATO and the UN. Erdogan's statement was widely criticized by the EU and other parties. In response, France reminded Turkey of the pact signed between Greece and France.

Some experts assume that the recent aggravation of the conflict, and especially Turkey's stance stems from Erdogan's need to retain his seat in the upcoming 2023 elections in Turkey. Given that Turkey faces immense economic challenges, many believe that the Blue Homeland doctrine is primarily an effective distraction that can rally support for Erdogan among nationalist Turks.

The recent "September Crisis" gave Greece full justification and legitimacy to maintain a military presence on its islands neighboring Turkey.

### *CONCLUSION*

As clearly understood from this study guide, the conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean is a complicated and far-reaching conflict with a troubled history and many contradicting interests.

This committee must tackle multiple issues:

- Determining the status and legitimacy of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
- Promoting the disarmament and demilitarization of the region
- Resolving the Aegean Conflict between Greece and Turkey
- Drafting guidelines on the proper management of energy resources in the region

This is by no means an easy task, but we trust you to try your hardest to tackle the issue at hand.

Good Luck,

Your committee chairs

Melilah Sinclair and Sasha Efron



### *QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER*

- Should Northern Turkey be granted independence based on the South's disagreement with the EU's reunification proposal?
- Should the current maritime divisions be reevaluated?
- What should be done when a country acts illegally? Should it be somehow sanctioned? How exactly?
- How should Erdogan's recent threats be treated?
- Can an agreement be reached between Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus?
- What should be done if no agreement is reached?

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