

UN chief urges Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides to seize 'historic' chance for peace

30 June 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres today called on the leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus to grasp “an historic opportunity” to reach a comprehensive settlement to the conflict that has divided the Mediterranean island for more than four decades.

“The road back to Switzerland has not been easy, but the path to lasting peace never is,” Mr. Guterres [told](#) a press conference in the Swiss town of Crans-Montana, where the UN-facilitated talks are taking place.

The Conference on Cyprus, which began on 28 June, brings together Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci, as well as the guarantors – Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The European Union is attending as an observer.

“To get to this point, the leaders have overcome significant challenges and making unprecedented progress, and I salute the determination and common vision which has led them here,” the Secretary-General stated.

He added that the reconvening of the Conference offers “an historic opportunity to reach a comprehensive settlement to the conflict that has divided Cyprus for too many decades.”

Cyprus has been divided since 1974. The negotiations have come down to six main areas, which include new territorial boundaries, power-sharing and the economy.

“I firmly believe that, through determination and political will, it will be possible to clear this final hurdle and reach a comprehensive settlement,” Mr. Guterres said, recognizing that some sensitive and difficult issues remain to be resolved, including in the area of security and guarantees.

Asked what the UN would do if the sides failed to produce a settlement at the Conference, the Secretary-General said that the Organization is “not impatient” and its role continues to be providing support for the parties to find a solution.