

Dour 46th anniversary of Turkey's invasion of Cyprus



Monday, July 20, marked the dour 46-year anniversary of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

This year observance of the tragic anniversary comes amid heightened tension and provocations by Turkey in the eastern Mediterranean and Near East, while the one-third of the island republic still occupied by Turkish forces has witnessed ethnic cleansing and the systematic destruction of the Christian and cultural heritage, with churches often turned into stables by occupation troops and Turkish settlers from the mainland.

A memorial service was held on Monday in the free part of Nicosia for the officers and servicemen who fell in battle during the invasion.

In a statement, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis noted that "...46 after the Turkish invasion, the wound of Cyprus still bleeds...A series of aggressive actions are now being added to the illegal occupation of European territory, challenging the sovereign rights of Greece and the Republic of Cyprus; acts that violate international law, undermine stability and security in the Mediterranean, along with unhistorical decisions, insults to global cultural heritage, such as the conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque."

A similar message was issued by the Archbishop of Australia, His Eminence Makarios, on the occasion of the bleak anniversary, who referred to thousands of dead, missing and injured, as well as to their families, who remained behind in suffering and mourning.