



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris Calls On U.S. Government To Address Turkey's Aggression Against Cypriot And Armenian Communities

MICHAEL GIANARIS October 16, 2020

| ISSUE: **PRESIDENT ERDOGAN, US DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CYPRUS, ARMENIA, VAROSHA BEACH**



NEW YORK – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris is calling on the US Department of State to take action in the crises in Cyprus and Nagorno-Karabach. In a letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Senator Gianaris asks the federal government to promote stability in the Mediterranean and Caucasus regions following aggressive moves by Turkish president

Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

“The Greek-Cypriot and Armenian diaspora are properly alarmed at recent destabilizing aggressions by the Turkish government,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “I urge the State Department to take action to calm these regions, responding diplomatically to these incursions to protect peaceful and democratic interests.”

The Turkish leader recently intervened in the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan and also opened access to Varosha, a seaside resort community in Cyprus that has remained closed since Turkey’s illegal invasion and ongoing occupation of northern Cyprus.

Senator Gianaris’ full letter appears below.

October 16, 2020

Honorable Michael R. Pompeo, Secretary of State

Department of State

2201 C Street NW, 7th Floor

Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo,

I write regarding a serious situation involving regional stability in the Middle East and in the Caucasus region.

Many Americans from the Greek, Cypriot and Armenian diaspora are increasingly alarmed at recent aggression in Cyprus and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabach) by the Republic of Turkey under President Erdogan. These actions violate international norms and threaten peace and stability in two already-volatile regions.

As I am sure you are aware, in recent weeks President Erdogan and his like-minded allies have escalated violence in these two locations, causing significant civilian casualties, violating long-standing agreements, and undermining ongoing efforts to create new ones.

Most recently, the government of Turkey decided to re-open Varosha, a resort town in Turkish-occupied northern Cyprus, in violation of international law and United Nations Security Council resolutions. Turkey's increasingly problematic behavior is also escalating the ethno-religious conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan by, among other methods, using American-made F-16's and cynically financing a mercenary force comprised of Syrian civil war survivors to suppress Armenians in Artsakh.

I respectfully urge you to spearhead efforts to re-stabilize both regions by persuading instigators such as the leaders of Turkey and its allies to desist in actions that undermine the safety and security of Cypriot and Armenian people who deserve peace, security, and independent self-determination.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to discussing this matter with you in greater detail in the near future.

Sincerely,

*Senator Michael Gianaris
Deputy Majority Leader*