

Time to act

On 20 April 2003, Rauf Denktaş announced the partial lifting of restrictions at designated crossing points across the occupation line, known as the green line. For the first time in almost 30 years, thousands of people started crossing from the free areas to the occupied areas and vice versa.

At that time, *Lobby for Cyprus* had to consider the situation carefully. It was clear that the desire and longing of many refugees and compatriots to return to their homes and occupied ancestral lands was overwhelming and unstoppable, for obvious reasons. People had waited for years to see their homes, their villages and towns, to take their children and grandchildren back to those beautiful northern shores and to those areas which had been denied to them and nothing could stop them. In response, *Lobby* released a statement with a clear message to the refugees and to those with properties in the occupied north. We, said amongst other things:

Lobby for Cyprus statement

April 2003

The wall has cracked. Hundreds of thousands of Greek Cypriot refugees have returned to see their towns and villages, their homes and properties. Thousands have gone over to see for the first time since the Turkish invasion of 1974...

Lobby for Cyprus calls on all refugees (in Cyprus and the Diaspora). Not to go over just for the joy, but to compile photographic and other material evidence to prepare for their claim and right to return!

Remember your roots; never forget your rights, never give up your land!

Lobby for Cyprus says:

GO HOME AND RECLAIM

Lobby's advice of two years ago, still holds true today.

During the last year we have sadly witnessed an explosion of illegal construction of holiday villas and apartments in the occupied areas and, in particular, in those properties belonging to the evicted inhabitants of Ayios Avrosios and surrounding areas.

Almost on a daily basis we hear of people having returned to their properties to find such construction progressing rapidly. At *Lobby for Cyprus* we also receive a constant stream of calls and emails expressing frustration and seeking our advice on what action to take. Other compatriots have done so already. We congratulate Mr Apostolides for suing, successfully, Mr and Mrs Oram, the British trespassers who uprooted all the trees from his land and built a house without his knowledge or permission. However more of us must have the courage to do the same.

If you have a property in the occupied area that has been

exploited by illegal trespassers, in particular EU citizens, *Lobby for Cyprus* will be pleased to advise and assist you in relation to preparing legal proceedings against them.

I repeat *Lobby's* advice of two years ago – please put together the evidence required (as set out below) and prepare for action:

- A title-deed – a clear title, which is in your name and not one that belongs to your parents, uncles or relatives.
- A land registry map of the area in which your property is situated (Topografiko).
- Details of who currently lives or uses your property and since when. Don't worry how they 'acquired' your property, ie if they 'bought' it or are 'renting' it.
- If possible, the address of the trespasser, in his/her original country of residence or their car number plate.
- A valuation in Cyprus of the extent of your losses in respect of the stolen property for the period of 'residency' by the trespasser, including for loss of rent etc.
- Finally, the courage and determination to fight for your rights.

It is up to us, the ordinary people who have, every day for the last 30 years, been feeling the pain and frustration at the continued occupation of our homes, to do something. With the first opportunity, therefore, please gather the required evidence (as set out above), then contact us and we will advise how to proceed with your legal action. Nobody else will do it for us.

In the same statement we made the following remark about the Annan plan:

Lobby for Cyprus statement

April 2003

...The UN's plan intended to dispossess at least one hundred thousand refugees by forcing them to accept 'compensation' or 'land exchange' rather than reclaiming what is rightfully theirs. It was a plan not intent on serving justice, but serving the self interests of others.

Let's remain alert and determined so as not to allow this ever to happen.

We will struggle for our rights and for a free and united Cyprus for as long as it takes.



- The 3RS:**
- 1 Removal of all Turkish troops from Cyprus**
 - 2 Repatriation of all colonists**
 - 3 Return of all refugees to their homes without preconditions, restrictions or discrimination**

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