

Cuban Committee for Human Rights. He is an independent journalist who has contributed to CubaPress, Cuba Free Press and Nueva Prensa, all publications who seek to expose the nightmarish reality imposed by the totalitarian regime.

Because Mr. Argüelles Morán fought to expose the truth about the ruthless dictator's politics of fear and repression, he has been constantly harassed by Castro's thugs since 1997. According to Amnesty International, the harassment Mr. Argüelles Morán has endured includes threats, warnings, and detentions in the totalitarian gulag. On January 15, 1999 he was summoned to appear before a chief of the so-called Revolutionary National Police where Mr. Argüelles Morán was found to be a "danger" because he didn't work for a state enterprise. On January 27, 1999 he was locked up for two days to prevent him from covering the birthday celebrations of Jose Martí on January 28.

On March 20, 2003, as part of the totalitarian regime's ruthless crackdown on pro-democracy activists, Mr. Argüelles Morán was arrested and, after a sham trial, sentenced to 20 years in the totalitarian gulag. According to CubaNet, Mr. Argüelles Morán has been confined in a security cell with inmates held for common crimes who are mistreating him. He also reportedly has kidney problems. Let there be no doubt, Mr. Argüelles Morán has been "sentenced" to 20 years in Castro's violent, inhumane totalitarian gulag because he believes in, and wrote about, freedom, democracy, and human rights for the people of Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Argüelles Morán is languishing in the deplorable, inhuman conditions of Castro's totalitarian gulag, simply because he wrote the truth about the tyrant's repressive regime. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate release of Pedro Argüelles Morán and every prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

REGARDING THE PROPOSED PLAN TO REUNIFY CYPRUS

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, I rise to express my deep concerns with the final Annan plan to reunify Cyprus which will be voted on by both the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots on Saturday.

I am very fortunate and privileged to represent Astoria, Queens—one of the largest and most vibrant communities of Greek and Cypriot Americans in this country. It is truly one of my greatest pleasures as a Member of Congress to participate in the life of this community, and the wonderful Cypriot friends that I have come to know are one of its greatest rewards.

Along with these friends, I have been monitoring the negotiations to reunify Cyprus very closely during the past few months. On July 20, 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, and to this day continues to maintain an estimated 35,000 heavily armed troops. Nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots, who fell victim to a policy of ethnic cleansing, were forcibly evicted from their homes and became refugees in their own country.

Despite the hardships and trauma caused by the ongoing Turkish occupation, Cyprus has registered remarkable economic growth, and the people living in the Government-controlled areas enjoy one of the world's highest standards of living. Sadly, the people living in the occupied area continue to be mired in poverty.

Last month, 46 members of the Hellenic Caucus joined in a letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to express their hope that any agreement to reunify Cyprus would explicitly recognize, among other provisions, property rights, the demilitarization of Cyprus, the establishment of the legal obligations of the guarantor powers (Turkey, Greece and the United Kingdom), and the presence of United Nations troops throughout a transitional period.

I also led a delegation of members of the Hellenic Caucus to meet with Secretary General Kofi Annan to discuss the negotiations regarding the reunification of Cyprus before it enters the European Union on May 1st. We expressed our support for the Secretary General's leadership in bringing the parties to the bargaining table, but expressed concerns regarding some of the issues that remained open: property rights, governance, free movement between Greek and Turkish areas of the island, and the pace of demilitarization of the island.

We stressed the importance of having a central government that has the ability to make decisions, and we expressed concern about limitations on the ability of Cypriots to travel unimpeded to all areas of the island.

Unfortunately, the negotiators were unable to reach a consensus, and Secretary General Annan was forced to step in to fill in the remaining gaps in the settlement. This final plan will now be voted on in two separate referenda by both the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots on Saturday, April 24.

The Greek Cypriots, who have worked continuously to end the forcible division of the island through a viable and lasting settlement, have several valid and important concerns with this final plan, which may lead them to reject it.

First, the Annan plan allows the indefinite presence of Turkish troops in Cyprus with a gradual decrease to 650 troops over a period of 14 years. The presence of these troops will prevent the full and genuine independence of Cyprus.

Next, while the plan allows the guarantor powers (Turkey, Greece, UK) to intervene unilaterally to preserve the "constitutional order" of the United Cyprus Republic and its constituent states, it neglects to clarify that the Treaty of Guarantee does not empower military intervention. This omission is troubling especially because Turkey believes that it still has the right to intervene militarily in Cyprus.

Previous UN Security Council resolutions called for the withdrawal of all settlers from Cyprus that were brought from Turkey after 1974, since the colonization of occupied territories is a crime under international law. The final plan provides that 45,000 of the settlers will automatically become citizens of the United Cyprus Republic. It also allows a large number of additional settlers to remain in Cyprus as permanent residents and after four years to apply for Cypriot citizenship. As a result, the vast majority of approximately 115,000 Turkish settlers, who are now illegally in Cyprus, could stay in Cyprus.

Under the Annan plan, for the first 19 years or until Turkey's accession to the EU, the number of Greek Cypriots who wish to permanently live in the Turkish Cypriot Constituent State (TCCS) will not be able to exceed 18 percent of its total population. After that time, their number will be permanently restricted to not more than 33.3 percent of the total population. Because the Greek Cypriots who will be permanently living in the TCCS will have its internal citizenship status, they will not have the right to participate in the elections for its 24 representatives in the federal Senate. Therefore, the plan establishes a system based on permanent ethnic division, while denying fundamental democratic rights to a segment of the population.

Finally, according to the Annan plan, the one third of the compensation to legal owners (Greek Cypriot refugees), who will be losing their properties, shall be guaranteed by the Federal State. Because the Federal State's sources will derive from Greek Cypriots by nine tenths and only by one tenth from Turkish Cypriots, the Greek Cypriots will be compensating their own loss of property. Therefore, instead of Turkey, they will be paying for the results of the Turkish invasion of 1974.

It is clear that divisions among people create harmful, destructive environments. I am disappointed that more progress was not made on these issues prior to the completion of the final plan. No matter what the Greek Cypriots decide on April 24, I will continue to support them in every way possible.

COMMENDING LOPEZ LOBOS, TEXAS CLASS 4A STATE SOCCER CHAMPIONS

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Brownsville, Texas, Lopez High School Lobos for their victory last weekend at the Class 4A State soccer championship, winning the game 2-1 and finishing their season at 25-4-1.

No team is greater than the student body and parents who support them, and that was Lopez' not-so-secret weapon. Over two-thirds of the crowd was there to support the Lobos, and their chants of "Si se puede" (we can do it) inspired this victory.

Lopez High School brought home to Brownsville the first championship title in UIL soccer. To find Brownsville teams that won State titles, you have to go back to 1985 and 1967 (both were cross country championships).

Lopez won seven playoff games for the right to compete for the State championship. Awful weather even played a part in the tournament. The title match was originally scheduled for the week before, but heavy rain and lightning postponed the championship game to another site and another time.

As any athlete can tell you, the rhythm of your game is a large part of the overall effort, and being mentally prepared for a game on a certain date—then having to postpone the game—can play havoc on your rhythm. But not for these young athletes; for them it did not matter that their shot at the title was postponed for a week. They redoubled their efforts