

Contribution to the

# Political Studies Association

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**Greek Politics Specialist Group: Session 4, Wednesday April 6th, 11:00 - 12:30**

**GPSG Panel 1: Greek Foreign and Defence Policy**

Panel Convenors: Roman Gerodimos (Bournemouth), Maria Zisouli (AUEB)

Panel Chair: Stella Ladi (Sheffield)

**Paper 1: "The S-300 Missiles Crisis Revisited: A Structural Realist Approach"**

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## **Introduction.**

If there is something that the public opinion was latent of its attention, in the case of the tragic events connected with the "S-300" missiles crisis, is not so much the diplomatic dimension of the analysis or the consequences of the crisis to the political life, but the military-tactic dimension of the problem. The diplomatic background was debated quite thoroughly in the Greek press, in contrast to the strategic and military variables of the crisis that there was not much public discourse about it. And this fact exactly constitutes a methodological paradox in our case. In a strictly military matter, which entailed expert knowledge of inaccessible technology, military terminology and caused a profound impact on national security and regional strategy, there was actually not particular emphasis on the military aspect of the balance of power.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On the concept of "power," see, the following studies, in chronological order: R. Dahl, "The Concept of Power", *Behavioural Science*, Vol. 2, 1957, pp. 201-215. K. Deutsch, *The Nerves of Government: Models of Communication and Control*, Free Press, New York, 1966, pp. 110-127 and of the same author, *The Analysis of International Relations*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1968, pp. 21-39. R. Lieber, *Theory and World Politics*, Winthrop, Cambridge, Mass., 1972, pp. 89-98. R. Cline, *World Power Assessment: A Calculus of Strategic Drift*, Georgetown University, CSIS,

Nevertheless, the discussion focused mainly on the external political pressure, stemming from the dynamic actors of international system.

Aiming at the creation of legitimacy over or merely the justification of specific political choices, regarding the issue of the final repudiation of the common defence strategy between Cyprus and Greece, arguments creating distraction were launched that the missiles “were not a panacea” or that the missiles did not in “themselves alone protect” Cyprus”. We will try to cast light on the fact that the chosen politics of the makers of the Greek foreign policy, were basically controversial.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Advantages of the Original Plan and The Diplomatic Bartering.**

The strenuous effort of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece to integrate Cyprus to the European Union (E.U.) was, from the angle of the writer, the unique essential and not myopic strategic counterbalance of Cyprus versus Turkey, in the long term. Categorically, the incontrovertible incorporation of Cyprus into the EU was the apogee of a success story of the Greek diplomacy. In parallel with the aforementioned strategic aim, Athens and Nicosia altogether decided not to accept the Turkish occupation of the northern part of the island, by means of procuring the Russian anti-aircraft defence missile system “S-300”. Filtered information unveiled by governmental departments, circulated through the grapevine and exaggerated by the Greek press, defended the view that for the first time after the Turkish invasion of 1974, there was a real struggle to brake the accomplished fact of Cyprus being “hostage” to Turkey, by way of the fulfillment of a common defence strategy between Greece and Cyprus. Let alone the rhetoric, it was incontestable the fact that the anti-aircraft missile system would augment the risk of occupation of Cyprus for Turkey and it would abstract the “Cypriot Issue” out off stagnation. Ergo, the Greek Cypriot side would attract the attention of the foreign offices of the western European countries, a actuality that, with appropriate political handling, could yield diplomatic profits, one of which was that Turkey could be fettered to negotiate for a viable solution of the problem of the island.<sup>3</sup> On the basis of defensive diplomacy, it was likely that the missiles could be bargained with Turkey, provided that the latter acquiesced in the solution of the demilitarization of the island and the retreat of the Turkish occupation forces from the northern part of Cyprus.<sup>4</sup> In this case, the advocates of the realistic approach in the Greek foreign policy anticipated that the Turkish Cypriot side would feel more motivated to go to negotiations with the Greek Cypriots, forasmuch the method of “stick and carrot” would function, from now on, with its two dimensions (“stick” and “carrot”).

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Washington DC, 1975, page 11. R. Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1981.

<sup>2</sup> One of the best recent studies coping with the “security dilemma” in the Greek-Turkish relations, but also in the ways to surpass it, see M. Aydin and K. Ifantis (eds.), *Turkish-Greek Relations: The Security Dilemma in the Aegean*, Routledge, London, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. Lazaridis, [in Greek] “The Diplomacy of Nazredin Hontza”, *Journal Strategy*, December 12, 1998, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> M. Drouziotis, [in Greek] “The Major and the Minor,” Newspaper *Eleftherotypia*, August 29, 1998, p.5.

## **The Improvement of the Defensive Equilibrium.**

Naturally, the obtainment of the “S-300” would secure the enhancement of the defensive balance on the island. From the moment that the Russian missile system would have been installed, the theories of the “crisis management”, “tension dis-escalation” and of “arms control and limitation” would have been a coin with two sides, since both the opponents would maintain equivalent amounts of power that would encourage the mutual disarmament.<sup>5</sup> In this way, the abolition in practice of the “embargo” in arms sales that the United States administration had imposed against the two communities of the island, would become possible.<sup>6</sup> That embargo was proved in essence one sided, because it turned virtually against the Greek Cypriots, on grounds that Turkey never stopped to send immense cargoes of military equipment of American origin to the regime of Rauf Denktash.<sup>7</sup> Even more, the amplification of the security status of the Greek Cypriots and the comparable counterbalancing of power that was about to come true, would hinder Turkey from creating blockades contra the integration trajectory of Cyprus towards the European Union.

## **Gap Between Expectations and Practical Implementation.**

One of the inconsistencies in the case of the “S-300” missiles crisis is the following. At the end of the quagmire, there was a decision by the Greek government that the Russian missiles could not be allowed to station on the island of Cyprus. In this point, our effort to illustrate what lied underneath the deeds and the words of the Greek political leaders, is of utmost importance. The prior resolution of the administration to provide Cyprus with the “S-300” anti-aircraft defense long distance missile system compounds the zenith or the “gem of the crown” of a conscious strategic choice, apropos to the crucial matter of the defensive contribution of Greece the security of Cyprus, which selection was in fact made by the ruling socialist party. The choice above was known as the “Doctrine of the Common Defence” between Greece and Cyprus. There was an painstaking and agonizing endeavor by the governmental communicators to present the new doctrine as the ultimate chance to discard the strategic *faits accomplis* on the island of Cyprus and, even more, to check the endless procrastination caused by the Turks on the nusus to find a solution via intercommunity dialogue.<sup>8</sup> Even if the above mentioned plans were maximalistic in theory and difficult to come true in essence, then, in the worst case scenario, the whole enterprise would be a good enough undertaking to reinforce Cyprus’ sheer defence.

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<sup>5</sup> This topic is dealt by the assumption of the “security dilemma” facing antagonistic nation-states and it was conceived by the following theorist: J. Hertz, Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, January 1950, pp. 157-180. As well as, of the same author see *Political Realism and Political Idealism*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1951. Special emphasis on the treatment or surpassing of the security dilemma grants the essay of R. Jervis, “Co-operation under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2, January 1978.

<sup>6</sup> Jenick, Gabelnick, Hating, Washburn, William and Tanar, *Arming Repression: US Arms Sales to Turkey during the Clinton Administration*, World Policy Institute, New York, 1999.

<sup>7</sup> K. Adam, [in Greek] “The Hypocrisy of the US”, Newspaper *Eleftherotypia*, November 15, 1998, p.7.

<sup>8</sup> Kyriazis, N., [in Greek] *For a New Power Balance Between Greece and Turkey: Redefining the Greek Defence Doctrine*, Editions Hestia, Athens, 1997, p. 137.

The original idea, omitting the risks and objections, the fostering of which might entail, could be characterized at least as useful for the foreign policy of Greece, on grounds that it offered flexibility of decision making and ample of policy options. Nevertheless, this action was not handled with appropriate preparation and fair execution. And this is the first paradox of our narrative. However, our case does not establish a classical “capabilities-expectation gap,” as defined by Professor Christopher Hill,<sup>9</sup> but antithetically to paraphrase his findings, it institutes a “capability-implementation gap”. The Greek-Cypriot leadership beseeched to supply itself with the proper means, which were the Russian missiles and in this way it obtained the analogous capabilities, after all, yet when the time was there to execute the plan, its tactical management was terrible.

### **The Inefficiency of the Cypriot Defence.**

Till nowadays the armed forces of Cyprus, the so-called “National Guard” were consisted, till lately, only of an army corps, suitable only for parades and incapable of resisting the decisively superior Turkish Cypriot forces, armoured with American equipment. Just a few years ago, there was a radical modernization of the panzer division, with the procurement of T-80U Russian tanks, BMP-3 armoured personnel carriers and a number of Mil Mi-28 Hind helicopters. The improvement of the army notwithstanding, there could not be a chance for realistic defence of the island in the depressing absence of an air force. Consequently, a defensive fortification of Cyprus would imply the neutralization of the Turkish menace. On account of that, there was crystal-clear need for mobile radars, command control and communication systems and a solid anti-aircraft warfare umbrella. These modest purchases, which would not imply huge amounts of money, would ensure the pragmatic defence of Cyprus, in combination with the dedication of a Greek Fighter Wing to this cause.

The second paradox has to do with the fact that the improvement of the island’s defence that was supposed to be the cardinal object of the plan above, which established the basis of “special relationship” between Greece and Cyprus, in the grand finale it was rendered as the impotent point of the common defence doctrine, when it was sucked off its trustworthiness. In other worlds, although the doctrine took the strategic “anemia” for granted and aimed to restore the strategic balance with Turkey, in fact, when coping with the issue, the Greek Cypriot defence turned out to be even more inadequate.<sup>10</sup> This is what we are going to prove in this article.

### **The Turkish Threat for Cyprus.**

We will try to define the typology of the certain threat that Turkey stands for Cyprus.<sup>11</sup> In the sovereign territory of Turkey, there are at least thirteen main tactical

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<sup>9</sup> Hill, C. J., *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*, Routledge, London, 1996, pp. 10-22.

<sup>10</sup> On the notion of “balance of power,” see, in chronological order: R. Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, Double Day, New York, 1966. S. Hoffman, *The State of War: Essays on Theory and Practice of International Politics*, Preager, New York, 1965. H. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Knopf, New York, 1978.

<sup>11</sup> See D. Sezer, “Turkey’s Security Policies”, *Adelphi Paper*, No. 164, IISS, London 1981, as well as the more recent study of Blank, Johnsen, Pelletier, Stephen and William, *Turkey’s Strategic Position at*

airbases, in the Central and Southeastern Anatolia. Besides, the Turkish armed forces own a number of air control radar systems, either permanently established on the ground, or mobile mounted on vehicles. We have to underline that the mobile radar systems are burdensome to be located by the enemy airforce. Distinct from that, on the occupied lands of the northern Cyprus, there are two more airbases. By exhibiting the above elements of the Turkish military power, we want to divulge that the Turkish Air Force has the insurmountable capability to perform air strikes in the region of Southeast Mediterranean, considering the fact that actually Cyprus had not and continues not to have an air force to array against Turkey.<sup>12</sup> Of even greater importance is the fact that Turkey possesses plenty of military systems of high technology, the so-called “power multipliers,” which as a matter of fact make the difference between two enemies, in whichever instance they are used, not only at the modern battlefield, but also during peacetime. The power “multipliers” that Turkey maintains are advanced satellite telecommunications, updated electronic warfare means, high-tech information systems for operational planning of the air force and, last but not least, new flying tankers.<sup>13</sup>

Altogether, combined with the fact that Cyprus is geographically exposed in front of Turkey, not being far away but a few kilometers from the opposite coast, then makes the strategic equilibrium to seem gloomy for the Greek Cypriots, in case of a martial collision.<sup>14</sup> The situation is even worse, if we bare in mind that the Turkish joint staff showed the readiness to invent and put to practice a detailed tactical scenario, titled “Enlarged Horizon”, with an aim to challenge the primitive organization and the imaginative content of the doctrine of common defence, between the nations-states of Greece and Cyprus. According to this plan, the Turkish armed forces gathered the appropriate means to block the communication lines of the Greek air force and navy towards the island of Cyprus.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Quality and Quantity Deficit of Greece.**

Inasmuch as Greece’s comparable lesser number of third generation fighting aircrafts,<sup>16</sup> was heavily burdened with the task of putting to practice the doubtless much longed air force umbrella over Cyprus. Characteristic of the awkwardness of the Greek “General Staff of National Defence”, is the fact that, during the annual tactical exercise named “Archer,” the joint chiefs of staff were coerced to order the taking off eighty Greek fighters, having as their primary role the distraction of the adversary Turkish aircrafts. The objective of this agonizing and tortuous mass mobilization of

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*the Crossroads of World Affairs*, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> Illuminating is the study of S. Elegdag, “Two and a Half War Strategy,” *Perceptions*, Ankara, May 1996.

<sup>13</sup> M. Fisunoglou, “Reorganisation of the Turkish Land Forces- Integration of Reinforcements and Host Nation support”, *NATO’s Sixteen Nations*, Special Edition, Vol. 1, Brussels, 1993.

<sup>14</sup> On the geographic role of Turkey, see R. Chase, E. Hill and P. Kennedy (eds.) *The Pivotal States: A New Framework for US Policy in the Developing World*, Norton and Company, New York, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> N. Kadritzke, “The Desires of the Turkish-Cypriots”, Newspaper *Le Monde Diplomatique*, English Edition, 6 September 1998, p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> See the *Military Balance 1998-1999*, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, Brassey’s, London, 1999. From the comparison of the air forces of the two neighbouring countries derives that the analogy of the Turkish modern (third generation) fighting aeroplanes to the Greek modern aircrafts was two to one, throughout the year 1998.

the “Hellenic Air Force” (H.A.F), was for solely six Greek fighters to penetrate the iron collar of the enemy air force and make it through reaching over the territory of Cyprus.<sup>17</sup> To make the argument above even clearer, it has to be construed that the whole fleet of third generation fighters of the Hellenic Air Force (HAF), which was more or less eighty aircrafts, at the time, had to take off the ground, in order that a small number of them, as we saw above, could attain to navigate over Nicosia, in display of solidarity to the Greek Cypriots or to participate in local exercises.<sup>18</sup>

Therewith, the rudimentary deficiency and the proportional antiqueness of the Greek air force become unequivocal. A central proposition of this article is that, by virtue of the dearth of provision to solve the dismal issue of the air coverage of Cyprus, the Russian missiles should never arrive at the island. The preceding thesis outlines and justifies the antithesis of this article with the political trajectory that the matters followed. It derives by the analysis that, presumably, it might have been rationalistic and convenient to choose the scenario of the placement of the S-300 missiles, subsequent to (and only when) the new Greek Fighter Wings would have become operational. The new wings were about to receive forty new F-16 Block 50 fighting aircrafts ordered by the previous political leader of the Ministry of National Defence, Ioannis Varvitsiotis. Accordingly, the Russian missiles should have stationed on the island, in the precise point of time, when there would have been adequate amount of power and of air-superiority, on the part of Greece. The foregoing discussion ascertains the improvisation of the preparation, as far as the political choice of the proper timing to erect an issue of missiles’ procurement is concerned.<sup>19</sup>

From the writers’ point of view, the most fair estimate is the one, which acknowledges that Greece was not adroit to offer air-coverage to Cyprus, not even after the acquisition of the forty new General Dynamics F-16 C/D Block 50 Fighting Falcons, bought under the contract named “Peace Xenia II.” The previous fighters would have better be used to amend the murky military balance, vis a vis the Turkish air force, over the Aegean Sea. These planes should not be committed to the security of Cyprus. Ultimately, the balance was restored, six years later, with the novel purchase of sixty Lockheed Martin F-16 Block 52+ fighting aircrafts, under the contract “Peace Xenia III,” which was signed by the new socialist Minister of Defence, Akis Tsochatzopoulos. The Block 52+ planes landed the Greek airbases during the years 2003-2005. The aforementioned aircrafts stood for the state-of-the-art of global aerodynamics and were finely equipped with the pertinent means, to wit highly evolved radar, precocious avionics and conformed fuel tanks, making easier the getting to Cyprus. In fact, from the year 2004 and on, the Hellenic Air Force established the air-superiority again over the Aegean. The previous time that Greece had the air-superiority was at the beginning of the ‘80ies and Athens lost this primacy, when the Turkish state built the industrial base that manufactured the “F-16,” in collaboration with the General Dynamics company.

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<sup>17</sup> N. Chasapopoulos, “Hard Dogfights Over the Aegean See”[in Greek], article in the newspaper *To Vima*, 3 January 1999, page A23.

<sup>18</sup> The fact that exclusively third generation aircrafts took off, remains an assumption. It seems most probable that a certain intermixture of fighter types, namely a combination of second generation fighters with third generation fighters, implicitly operated, considering the obliging responsibilities of Hellenic Air Force in the entire geographic region of the Greek national soil.

<sup>19</sup> On the military procurements of Greece and Turkey see *SIPRI Yearbook 1999*, SIPRI, Stockholm, 1999, as well as the *Strategic Survey 1998-1999*, IISS, Brassey’s, London, 1999.

## The Turkey's Competence to React

It would be interesting to examine minutely the method, in which the Turkish political-military establishment responded upon the actions of the Greek side. Did the armed forces of Turkey enjoy the qualification and the sufficiency to affront and defy operationally the Russian missiles or not? Were the S-300 missiles indeed a “super-weapon,” as was presented by a keen part of the international press? It is quite unclouded and conspicuous by now, by the study in the chapter overhead, that there was a substantial necessity for the Greek decision-makers to take some measures, before or at least, in parallel with the obtainment of the S-300, videlicet the activation of the Greek Wings with fighter planes, charged with the task to provide the Greek Cypriot with security. Yet, a reinforcement of such an extent, of the anti-aircraft defence, could not possibly symbolize just a typical defensive upgrade of Cyprus, but also it unveiled a strategic dimension in the background, as well. The Russian anti-aircraft missiles would give the unprecedented capability to the Hellenic Air Force to threaten, in the future, that the latter was able, in all likelihood, to strike targets in Anatolia. Still, this feasibility and prospect was precisely what the Turkish general staff was timorous of and alarmed by. The Greek air force, being able to harm vital Turkish infrastructure in the southern and southeastern areas, by using bombers and fighters coming from the Greek hinterland and stationing in Cypriot airbases, would delineate a unacceptable peril for the Turkish administration, seeing that Cyprus would become a strategic actor in the Southeastern Mediterranean Sea.<sup>20</sup> Hence, the S-300 missiles would not only offer anti-aircraft protection to the island against Turkish air-assault, but would also provide an umbrella, under the aegis of with would the Greek fighters operate.

Albeit the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs did not centered upon the strategic controversy, inversely it embarked upon a communicative war. It accentuated expressly on manifestations, which would magnetize the attention of the international press, by way of illustration the characterization of the Russian missiles as a “super weapon” with ballistic attributes. The “S-300 PMU” is a missile system, which offers anti-aircraft protection, integrating technology of Soviet designer bureaux of the early nineties and placed in the international market by the Russian military exports company, named “Roosvoroosenie”. According to leading expert journals on the area of defence, such as “*Flight International*,” “*Jane's Defence Weekly*”, “*Aviation Week and Space Technology*” etc, the missiles, mentioned previously, can be used only for anti-aircraft role (the -PMU model). Another model, which was unconditionally not the one that the Greek Cypriots bought, placed in the market under the name S-300 V, has anti-ballistic capacities. In any case, the Russian system is not a ballistic system. A ballistic system has the capacity to bombard strategic targets of the foe, deep into the enemy lines, in the peripheral theatre. A well-known paradigm of this system is the “SCUD-B” ballistic missiles, owned by the Iraqi army and Sadam Hussein, during the first Gulf War.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> On the strategy of the air force as a corps, see the perfect essay of D. Mac Isaac, “Voices form the Deep Blue: The Theorists of Air Warfare”, in P. Paret (ed.), *The Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1986, pp 735-764.

<sup>21</sup> On the difficulty to distinguish between offensive and defensive weapons, see the excellent study of S. Van Evera, “Offence, Defence and the Causes of War,” in M. Brown, O. Cote, S. Lynn-Jones and S. Miller (eds.), *Theories of War and Peace*, The MIT Press, Cambridge Mass., 1998, pp. 66-68. In

Be that as it may, the Turkish military could confront the new challenge poised by their neighbors, in multiple different ways.<sup>22</sup> These ways include: the usage of “HARM” type anti-radar missiles, which was recorded in the Turkish arsenal. Apart from that, utilization of “MLRS” type system, which is a multiple land rocket system. This is, habitually, combined with the “ATACMS” type system, which is an attack tactical projectile for the theater of war.<sup>23</sup> Last but not least, employment of new air-warfare tactics, which were instructed to the Turkish pilots by the Israeli air force, succeeding the Turkish-Israeli military pact, in the aftermath of the rapprochement within Israel and Turkey.<sup>24</sup>

### A Model of Tactical Maneuvers for the Strengthening of the Defence of Cyprus

And we have arrived at the critical argument of this study. The Greek Cypriot side had to take the succeeding steps, in such an order: First and foremost, Cyprus should have been furnished with defensive armor, then the “S-300” missiles should be installed, without proclamations in the press or comments by the political leaders, soon afterward there could be an public announcement that the common defense doctrine was in power and, at last, negotiations could be done, if necessary, but for the Greek Cypriot side having already acquired the relative power.

Table A: Regulative Model of Tactical Maneuvers for the Strengthening of Cyprus

<b>1st.</b> Substantial defensive build-up of Cyprus	<b>2nd.</b> Installation of the “S-300” missiles, without proclamations in the press	<b>3rd.</b> Public announcement that the common defense doctrine is in power	<b>4th.</b> Negotiations, if necessary, after acquisition of the relative power
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At least the steps overhead should be observed, in a orchestrated mode, with a view not to creating tactical discontinuities towards the actualization of the strategic goal, which was the common defence. From all these steps, solely the purchasing of long range anti-aircraft defense missiles was favored to proceed, by the Minister of National Defence, Gerasimos Arsenis, who, despite his preliminary thoughts of employing crumbles of deterrent policy, in effect he did nothing on this issue, belying the intentions of the Greek government and ridiculing its foreign policy in front of the eyes of the intentional community. Oppositely, the venture to implement the original

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addition to that, of the same author see, *Causes of War, Volume I: The Structure of Power and the Roots of War*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y., 1999.

<sup>22</sup> D. Gures, “Turkey’s Defence Policy: The Role of the Armed Forces and Strategies, Concepts, Capabilities”, *RUSI Journal*, London, June 1993.

<sup>23</sup> The “ATACMS” system is not registered as a ballistic missiles system, in spite of the fact that it has unquestionable ballistic competencies, which can be used for tactical (and not strategic) reasons. On the military capabilities of Turkey, see Th. Dokos and N. Protonotarios, [in Greek] *The Military Power of Turkey and the Challenge for Greek Security*, Tourikis Editions, Athens, 1996.

<sup>24</sup> Ch. Iacovou, “National Security and Decision Making in the Post-Cold War Era: The Cases of Greece and Israel,” as well as M. Evriviades, “Regional Stability, Security and Co-operation,” in M. Evriviades and I. Papadimos (eds.), *Greece and Israel in a Changing Regional Environment*, Conference Proceedings, Defence Analyses Institute, Thessaloniki, February 25, 2000, pages, respectively, 81-88 and 105-108.



governmental plan brought about the reverse results to the expected ones. Browsing Table A, one can smoothly figure out that the Greek decision-makers went forward to realize the “second step”, which was the installation of the Russian system, oblivious of the inflexible precondition, which was nothing more than the “first step” of the table, in plain English the construction of Cypriot defensive edifice. That is why there is a tragic irony in this process. By reason of the tension brought into the Greek-Turkish Relations after the incident of the Imia islands in 1996,<sup>25</sup> Athens was instigated to elaborate even with delays whatsoever, unprecedented armaments programs of colossal scale.<sup>26</sup> Whereas, it appeared that Athens was compelled to relinquish the transfer of the “S-300” missiles to Cyprus, one of the most trustworthy and effective for the Cypriot defence systems. This carries along that Greece abandoned Cyprus to the mercy of the schemes of the Turkish generals,<sup>27</sup> due to facts that both Cyprus was forlorn without anti-aircraft umbrella and the common front against the adversary was rendered easily pulverized.

### **Sovereignty Under Skepticism**

In the political field, the choice of the doctrine of common defense was portrayed in the press as the right of an independent state to make decisions, regarding its defence as an expression of the will of its people to safeguard its freedom. Nevertheless, when the crisis moment was there for the application of this self-evident and inalienable right, the Greek and the Greek Cypriot governments did not exercise their sovereign decisions after all, preferring to disorientate the public opinion, embracing arguments, such as “the missiles do not offer a solution to the Cypriot Issue”. As a result of this final resolution, Cyprus lost every negotiating capability. According to cynical analysts of foreign affairs, the fact, which is worst for Cyprus was that it was demised to a country of limited sovereignty, owing to the frustration of its basic rights, such as autonomy, self-government and home rule, in the core of which there is the sovereign right of a nation-state to defend itself. In addition to that, the proponents of “offensive realism” in international affairs, stated that no-one could deny the fact that the decision, of which military systems were allowed to be placed on the land of Cyprus and which ones are not, was made primarily the Turkish decision makers and secondly by the Americans and the British.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> On the Imia islands crisis, see: H. Dipla, G. Kostakos and N. Ziogas, “*The Imia Incident and Turkey’s Violation of International Law*”, Hellenic Institute for European and Foreign Policy and The Citizens’ Movement, Athens, 1996. Also, for a fine analysis of the incident, see the essay of A Kourkoulas, [in Greek] *Imia, Critical Approach of the Turkish Paragon*, Editions Sideris, Athens, 1997.

<sup>26</sup> C. Kollias and A. Refenes, “Modeling the Effects of Defense Spending Relations Using Neutral Networks: Evidence from Greece”, *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy*, Vol 3, No 2, Winter, 1996.

<sup>27</sup> On the interconnection between the Turkish generals and politics in Turkey, see, in chronological order: D. Lerner and R. Robinson, “Swords and Ploughshares: The Turkish Army as a Modernizing Force”, *World Politics*, Vol. 13, 1960; G. Harris, “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics,” *Middle East Journal*, PartI, 1965; A. Fincel and N. Sirman (eds.), *Turkish State, Turkish Society*, Routledge, London, 1990; W. Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, Routledge, London, 1994; J. Gareth, “Context and Circumstance: The Turkish Military and Politics,” *Adelphi Paper*, No 337, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 2001.

<sup>28</sup> Ch. Gialouridis, [in Greek] “Cyprus in Crisis”, Newspaper *Eleftherotypia*, August 23, 1998, p. 34.

But, the Russian missiles were not (and still are not) an offensive system, on the contrary it is an anti-aircraft defence system, which is evidently a defensive system. The specialized magazines covering security issues and defence industry were perfectly informed of this detail, however the international daily press published overstated, sensational, preposterous and hypocritical fears that the system owned attacking capabilities, which was definitely not the case. At length, the impact of the opinion of the international community upon the Greek government was of such a kind that Athens contrived the solution of installing the missiles on Crete, an island on the South of the Greek national territory, surely a half-measure not deploying the capabilities of the missiles in full. But, it is characteristic that Turkey reacted harshly even to this half-measure. Also, there is an analogous historic paradigm, when in the winter of 2001 the Greek Cypriots were determined to buy a number of Russian attack helicopters, there were over and over again concerted pressures from multiple sources that the helicopters should not be transferred to the island. But these pressures are usual, ordinary and understandable, because they are considered part of the political power game among different governments. The enormous difference in this case is that the procurement of the helicopters was made secretly and with absolute discretion, not giving space to political exploitation by the hostile governments, as well as not permitting misquoting of the facts by the press. This is the sensible thing to do in matters of defense, but, in the case of the “S-300” missile system, it just did not happen.

### **The Handicapped Deterrence**

With their firmness to formulate a common defence, the governments of Greece and Cyprus asserted their judgment to impersonate a mutual, uncracked, unwavering and reliable front, including their will to rectify the deterrence, proceeding to tuned procurements. At the end, it was proved that the armaments occurred in an accidental and improvised manner. This is also affirmed by the fact that the Greek ministry of foreign affairs succumbed more recently to the correlative obliging demands of both the United States Pentagon and the State Department for the buying of the long range anti-aircraft defence missile system, under the code name “Patriot” and made in the United States by the ponderous company of “Raytheon.”<sup>29</sup> The irony is that, in parallel, the Greek government was arranging the reception in Crete of the Russian missile system, which was the basic contestant of the “Patriot” missile system. In other words, Greece, in spendthrift and a profligate conduct, bought two high-priced systems, of resembling capabilities, thing which not habitual to the armed forces of the western European countries, assuredly not to the forces of the former member-states of the Warsaw Pact and even not to the military force of Turkey, which stands for a regime superintended by generals. As a matter of fact, this comportment of political leadership and the ignorance of basic rules of the game are features of third world countries. As a result, the only thing, which the government accomplished, was to overextend the “multiplicity of types” of the Greek arsenal, burdening the military depots, encumbering the arms storehouses and hampering the machinery of

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<sup>29</sup> The missile system “Patriot” is a mobile anti-aircraft warfare complex, of long range. Actually, it has the same role and comparable capacities with the “S-300” anti-aircraft missiles, disregarding some reasonable differences between the two systems. As a result, the Russian originated “S-300” system is equitably considered to be the basic competitor in the international market of the equivalent “Patriot” system of United States origin.

provision.<sup>30</sup> Many types of air-defense systems meant that there was a knot in the technical and logistic support of them and a pitfall in the training of the personnel. To make matters worse, the technical co-operation between the two systems (the Russian “S-300” and the American “Patriot”) grows troublesome, due to the fact that the two systems are operationally incompatible. Thus, their integration with the rest of the national air-defence system is even nowadays such a nasty task, as walking in a moorland. In an attempt to brighten the picture a bit more upon the roots of the incompatibility of the military systems, we have to add that, during the Cold War, the arms manufactured by industries located in member-states of NATO were produced with deviant technical prescriptions from the ones constructed by the industrial complexes of Soviet Union and its allies. This eventuated, by reason of the one camp not being able to copy, reproduce or plainly make use of the armaments of the hostile camp. But, starting with the nineties decade and the gradual obsolescence of the Cold War, there has been a global tendency of convergence of the different technologies.<sup>31</sup>

This was the situation with the arsenal of Greece, in moment that Cyprus was rendered entirely defenseless and unshielded. The deterrence collapsed, when Athens appeared to abjure and disavow the co-responsibility with Nicosia, not offering support to the Cypriots and catapulting them in a confusion and predicament, in which Athens, first and foremost, held the initiative and the culpability. So, Turkey for once more acting as a hegemon or peripheral middle power, evinced itself as non-negotiable nation-state.<sup>32</sup> From the realists point of view, Turkey was stimulated and made audacious by the hesitating and retreating attitude of Greece, which were made beforehand apparent in the international fora. Hence, Turkey not only survived the crisis without cost, but also won, actually, in many respects. This withdrawal and disengagement of Greece nourished the contentious, quarrelsome and revisionist policy of Ankara.

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<sup>30</sup> For a general overview of the organisation of the Greek army, see D. Skarvelis, ‘Freedom in Valour- Mission and role of the Army’, *NATO’s Sixteen Nations*, Special Edition, Vol 1, 1993. On the Greek Navy, see N. Stagas, ‘The Hellenic Navy’s role in the Mediterranean security’, *NATO’s Sixteen Nations*, No 1, 1994.

<sup>31</sup> A. Carter, M. Lettre and Sh. Smith, “Keeping the Technological Edge,” in A. Carter and j. White (eds.), *Keeping the Edge: Managing Defense for the Future*, Preventive Defence Project, Collaboration of Harvard and Stanford Universities, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2001, pp. 129-164.

<sup>32</sup> A. Syrigos, [in Greek] “Swamp in the Negotiations,” Newspaper *Eleftherotypia*, January 3, 1999, p. 19.