Ελληνική Εταιρεία Γεωγραφικών Μελετών
«Ο Στράβων»

POLITICAL and GEOPOLITICAL REFLECTIONS of ACTUALITY

Cyprus

UN Secretary General visited last week Nicosia, in an effort to give a new lease of life to the stalled process to reunite Cyprus and thus in essence get rid of Turkey s armed forces in the occupied north part of the island. A behind closed doors series of consultations has preceded in various quarters. Apparently, Dr Guterres and the UN machinery as a whole are bound by successive UN Security Council resolutions. On his heels, European Commissioner Raffaele Fitto followed, nominated special representative of the EU in Cyprus, a token of EU s engagement, no matter the show from the leaders in Nicosia North. A new effort will build on the acquis of last fruitless effort in Crans Montana Switzerland, early July 2017. We are neither pessimistic, nor naively optimistic. The proof is in the pudding. Solution is much more than the return of territory to the harmed Greek Cypriot side. It is in the equilibrium of institutions of a revamped, enlarged to accommodate the T/Cypriot community, Republic of Cyprus. It is in the powers to be vested on the central government, which should not be allowed to be a shadow of a government. It is in the way the federated Cyprus will function within the European Union, so as not to create deadlocks nor to lead inadvertently to an exit from the Union.

STRAVON wonders whether the status of British military bases on the island will remain untouchable. Any negotiated solution should make life better, more prosperous, more secure in the short and the long run, for all communities on Cyprus. This will be the criterion of success.

These are first incomplete glosses. Down the road, more might follow.

Strait of Hormuz

An agreement between Iran and Oman to supervise, not free of charge, shipping lanes along the Hormuz Strait could be welcome, as it has already been alluded by influential circles in the international maritime community. Nevertheless, there is a correlation with Bab el Mandeb; Iran and Oman - the latter bordering with Yemen - are called upon to cooperate in securing freedom of navigation at this artery of world maritime trade.

Middle East as a whole, eternal Middle East

STRAVON does not espouse the widespread view that a new geopolitical condition is prevailing in the Middle East and that everything is turned upside down, just during the last couple of years.

Instead, there is a continuity of patterns and problems, starting with the unresolved issue of Palestinian statehood. (Let us watch the upcoming intra-Palestinian elections).

Moreover, the Kurds in their ancestral homeland remain as ever divided among four countries and at the mercy of unfulfilled promises.

«*Plus ca change, plus ca reste le meme*» does apply to large extend in the perennially volatile Middle East.

Some changing contours though with a possibly profound impact, are visible:

- Loss of credibility of the US with Arab Gulf monarchies; the protector proved unable to protect.
- Syria has ceased to be a secular country.
- The gap between Israel and its neighbours has widened; Saudi Arabia is not amenable to be coopted, with everything that this implies.

The preponderance of maritime activity, the importance of choke points, like Straits in Malakka, Hormuz, Bab el Mandeb, Suez Kanal, Dardanelles and Bosporus, overall, the impact of sea power in peace and war is continuously attested and manifested.

Stravon of Amaseia,
Attica, gulf of Evia,
August 06, 2026

P.S. (08/07)
This text was drafted before the Mecca agreement became known. Initial thoughts: something was brewing for some time on quadrilateral level, including Egypt. Why Egypt is not a part of the new defence pact? Possibly because Cairo has a longer view of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Horn of Africa conditions than the three signatories. Cairo traditionally entertains cordial relations with India. In Cairo they do not want to break from Cyprus, Israel and Greece. How do they feel in the UAEmirates about this triad of their fellow Sunnis?