



July 1, 2010

Ms. Jennifer Lopez
c/o Cara Lewis
William Morris Agency, LLC
1325 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10019

Dear Ms. Lopez:

On behalf of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), the largest and oldest membership-based association of American citizens of Greek heritage, and countless Philhellenes, I am outreaching to you as a fellow New Yorker and as a person who takes great pride and has tremendous passion in one's cultural heritage to respectfully request that you cancel your visit to Turkish-occupied northern Cyprus to attend the opening of the Cratos Hotel & Casino on July 20, 2010— **a day that is ironically the 36th “black anniversary” of Turkey’s illegal invasion and subsequent occupation of 37 percent of the Republic of Cyprus.**

The Cratos Hotel & Casino is located in the city of my birth, Kyrenia, which is now located illegally-occupied Cyprus. As one family of the nearly 200,000 refugees of Cyprus, we cannot return to our homes in Kyrenia. It is sad and disheartening to see a celebration of this grandeur taking place in a city where countless human rights violations including, murder, rape, and the forced movement of population, occurred 36 years ago.

Ms. Lopez, because of many similarities between the illegal invasion of Cyprus and Fidel Castro’s dictatorship of Cuba, including the struggle of the refugees, you may find it of interest that many members of Congress who are of Latino heritage have been ardent champions of securing justice for the Republic of Cyprus. They join with many of their congressional colleagues to call for:

- a just and viable solution to the division of Cyprus under high-level UN agreements and Security Council resolutions,
- the removal of Turkey’s 40,000 illegally stationed troops,
- the return to Turkey of 180,000 illegal settlers in occupied Cyprus, and
- the restoration of property illegally taken from their rightful owners.

These members include: U.S. Senator Robert Menendez, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; U.S. Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, ranking member, House Foreign Affairs Committee; U.S. Congressman Albio Sires, member, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe; and U.S. Congressmen Mario and Lincoln Diaz-Balart.

Finally, the destruction of the cultural and religious heritage of Cyprus due to Turkey’s illegal invasion and occupation is well-documented by leading authorities, including the **United States Helsinki Commission (CSCE)**¹. Moreover, I am enclosing for your review a feature article published in *The Weekly*

¹ “Cyprus’ Religious Cultural Heritage in Peril,” U.S. Helsinki Commission briefing, July 21, 2009, <http://csce.gov/> for a transcript.



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Standard titled “Bare Ruined Choirs: Turkey’s War on the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus” by Katherine Eastland². Eastland’s article clearly reports on the vandalized and dilapidated state of Cyprus’s cultural and religious heritage due to Turkey’s illegal invasion and occupation. In it, she references the Helsinki Commission’s briefing:

This past summer in Washington the U.S. Helsinki Commission (CSCE), which monitors compliance between and among member states on the Helsinki accords, issued a 50-page report for Congress on the state of Cyprus’s cultural and religious heritage, saying that it was “in peril” and that “under conventional and customary law, Turkey, as an occupying power, bears responsibility for acts against cultural property.” It also numbers the various ways Turkey has violated international humanitarian law, as set forth in post-World War II treaties that Ankara has signed.

I implore you to read the transcript of the Helsinki Commission’s briefing (that can be found on the CSCE Web site) and to read the Law Library of Congress’s report to Congress as well.

Ms. Lopez, I sincerely appreciate your professional accomplishments. Furthermore, I understand the business commitments that a person of your immense talent must undertake as part of your dedication to the profession. However, I strongly request that this specific business commitment to the illegally-occupied area of Cyprus be canceled.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicholas A. Karacostas
National President

The mission of AHEPA is to promote the ancient Greek ideals of education, philanthropy, civic responsibility and family and individual excellence through community service and volunteerism.

Cc: Members of Congress
U.S. Department of State

Enclosures

² “Bare Ruined Choirs: Turkey’s war on the cultural heritage of Cyprus,” Katherine Eastland, *The Weekly Standard*, Feb. 1, 2010, Vol. 15 No. 19.