

The Atlantic Alliance's Cyprus Plan

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Abstract

The Atlantic Alliance, consisting of the US, the UK and EU, has expanded its membership and sphere of influence in recent years with Israel's unofficial participation. Although the strategic objectives of the Atlantic Alliance and Israel (AA-I) regarding the island of Cyprus began to emerge in 1967, they became clear and evident after the Cyprus Peace Operation on July 20, 1974, with the arms embargo imposed by the US on Türkiye. The main objective of the Annan Plan Referendum held in Cyprus on April 24, 2004, was to bring the island under the control of the Greek Cypriot and Hellenic alliance, to sever Türkiye's ties with the island of Cyprus, and to ensure that Turkish troops also leave the island, bringing the entire island of Cyprus and its Exclusive Economic Zone in the Eastern Mediterranean under the control of the AA-I. Although this plan did not materialize due to the "No" votes of the Greek Cypriots, it continues to exist. The reasons for the AA-I's interest in the island of Cyprus are closely related to the region's geopolitical position, its potential for access to energy resources, and its role in regional balances. This article is a study that examines in detail the AA-I's strategies towards the entire island of Cyprus and the TRNC in light of the dynamics of regional and global power balances.

Keywords

Atlantic Alliance, Israel, Cyprus Island, TRNC, Energy Sources, Eastern Mediterranean

1. Introduction

Understanding the Atlantic Alliance and Israel's (AA-I) long-standing strategic interest in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) is of fundamental importance. The reasons for this interest are closely related to the region's geopolitical position, potential access to energy resources, and role in regional balances. While aiming to become a regional power in the Middle East, the AA-I has also sought to establish spheres of influence in critical regions such as the TRNC in

line with its strategies of protecting and expanding its maritime and land borders. Furthermore, the fragilities in the region and the continuation of the status quo encourage Israel, a secret member of the AA-I, to develop relations with regional actors and the TRNC in an effort to establish more stable and controllable border arrangements. Behind these strategies lie the goals of energy security, regional power balances, and increasing its influence in the divided Islamic world. The TRNC's unique geographical location and political situation are among the elements that particularly stand out in the AA-I's regional strategy. In this context, Israel's interest in the Greek Cypriot Administration of South Cyprus (GCASC) is shaped by the desire to evaluate economic opportunities on the one hand and gain geopolitical advantages on the other.

2. Historical Background

The historical background of Israel's relations with the TRNC is closely linked to geopolitical developments and power balances in the region (Yumusak, 2023). Since the mid-20th century, the island of Cyprus has attracted international attention with the establishment of both the GCASC and the TRNC. This process took place during a period of intense conflict and negotiations in the region. Following the Yom Kippur War between October 6 and 25, 1973, Israel began to act in line with strategic proximity and interests with other actors in the region, particularly states favored by the AA-I, concerned with increasing stability and security in the region, began to develop its relations with Cyprus, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, in line with cooperation in the energy and military fields, and with the initiatives and pressure of the Arab-Israeli axis, peaceful relations were initially developed with Egypt, and a long-term fragmentation plan was put into action with regard to Libya, Iraq, and Syria, with the aim of preventing them from uniting their armies and attacking Israel in the future. With the aim of increasing its regional influence, the AA-I began to shape policy and security strategies in Cyprus and on a regional scale through Israel. By the 21st century, the discovery of energy resources and the importance of energy corridors, particularly developments in the Eastern Mediterranean, further increased Israel's interest (Goren, 2018), leading to various economic and security-focused interactions between the two sides. In this historical process, Israel's strategies aimed at consolidating its presence in the region and achieving its goal of becoming a regional power have also shaped its relations with the TRNC (Tüzgen, 2022). Therefore, the historical supply and demand of the region are fundamental to understanding current policies.

3. The Geographical Importance of the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus

The geographical location of the TRNC is of great importance due to the strategic aspect of the region (Bostan & Doğan, 2025). Located in the northern half of the island of Cyprus, in the center of the Eastern Mediterranean, the TRNC is a strategic point in terms of its geographical location, integration into energy projects,

control of maritime trade routes, and establishing regional balance. The UK recognized the regional importance of the island of Cyprus after annexing Gibraltar in 1704 and Malta in 1800. In 1814, a British sailor who was an employee of the East India Company stated, "Possession of Cyprus will elevate Britain to a position of supremacy in the Mediterranean and place it in a position to determine the future destiny of the Levant countries. Egypt and Syria would immediately become subject to Britain, and it would be possible to prevent any movements in Asia Minor. Thus, the Sultan would always be kept under control, and even if Russia's encroachments in this region could not be prevented, they would be delayed." Benjamin Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield), who conducted a research trip in the region in 1834 and later became Prime Minister of England, emphasized the importance of the island of Cyprus in his book "TANCRED," published in 1847, and stressed that the country that would rule the Middle East should be the ruler of the island of Cyprus (Kinneir, 1818). The maritime borders and airspace of the island of Cyprus also provide advantages for regional military and intelligence activities. In addition, the geostrategic location of the TRNC, acting as a bridge between the Middle East and Europe, attracts the attention and interest of regional and international powers. For this reason, plans to expand the AA-I's sovereignty and sphere of influence in the region include the effective use of the TRNC's geography, which is among the most suitable locations to support its political strategies. Therefore, the geographical characteristics of the TRNC play a central role in the region's geopolitical structure and regional power struggle.

4. The Atlantic Alliance and Israel's Foreign Policy Strategies

The foreign policy strategies of the AA-I have a multifaceted approach that shapes their relations with regional and international actors (Yıldız, 2025). Within these strategies, security priorities, adapting to regional power balances, and developing economic cooperation constitute the fundamental elements. Israel has intensified its use of military force and intelligence activities in order to shift the regional power balance in its favor; in this context, it has built its relations with other actors in the region on various and different tactics. Furthermore, it has implemented active propaganda and communication strategies to increase support on international platforms and achieve diplomatic successes. In this context, AA-I's partnerships with various countries, establishment of military bases, and seemingly innocent investments aim to strengthen its effectiveness in the region and expand its sphere of influence to achieve its strategic goals. At the same time, access to energy resources and the desire to have a say in regional energy projects are an important part of AA-I's foreign policy (Türkeş, 2023). These policies are consistent with both short-term interests and long-term regional stability and security goals. Therefore, the AA-I's foreign policy strategies involve comprehensive and planned efforts to steer the region's political, economic, and military dynamics by striking a balance between flexibility and determination in regional relations.

5. Political Relations with the Gcasc Administration

Diplomatic relations between the GCASC and Israel have gained significant momentum in recent years in line with regional developments and strategic calculations (Sancaktar, 2021). Both sides felt the need to establish channels of communication and cooperation for different reasons and have taken steps to achieve mutual benefit, particularly in the economic, security, and energy fields. Although these relations began with limited, unofficial contacts, they have gradually taken on a more active and institutionalized form within the changing dynamics of regional diplomacy. Israel's policies aimed at increasing its influence in the region and the strategic position of the GCASC have encouraged the two sides to come closer together on the basis of common interests. To develop diplomatic relations, both sides have established various strong communication channels and representations, and organized mutual visits and meetings. Within the scope of these relations, in addition to official contacts, civil society organizations and business representatives have also begun to play an active role. Furthermore, various programs and agreements have been signed to strengthen bilateral relations, and joint projects have been brought to the agenda through regional cooperation platforms. Although the level of relations has fluctuated from time to time due to historical and political differences, mutual interests and regional security concerns have created a basis for expanding areas of cooperation. The emphasis on energy resources and regional energy projects has also given the relations new dimensions, bringing new agreements centered on the common economic interests of both sides to the agenda. In this context, the geostrategic location of the island of Cyprus and Israel's regional policies have encouraged both sides to establish relations with the aim of increasing their manoeuvrability in the international arena and supporting regional stability. Therefore, the diplomatic relations between the GCASC and Israel are not only a regional development but also a process closely linked to the international strategies and security calculations of both sides.

6. Opportunities for Economic Cooperation

Israel's opportunities for economic cooperation with the GCASC constitute an important anchor point when regional power balances and strategic interests are taken into account. The development of economic relations between the two sides is not limited to economic benefits, but also strengthens interactions in the political and security spheres. In this context, regional economic integration projects and joint investments are planned in a way that maximizes the mutual interests of the parties. Potential opportunities for cooperation are particularly focused on the energy, tourism, shipping, and technology sectors. In the energy sector, efforts are being made to establish a link between Israel's gas reserves on the Mediterranean coast and the maritime resources of the GCASC (Yoldaş, 2022).

7. Energy Policies and Resource Management

According to Israeli policy, considering the power balances and strategic positions

in the region, the economic development of the GCASC is of critical importance for regional stability. Israel's energy strategies towards the GCASC aim to increase its political and economic influence in the region, beyond ensuring access to new resources and energy security. In this context, the exploration and development of natural resources in the region, joint energy projects, and infrastructure investments stand out as key elements for long-term energy supply security. At the same time, developed plans regarding existing natural gas resources between the GCASC and Israel and the access of these resources to international markets shape the energy balance in the region. These policies aim to reduce geopolitical tensions in the region while minimizing energy dependence on various external actors. Furthermore, projects such as the development of regional infrastructure and energy transmission lines aim to increase competitiveness not only in regional but also in global energy markets. These strategies are designed to contribute to economic development and reshape the balance of power in the region. The AA-I's energy policies and resource use towards the GCASC are one of the key factors deeply affecting Cyprus' strategic position and the relationships between actors in the region (Harunoğulları, 2025).

8. Military Cooperation and Security Strategies

AA-I's military cooperation and security strategies with the GCASC constitute an important area closely related to regional stability and power balances (Duman, 2025). In this context, Israel's efforts to increase its military presence in the GCASC are manifested through mutual joint military exercises and defense cooperation agreements. Furthermore, joint working mechanisms are being established in the areas of intelligence sharing and border security, and regional defense capabilities are being developed against potential threats. Israel is also developing cyber defense projects and maritime security strategies for the GCASC with the aim of integrating into the region's security architecture. Within this framework, joint surveillance and patrols are organized in maritime borders and coastal areas, and joint measures are taken against illegal immigration, smuggling, terrorism, and military attacks. Security cooperation also includes the modernization and technological integration of military assets in the region, and joint intelligence and defense plans have been implemented to maintain regional stability. Although historically limited concrete steps have been taken, the apparent increase in regional power balances has paved the way for the AA-I to develop strategies to strengthen its military and security presence across the entire island of Cyprus. All these plans aim to end Türkiye's military presence and influence in the north of the island of Cyprus and to bring the entire island under the control and supervision of the AA-I by eliminating the TRNC.

9. 1960 Treaty Agreement between Cyprus, United Kingdom, Türkiye and Greece

The Treaty of Guarantee was one of several treaties that created the Republic of

Cyprus on August 16, 1960. In addition to guaranteeing Cyprus's independence, territorial integrity, and security, Cyprus, Greece, Türkiye, and the United Kingdom all agreed to forbid any actions that would encourage the island's split or union with another state. The negotiations that resulted in Cyprus's independence included these assurances as well as a Treaty of Alliance that permitted Greek and Turkish forces to be stationed on the island (Treaty, 1960).

10. Political Impacts and Strategic Partnerships

The political, military, and economic relations established by the AA-I with the GCASC (Koğ, 2021) pursue the AA-I's goal of consolidating its power in the Eastern Mediterranean and increasing its influence in the Middle East (Özsan, 2024). AA-I's policies towards the significantly affect the political and military balance in the region. These relations are not limited to the diplomatic level but also involve in-depth cooperation in the economic, military, and energy fields. Particularly in the field of energy policies and resource management, initiatives have gained momentum in line with the common interests of both sides, and joint work on regional energy projects has been brought to the agenda. The US has initiated efforts to strengthen military security cooperation with the GCASC and develop joint defense mechanisms against regional threats. In this regard, the US lifted its arms embargo on the GCASC in 2024 and, in addition to intensive arms sales, began deploying troops and establishing military bases on GCASC territory. The AA-I's de facto presence in the southern part of the island of Cyprus and its strategic, economic, and military cooperation with the GCASC changed the political and military balances in the region (Düz et al., 2025), leading to the formation of new alliances and new dimensions in the search for regional stability.

11. U.S., U.K., and Israeli Actions in Cyprus

Some explanations emphasize Cyprus' strategic significance as a Western military base, while others see U.S., U.K., and Israeli actions in Cyprus through the prism of regional power dynamics. A different viewpoint, especially held by certain Cypriots, regards these actions suspiciously and claims that the United Kingdom utilizes its sovereign base to supply Israel with weaponry and support its military operations. Despite the Republic of Cyprus's formal recognition of Palestine, some pro-Palestinian individuals believe that Cyprus is involved in assisting Israeli acts (Daalder, 2024).

12. The Future of Atlantic Alliance—Gcasc Relations

The future of AA-I's relations with GCASC is a variable area shaped by regional power balances and geopolitical interests. Cooperation between the two sides in the economic, security, military, and energy sectors is increasing in line with their strategic interests, playing an important role in regional stability while also posing a threat. Israel's active foreign policy strategies in the region indicate that relations with the GCASC could strengthen further in the near future. This practice forms

the cornerstones of shared energy resources, energy infrastructure integration, and military cooperation. Joint military and security exercises and information-sharing mechanisms contribute to deepening the strategic partnership between the two sides. The sustainability of these relations is directly linked to political balances in the international arena and the reaction or support of the Greek Cypriot public.

13. Regional Security Dynamics

Regional security dynamics are an important factor shaping the AA-I's strategic approach to the TRNC (Çakır, 2023). Its geostrategic position in the southeastern Mediterranean and its quest for access to energy resources are causing Israel to increase its activities in the region. In this context, Israel aims to strengthen military and security cooperation with the GCASC. Increasing tensions in the region and perceptions of new security threats are paving the way for Israel to act jointly with the GCASC, taking into account the regional balance of power. Furthermore, geopolitical developments in the region allow Israel to use its steps regarding the sovereignty and security of the GCASC as a strategic tool. To ensure political stability and strengthen the security environment, Israel conducts cross-border operations and joint exercises within this scope, adopting various diplomatic and psychological strategies to legitimize these activities. The power struggle between actors in the region affects AA-I's regional strategies and forces them to be flexible (Adasoy, 2024).

14. The Future of the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus

The geopolitical importance and strategic position of the TRNC is significant, particularly in terms of energy resources and maritime transport routes. The AA-I's efforts to increase its dominance and influence in the region are having negative effects on the TRNC and shaping its future political, economic, and security strategies. In parallel, the TRNC's international recognition initiatives and internal political dynamics are also developing and taking shape. The geopolitical importance of the TRNC and the development of regional relations require it to take strategic steps in terms of future political stability, economic sustainability, and international acceptance. In this process, which must be carried out with Türkiye, international partnerships and regional cooperation mechanisms will be key elements in ensuring the TRNC's stability and sustainable development.

15. The Atlantic Alliance and Israel's Regional Strategic Objectives

The strategic goals of the AA-I aim to increase its power in the region, ensure its security, and expand its regional influence. These goals aim to shift the political and military balance in the region in its favor, strengthen economic ties, and gather international support. Access to energy resources and control of regional energy corridors are particularly high on the list (Topuz, 2025). The objectives also in-

clude establishing superiority in relations with other actors in the region, limiting the effectiveness of rival countries, and minimizing potential threats to Israel. Closely monitoring political and economic developments in the TRNC, the AA-I engages in various diplomatic and economic initiatives to use the region's geopolitical position to its advantage and ensure that the entire island of Cyprus serves the AA-I's long-term interests, while continuing to seek support for this.

16. Conclusion

The AA-I's strategies towards the TRNC are closely linked to regional and international power balances. While these strategies aim to maintain a presence in the region and protect its interests, they are also shaped by the TRNC's problems with international recognition. Israel's activities in this region are not limited to economic investments and efforts to access energy resources, but also focus on the political and security spheres. While investment and trade relations are developed through opportunities for economic cooperation in the region, steps are also being taken to influence regional stability through military and security partnerships. This situation is directly linked to the general attitudes of the people living in the TRNC and the strategic approaches of political parties. Furthermore, Israel's propaganda activities and media communication in the region are aimed at shaping public perceptions on both sides of the island of Cyprus. In this context, regional security dynamics, interactions between the two communities, developments in the context of international relations, and strategic balance are the determining factors. In conclusion, although the AA-I's global and regional policies towards Northern Cyprus appear to be limited to items such as increasing regional power and superficial economic relations, deepening political and security-focused initiatives will play a significant role in determining the future of the island of Cyprus. These developments, shaped by the attitudes of other actors in the region and the policies of global powers, form the basis of long-term strategic calculations. It is therefore imperative that the TRNC, acting in concert with Türkiye, develop a proactive diplomacy.

Recommendations

The Turkish Republic of North Cyprus experiences international recognition problems since 1974. One of the fundamental problems in the TRNC's international recognition process concerns international legal rules on continental shelf and sovereignty (Bulunç, 2025). The lack of official recognition significantly hinders the country's representation in international platforms and the establishment of diplomatic relations. This situation also imposes limitations in the areas of economic cooperation and regional integration, reduces investor confidence, and hinders the diversification of foreign relations. Furthermore, due to its lack of international recognition, the TRNC faces difficulties in joining international organizations and gaining international acceptance for its political and economic decisions. In particular, the political, economic, and diplomatic struggles with the

GCASC, the AA-I's support for the GCASC in line with its own interests, affect regional peace, prevent the TRNC from gaining international recognition, and negatively affect long-term peace and stability in the region.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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