**Over 1600 people sign petition to stop Met Police displaying illegal flag**

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| An online petition set up by the National Federation of Cypriots in the UK, calling on the Metropolitan Police Service to stop displaying the flag of the illegal regime occupying the northern part of Cyprus, has so far reached over 1600 signatures.On March 11th, the Metropolitan Police shared an image of the illegal flag, which appeared on the official uniform of a police constable. This was done, despite the Metropolitan Police Service (“MPS”) and UK Government, having a clear policy of non-recognition of the illegal regime. Moreover, the Metropolitan Police has a fundamental obligation to uphold the rule of law, which it has, sadly, failed to do by allowing this flag to be repeatedly displayed on its public communications. The flag is a clear violation of UN Security Resolutions (which calls on Member states not to “facilitate” secession) as well as British Government policy. It is also a symbol of hurt and pain for our community, many of whom were forcibly evicted from their homes following the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974.Sadly, this is not the first time that the MPS has displayed the secessionist flag in its communications. In May 2019, following an investigation, Superintendent Mehtab, assured our community that this would not happen again saying: “I will offer an apology on behalf of the MPS. In relation to this incident there is a clear need for Learning & guidance to be given by the MPS in relation to displaying of the said flag by police whilst on duty with MPS.” President of the National Federation, Christos Karaolis, told Parikiaki, “Despite repeated assurances and apologies from the Met Police over the last five years that they would not display the illegal flag of the occupation regime in the north of Cyprus, they did it in 2018, they did it in 2021 and most recently this March, on the uniform of a police officer. “We have decided its time now for the Met Police to not just give us kind words, but to take real action to make sure that these mistakes aren’t repeated, that’s why we’ve set up the online petition, which so far has been signed by 1600 people. We would encourage absolutely everyone in our community to put their name to this petition, to call on the Met Police to make sure these mistakes aren’t repeated, that they don’t keep using this illegal flag on their communications, whether it’s on social media or anything else. “The petition link is **cypriotfederation.org.uk/metpolice** and I would encourage everyone to get on there and do it - it takes literally 30 seconds.” |