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issues, including territory, political equality, property, equivalent treatment, guarantees and troops. None of the delegations objected to this package.

After the departure of the Secretary-General, the participants used the remaining days trying to bridge the various positions. While the mood was not bad, progress was slow, with the parties continuing to hold their cards close to their chest and with none of the moves necessary for the package to materialize actually happening. It was only upon the return of the Secretary-General on 6 July 2017 that some of the cards were finally put on the table.

Importantly, during a bilateral meeting with the Secretary-General, Mr. Cavusoğlu confirmed that Turkey would be willing to give up the guarantees and the unilateral right of intervention from day one, provided that there was a robust mechanism in place to ensure the implementation of the settlement. However, Turkey was not ready to put this in writing nor to confirm it in the presence of the other participants. Furthermore, it would only concede to this as part of the final package. When this information was conveyed to Mr. Anastasiades, he appeared to become worried, even if this had been the most important ask of the Greek Cypriot side over the years. Mr. Anastasiades proceeded to question the validity of the information relayed to him and began insisting that Turkey could not be part of a future monitoring mechanism and that Turkey would need to agree to zero Turkish troops on the island after a maximum 18 months post-settlement.

Despite the efforts of the Secretary-General and the far-reaching offer made by Turkey, no breakthrough had been achieved by the time that all participants reconvened for the dinner hosted by the Secretary-General later that evening. The final hours of the day and the early hours of the following morning demonstrated that while the participants had moved significantly closer on substance, they remained far apart with respect to trust and motivation to seek common ground. The mood towards the end of the dinner became very sour, with especially Mr. Anastasiades but also Mr. Kozias on the offensive. Despite most of the key elements being there, the participants were unable to stitch them together. This is ultimately what led the Secretary-General conclude at the end of the dinner that it was not possible to reach an agreement, an assessment which was shared by the participants around the table.

In his statement to the press, the Secretary-General noted that “an agreement was not possible and the conference was closed without the possibility to bring a solution to this dramatically long-lasting problem”. However, he confirmed that the United Nations would remain “at the disposal of the parties willing to come to an agreement”.