



**FIGURE 8-27 ETHNIC BOUNDARY: CYPRUS** Since 1974, Cyprus has been divided into Greek and Turkish areas, separated by a United Nations buffer zone. The United Kingdom, the colonial ruler of Cyprus until 1960, maintains two military bases on the island.

### ETHNIC BOUNDARY: CYPRUS

Cyprus, the third-largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, contains two nationalities: Greek and Turkish. Although the island is physically closer to Turkey, Turks comprise only 14 percent of the country's population, whereas Greeks account for 63 percent. When Cyprus gained independence from Britain in 1960, its constitution guaranteed the Turkish minority a substantial share of elected offices and control over its own education, religion, and culture.

**FIGURE 8-28 ETHNIC BOUNDARY: CYPRUS GREEN LINE** A Greek Cypriot soldier guards the Greek Cypriot side of the Green Line. The U.N. buffer zone is behind the white barrels. The Greek graffiti reads "Our order Is Not Here."



But Cyprus has never peacefully integrated the Greek and Turkish nationalities.

Several Greek Cypriot military officers who favored unification of Cyprus with Greece seized control of the government in 1974. Shortly after the coup, Turkey invaded Cyprus to protect the Turkish Cypriot minority. The Greek coup leaders were removed within a few months, and an elected government was restored, but the Turkish army remained on Cyprus. The northern 36 percent of the island controlled by Turkey declared itself the independent Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983, but only Turkey recognizes it as a separate state (Figure 8-27).

A wall was constructed between the two areas, and a buffer zone patrolled by the United Nations was delineated across the entire island (Figure 8-28). Traditionally, the Greek and Turkish Cypriots had mingled, but after the wall and buffer zone were established, the two nationalities became geographically isolated. The northern part of the island is now overwhelmingly Turkish, and the southern part is overwhelmingly Greek. Approximately one-third of the island's Greeks were forced to move from the region controlled by the Turkish army, whereas nearly one-fourth of the Turks moved from the region now regarded as the Greek side.

The two sides have been brought closer in recent years. A portion of the wall was demolished, and after three decades, each nationality could again cross to the other sides. The European Union accepted the entire island of Cyprus as a member in 2004.