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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.7.2026)

The Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs) of the UK in Cyprus were established under the 1960 Treaty of Establishment. Their specific status, as outside of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus, was recognised upon the accession of Cyprus to the EU through Protocol No 3 on the SBAs. Following the withdrawal of the UK from the EU, the Protocol relating to the UK SBAs in Cyprus included in the Withdrawal Agreement ensures that EU law, in the areas stipulated in Protocol No 3 on the SBAs, continues to apply in the SBAs. However, the Protocol on the SBAs does not cover matters related to the EU security architecture and strategic autonomy, nor its security or external relations.

The UK is a close, trusted partner of the EU and the arrangements on the SBAs do not concern the EU's security architecture or strategic autonomy as such. The European Council of 19 March 2026¹ acknowledged the intention of Cyprus to initiate discussions with the UK regarding the UK bases in Cyprus and expressed readiness to provide assistance, as appropriate. The EU has a strategic interest in a stable and secure Eastern Mediterranean.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/lwhk3itd/en-20260319-european-council-conclusions.pdf>.