

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GREECE
- RIGHT OF REPLY -**

Working Session 8: Rule of Law I (23.09.2016)

Mr Moderator,

We fully align ourselves with the EU statement and would like to add some national remarks with regard to the issue of democratic representation of members of the Muslim minority in Greece, as a response to the comment of the esteemed NGO representative from Thrace.

As already explained by our delegates during previous sessions, the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, with which Greece fully complies, established the status of the Muslim minority in Thrace/Greece. As a result, there is no ethnic or national minority in Thrace.

With regard to the specific issue of democratic representation, I would like to remind the esteemed NGO representative that members of the Muslim minority, being Greek citizens, enjoy all civil, political and social rights deserved, in accordance with the national legislation, contemporary human rights' norms and standards, and the EU values and acquis, in conditions of transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. With regard to elections, they exercise their right to vote and stand as candidates, participating actively in the political life of the country at central, regional and local levels.