



**THE
CONSTANTINOPOLITAN
SOCIETY**

GREEKS EXPATRIATED FROM ISTANBUL
BY TURKISH COERCION

2014 HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

Warsaw, 22 September to 3 October 2014

Monday, 29 September 2014

Working session 11 (specifically selected topic):
Rights of persons belonging to national minorities

The Greek Minority in Turkey

RECOMMENDATIONS TO OSCE / ODIHR

Due to significant restrictions and serious limitations on human rights which are threatening the sustainable vitality, survival and vibrant future of the Greek Minority in Turkey, OSCE / ODIHR is called upon to urge Turkey -as an OSCE participating State- to:

Property rights

- Properties of minority foundations registered in the 1936 Declarations should be returned, without precondition and bureaucratic obstacles, to their rightful owners. If there is any kind of dispute as for the ownership of a particular property, the burden of proof should lay on the state and not on the foundations.
- Amend the Law on non-Muslim Welfare Foundations in such a way that would allow for, *inter alia*,:
- Putting an end to the fragmentation of minority Foundations as a result of the Wakifs system in force; allowing for the unification of the various Greek Minority Foundations is key to their survival as well as cost-effective functioning.

- Solving the question of property that was seized and sold to third parties.
- Issuing new regulations for the arbitrarily suspended elections within the minority foundations and immediately allow conducting of elections in all foundations.
- Returning the archives and the library of 50.000 valuable volumes of the Hellenic Literary Society of Constantinople (Ellinikos Filologikos Syllogos Konstantinoupoleos) - which has been illegally confiscated in 1925 - to a Greek Minority Foundation in Istanbul. This library represents the intellectual heritage of the Hellenism of Constantinople.
- Ensure that Greek citizens are able to fully enjoy their rights over inherited patrimonial property, by implementing as of March 2010 recommendations of the Council of Europe Venice Commission on the protection of property rights. Turkey should conform to the relevant rulings of the European Court for Human Rights.

Educational rights

Turkey is called upon to:

- Lift all educational and administrative restrictions regarding the Greek Minority, specifically:
- Amend the Law on Private Schools Education, so as the diplomas of students of European and other nationalities are officially recognized and validated for their admittance in Turkish Universities etc.
- Fully implement the circular revising the status of the Vice Director in minority schools as compared to that of Director that is a member of the minority, so as giving decision-making power to the Director.
- Facilitate the approval of textbooks used by Greek minority schools through a simple and speedy process.
- Support financially minority schools, as it is foreseen by the 1923 Lausanne Treaty.
- Delete all anti-minority references from schoolbooks used for teaching in Turkey, as it forges historic realities, fosters discriminatory behavior against members of the minority and incites hate actions.

Human rights, non-discrimination in general

Turkey is called upon to:

- Fully implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and interpret the 1923 Lausanne Treaty so as to provide equal rights to the Greek Minority in Turkey.

- Sign and ratify the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) of the Council of Europe.
- Turkey should ensure that Greek citizens are able to fully enjoy their rights over inherited patrimonial property.
- Abolish the confidential “race codes” given to the members of non-muslim minorities, as well as the systematic profiling of minority individuals.
- Turkey is urged to make sustained efforts to prevent and punish hate speech or crimes targeting persons belonging to minorities.

Overall, Turkey is called upon to take seriously into consideration the recommendations by EU and international organizations pertaining to human rights and act upon them and make more strenuous efforts to prevent discrimination, intolerance and religiously motivated acts of violence._

