

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

Working Session 12: Tolerance and non-discrimination II, including prevention and responses to hate crimes, aggressive nationalism and chauvinism, and Roma and Sinti issues including the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti (30.9.2014)

In reply to some references made by NGOs I would like to stress that over the last years, and in particular during the period 2012-2013, there has been an important surge in the number of attacks against foreigners living in Greece, and Greek citizens as well. Extremist organizations or individuals have attempted to exploit the anger or the discontent of some segments of the population severely affected by the economic crisis, against the background of an unprecedented rise in irregular migration. A number of measures have been taken at the level of law enforcement, criminal legislation and the justice system. Since September 2013, the leader and members of “Golden Dawn” have been placed under judicial investigation for membership of a “criminal organization”; the measure of pre-trial detention, or other restrictive conditions, have been imposed by the competent judicial authorities to a number of suspects, including Members of Parliament. State financing has been suspended.

A new anti-racism law was adopted on 9 September 2014, adjusting the country’s legislative framework with the 2008/913/JHA EU Council Framework Decision and strengthening the existing criminal anti-racism legislation in terms both of the acts criminalized and the penalties foreseen. Moreover sexual orientation and gender identity have been included in the law.

In concluding, I would like to stress that racist acts and hate crimes have been condemned in the strongest possible terms by members of the political leadership of the country at the highest level, conveying an unequivocal message of zero tolerance.