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Avrupa Batı Trakya Türk Federasyonu

Föderation der West-Thrakiens Türken in Europa

Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe

Ευρωπαϊκή Ομοσπονδία Τούρκων Δυτικής Θράκης

Fédération des Turcs de Thrace Occidentale en Europe

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
Member of the Fundamental Rights Platform (FRP) of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
Member of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)

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Mr. Moderator,

Distinguished representatives of delegates,

And esteemed NGO representatives,

The OSCE has created a large set of human rights and norms and standards that are part of traditional human rights and norms, and it has also developed a number of standards. The Copenhagen Document, with its subsequent document, the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe has created a unique framework, comprising a set of norms, rules and standards, is the foundation of the OSCE human dimension as it exists today.

The participating States have covered a remarkable distance in the OSCE concept of security, where all dimensions of security are viewed as being complementary and mutually supportive and where the security of all is considered as indivisible. It is important to recall the commitments undertaken by all OSCE participating States, in particular those of the 1990 Copenhagen Document of the Conference on the Human Dimension which, in Part IV, articulates detailed standards relating to national minorities. In its Helsinki Decisions of July 1992, the OSCE established the position of High Commissioner on National Minorities and High Commissioner has encouraged and facilitated the adoption by participating States of specific measures related to national minorities and the standards.

The implementation of OSCE commitments by participating States and the results achieved in further standard-setting and interpretation of minority standards is still challenging. Reminding that the OSCE commitments are not legally binding, but rather political commitments, it is very important that governments should pay a particular attention to the implementation of OSCE commitments and other relevant international commitments in the field of human rights.

Since inadequate representation of minority groups in decision making system ensues impediments to the full enjoyment of many civic, cultural, economic, political and social rights, full and effective participation in public and political life is of vital importance in expressing and maintaining identities of minorities. Therefore, a mechanism for dialogue between governmental authorities and national minorities should be established in the form of advisory or consultative bodies that would be the channel for national minorities to raise their own voices. Such bodies might also include special purpose committees for addressing such issues as housing, land, education, language, and culture. The composition of such bodies should reflect their purpose and contribute to more effective communication and advancement of minority interests.

To conclude,

A diverse and independent civil society is a key element in securing sustainable human rights protection in all participating States. All participating States are responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights and they all should encourage civil society participation in decision-making processes.

We urge all participating States civil society to recognize the important role that civil society plays, and to do their utmost to promote and protect the rights of members of who are working through peaceful means to improve situations in their countries.

And, ODIHR's cooperation with civil society should remain a strategic priority because it bolsters our shared objectives, helps to address our mutual concerns, and supports human rights in all participating States.

Thank you.