



OSCE – HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

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Warsaw – Poland

Working Session 5: Specifically selected topic: Ensuring equal enjoyment of rights and equal participation in political and public life

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Thank you Ms/Mr Moderator,

Distinguished Delegates,

Turkish Minority of Western Thrace calls upon the Greek State:

- To take special measures for the effective and adequate participation and representation of the Turkish Minority Women and Disabled Persons of the Turkish Minority to public and political life in Greece.
- To respect and implement the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which she signed in 2007 and ratified in 2012.

I would like to give some examples.

The Greek authorities do not let the Turkish Minority Women establish their Turkish associations. The Cultural Association of Turkish Women of Rhodopi is still pending the implementation of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights and the Cultural Association of Turkish Women of Xanthi is waiting the announcement of the decision of the Greek Supreme Court.

In the political life, however, there are a very limited number of Turkish women, no more than ten people, elected for the local and municipal councils.

Although a quota system has been introduced requiring that 30% of all candidates be women, no training seminars for women's participation in the elections or programs to help Greek society adapt to the quota system were organized, nor they were encouraged by the authorities to be candidates or to participate in public life. Greek local administrative system is a male dominated closed system, and there is an understanding that "Who cares the women?"

The persons with disabilities of the Turkish Minority, on the other hand, considered as non-existing group. They are twice a minority. There is no school for the disabled children, the children who are in need of special education of the Turkish Minority, neither a classroom in a minority school. There is no positive step taken by the Greek authorities to involve the disabled people of the Turkish Minority in social life. There is no civil servant.

This is the very brief example of Greece regarding the Turkish Minority Women and Turkish People with Disabilities.

Thank you for your attention.