



Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2011
Republic of Cyprus
Reply delivered during working session 13,
Tolerance and Non-discrimination II
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1. Regarding the so-called isolation of Turkish-Cypriots it should be stressed that this fallacy has been the façade of efforts to partition Cyprus in recent years. No sanctions or embargoes have ever been imposed on the Turkish Cypriot community, either by the United Nations Security Council, by the Government of Cyprus or by any other State. The lack of sufficient economic development of Turkish Cypriots was the result of the invasion, occupation and constant attempts by the occupying power to set up an illegal separatist regime in occupied Cypriot territory, attempts that have been condemned by the UN Security Council.

The Government of Cyprus is committed to addressing the self-inflicted economic underdevelopment of the Turkish Cypriot community, notwithstanding the continuing occupation and its consequences or the fact that most Turkish Cypriots reside in the occupied area of Cyprus. As citizens of the Republic of Cyprus, Turkish Cypriots have equal access to all the rights and benefits enjoyed by all other Cypriots and have recourse to independent courts if any of their rights are violated.

2. It is groundless, misleading and politically motivated to claim that intolerance in Cyprus mainly afflicts Turkish-Cypriots. Greek Cypriots do not confuse Turkish Cypriots with the country that invaded Cyprus and do not hold their Turkish Cypriot compatriots responsible for this act of aggression. Since movement across the ceasefire line was made possible, millions of crossings have been recorded without any incident, despite the decades-long segregation imposed by the occupation.

Like in all OSCE States, racist and xenophobic incidents occur also in Cyprus but neither the perpetrators nor the victims predominantly belong to any one ethnic community. The Republic of Cyprus takes very seriously the protection of the human rights of all its citizens. In case of any incidents, effective law enforcement relies heavily on the co-operation

of citizens, including for prevention and reporting of crime, as opposed to keeping silent and politicizing incidents *a posteriori*. Avoiding politicization is also needed when assessing whether particular segments of the population are targeted in incidents of broader violence, e.g. as a result of sport-related fanaticism. Lastly, one may not conclude from the activities of small-scale extremist groups that their views reflect broader sentiment or that an entire society is xenophobic.

Cyprus has adopted a comprehensive legal framework for safeguarding equality and combatting discrimination as well as a series of measures for its implementation, including police and teacher training, independent oversight for law enforcement officers' conduct, data collection and observation of racially motivated crime. The Cyprus Government welcomes the increased reporting of such incidents, which cannot be construed as a factual increase thereof, as an indication of a heightened degree of trust regarding law enforcement.

Unfortunately, the Cyprus Government continues to be unable to ensure respect for the human rights of its citizens in its occupied territory where the occupying power exercises effective control (see relevant ECHR judgments).

3. Mention was made to the upcoming Cypriot Presidency of the European Union, also in connection to the ongoing peace process in Cyprus. Any connection between the two is non-existent and thus regrettable, while both are irrelevant to the issue at hand.

4. Neither the aggression against and partial occupation of Cyprus nor the unilateral withdrawal of Turkish Cypriots from state institutions of the Republic of Cyprus in the 1960s affect the constitutional order of Cyprus in any way or the fact that the Republic of Cyprus is the only subject of international law, which represents all its citizens, and is recognized internationally as such.

5. The Republic of Cyprus has one people, comprising two communities and other religious groups. Presenting the Turkish Cypriot community as a "people" has the sole objective of promoting partition and creates concrete obstacles to the reunification of Cyprus.