



***PERMANENT MISSION
OF TURKEY TO THE OSCE***

**OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
(Warsaw, 28 September-9 October)**

Working Session 5: Tolerance and non-discrimination

**Right of Reply by Ambassador Yusuf Buluc
Permanent Representative of Turkey to the OSCE**

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch, His Holiness, is a personality who, not out of coincidence, has the same citizenship as I do, is held at the highest esteem not just by the community who belongs to the Church but much more broadly by his co-citizens and the authorities in Turkey.

The status of the Patriarchate and of the Patriarch himself as well as his title are defined and determined in a set of contractual documents that bind their contracted parties, including the Turkish Government.

While I have personal respect for the aspirations of the community to recognize the Patriarch in an ecumenical capacity, it is nowhere in these binding documents that such a title has been assigned. The Turkish authorities continue to consider themselves as bound by these undertakings.

The members of the Order of St. Andrew which is not the most virtuous and meritable in its vocabulary in expressing its criticism or in its faithfulness to objectivity, but seeks to excel in the economy of truth, will accept how intensely the Turkish Prime Minister, whose statements they quote, works towards the creation of a more harmonious and improved conditions for the Greek minority and its institutions.

However, I am disappointed that those who represent the Order of St. Andrew at the HDIM would not offer even a grudging recognition to the revised law on foundations which represent a new milestone in the ongoing process of reforms. I should be happy to quote for the benefit of Order's representatives statements of welcome by the community and the administrators of the Patriarchate.

The law of the land in a secular country like Turkey applies equally and indiscriminately to all religions and their institutions, resulting in the institutions holding neither a status nor a legal personality.

The preceding responds in equal measure to the intervention by the representatives of the Constantinopolitan Society whose very denomination reveals a revanchist and revisionist view of history.