

### **Right of Reply of the Republic of Cyprus**

#### Working Session 15: Specifically selected topics: Economic, social and cultural rights as an answer to rising inequalities (continued)

1. I exercise the right of reply in response to the comments made by an Azerbaijani organization for human rights.
2. This meeting is not a platform for channeling political propaganda and state separatism, disguised as human rights violations.
3. Despite the Turkish invasion and continuing military occupation of the northern part of the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus safeguards the human rights of all its citizens: Greek-Cypriots, Turkish-Cypriots, Armenians, Maronites and Latins. Hence, the Turkish Cypriots are entitled, *inter alia*, to social insurance and medical care benefits, as well to the issuance of passports, thus travelling freely in the EU and worldwide. Furthermore, the Turkish Cypriots have the right to participate in athletic events as members of the relevant Cypriot federation. Some difficulties are the direct result of Turkey's aggression on Cyprus, which keeps the country and its people forcibly divided. It is not certainly the result of any action taken by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus which has sovereignty over all of the Republic of Cyprus, and which abides by its obligation to defend its sovereignty and the rule of law.
4. Cyprus is not part of the Schengen zone. The holders of passport of countries with which Cyprus has not established diplomatic relations, they are obliged to obtain a visa, in order to enter Cyprus. The international community, including the EU, has been informed accordingly.