

2008 OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
Working Session 3: Freedom of Media and Freedom of Expression

Statement of the Home of Macedonian Culture

Thank you Mr Moderator.

The Home of Macedonian Culture in Greece wishes to make the following statement on the lack of independence and impartiality in the mainstream media in Greece.

The Greek newspaper *Eleftherotypia* recently reported on a seminar organized by the State Intelligence Service for editors of the mainstream media in which agents of this state body provided guidelines, recommendation and directives to editors on how they should report on minorities in Greece including of course the Macedonian minority. Such behavior by the Greek state is not in accordance with the OSCE's commitments on freedom of media.

The result of the many years of interference of the Greek state in media reporting on minorities has had an extremely negative effect on the way in which news is reported. The attitude of the Greek media in relation to legal judgments of the European Court of Human Rights is deeply concerning. For example in relation to the judgment concerning the Home of Macedonian Culture in which Greece was found to have violated the European Convention on Human Rights, Greek media, in cooperate with the state, failed to report on the issue.

Recently, when the same European court found another violation in relation to a different association, this time a Turkish association, elements in the Greek media attacked the judge from Greece in the court for voting against Greece.

Furthermore, in a liberal democracy one would expect a plurality of opinion in the media, thus reflecting the range of views in society. We regret to inform that the views of the representatives of the Macedonian minority are deemed by the Greek media not be worthy of reporting. Press Releases and statements calling

for the recognition of the Macedonian minority and language in Greece are considered to be too shocking for the public and not in line with official policy and are therefore silenced in the media.

The Home of Macedonian Culture therefore asks the Greek delegation:

How does the interference of the State Security Service contribute to the independence of the media?

Thank you for your attention.