

**2008 HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
Warsaw, 29 September – 10 October 2008**

**Working Session 3
Fundamental freedoms II, 30 September 2008**

**Statement of the Macedonian Delegation
In exercise of its Right of Reply**

Mr. Moderator,

In exercising our right of reply let me state the concerns of the Macedonian authorities how the four judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) which concern the freedom of assembly and association of the particular Macedonian associations are implemented by the Bulgarian authorities. These issues are interlinked with the question of compliance to the commitments of the OSCE in the domain of freedom of assembly and association.

Due to restrictions and inability to register as political parties Macedonian associations are confronted with difficulties to be more active in certain spheres of social life, including political activities and by this become more integrated into the Bulgarian society. This situation has been reflected in many reports not only from the NGO's but also in the debates of the European Parliament in the context of discussions how new member states are fulfilling the EU membership criteria. Demands for upgrading this situation have been raised when the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe monitors the execution of judgments of the ECHR.

Let me once again reiterate the call on Bulgarian authorities to implement not only the individual measures but also the general ones which will prevent similar cases to appear before the ECHR in future. That could be certain guarantee for the respect of the freedom of assembly and association when the Macedonian minority is concerned. What has been done so far by the Bulgarian authorities is considered insufficient.