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OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION
IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

19 to 30 September 2016

Warsaw –Poland

Working Session XIV: Tolerance and non-discrimination II, including ensuring equal opportunity for women and men in all spheres in life, including through implementation of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality

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Turkish Minority Women in Greece

Thank you Ms/Mr Moderator,

In the OSCE Moscow Document, 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, as well as other international women rights documents underline the gender equality in all spheres of life. CEDAW General Recommendations No. 23 based on Articles 7-8 advises states parties to identify and implement temporary strategies to increase women's political participation and equal representation, i.e. the targeted recruitment of female candidates; financial assistance and training of such candidates; amendment of electoral procedures; and appointment of women to public positions that hold significant decision making abilities to affect society.

The participation of Turkish Minority women in political and public life in Greece, however, is limited. Turkish Minority women have not been elected as MP since 1923. There is no elected Turkish Minority woman in Eastern Macedonia – Thrace Regional Council currently. There are only a limited number of women in municipal or regional councils.

2002 was the first year that a quota system implemented in the elections for local government, requiring that 30% of all candidates be women. However, no training seminars for women's participation in elections or programs to help Greek society adapt to the quota system were organized, nor they encouraged by authorities to be candidates or to participate in public life. Today, especially in the region where minority lives, the rate is no more than 5%.

Most of the Greek local administrations is male dominated closed circles. Since the traditional mentality and working systems put barriers to women's participation in public and political life, and without encouragement it is not possible to increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making procedures.

Moreover, political authorities' unwillingness, discriminatory attitudes and practices because of the ethnic identity of the Turkish women put obstacles to become a part of decision making bodies, and effective participation in public and political life.

Therefore,

Western Thrace Turkish Minority calls upon the Greek State

To eliminate all discriminatory applications towards the Turkish Minority Women and to take special measures in line with the international standards in order to ensure effective participation of the Turkish Minority Women to the public and political life in Greece.