

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GREECE
-RIGHT OF REPLY-**

**Working Session 11: Specifically selected topic: Rights of persons belonging
to national minorities (continued) (29.9.2014)**

In reply to a statement made earlier by two NGOs, I would like to point out that in almost all successive parliamentary elections held in Greece since 1927, candidates from the Muslim minority in Thrace, which is composed of persons of Turkish, Pomak and Roma origin, have been elected as M.P.s. (with the governing party, the main opposition party or, in most cases, with both parties). Currently, there are three minority M.P.s elected with two different parties.

Furthermore, the members of the minority actively participate at all levels of the region's Local Administration. In the May 2014 regional and local elections, roughly 120 Greek citizens members of the Muslim Minority were elected at the local and regional Councils in Thrace, among them three mayors.

The threshold of 3% required for obtaining seats in Parliament is among the lowest in Europe and is fully in conformity with the case-law of the ECHR, which has found that a threshold of 10% does not violate the convention.

Finally, it is to be noted that a quota of 0.5 ‰ to the State exams system for recruitment to the civil service has been established in favor of persons belonging to the Muslim minority with the obvious intention to enhance their active participation in the public sector.