

Dear Ms. Chairman,

We appeal to the OSCE institutions to take control of the situation with the education reform and the forthcoming law "On languages in Ukraine", which discriminate against national minorities.

Denial of the national identity of minorities is a serious problem for European countries. As a rule, it is dictated by the European constitutional tradition, which presupposes the equality of all citizens. However, in practice this leads to attempts to assimilate ethnic minorities and to losing control of the state over cultural and educational processes in national and religious communities.

This has been observed for many years in France, which denies the existence of ethnic minorities and has not acceded to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe. We see that, albeit with a positive dynamic in Greece, now we see it in Ukraine, where for the last two years an unprecedented attack on the right of minorities to use their native language has been conducted.

The most offensive is that at the same time the system of state education in the languages of national minorities that existed for many years, which completely corresponded to international standards and obligations of Ukraine, is being destroyed.

5.09.17. the Ukrainian parliament passed a law on education that introduces an actual ban on teaching in any language other than Ukrainian.

So, from 2018 only in primary school there will be classes with teaching subjects in the languages of national minorities, including Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Poles and Russians. From the fifth grade, the teaching of subjects in the languages of national minorities is canceled. And since 2020, education in the languages of national minorities will be eliminated in the lower grades. At once I will say that the law was not discussed with the Ukrainian Assembly of Nationalities and with the community structures of national minorities.

All this is a gross violation of human rights standards, Ukraine's obligations under the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Rights of National Minorities, the OSCE Hague Recommendations on the Rights of National Minorities for Education, and the UNESCO Outline Document "Education in the Modern World" 2002.

The protests were already expressed by the governments of Hungary, Romania, Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, the President of Moldova.

Moreover, the previous democratic law on regional languages does not actually work, the parliament is preparing its replacement with another law - "On languages in Ukraine". By this law it is supposed to increase three times the number of languages for ethnic minorities from 10% to 30%.

All this indicates a dangerous shortage of political experience and historical knowledge among Ukrainian politicians who adopt such laws. The historical experience shows, attempts at violent assimilation of ethnic minorities, first of all in the societies with the significant part of ethnic minorities, always lead to the opposite results: the significant part of minorities choose self-isolation, society is split by ethnicity, and children from

minority families who are choosing the self isolation, the children - victims of such a system have a lower level of knowledge than their peers from families of the title nations.

Most importantly, children from these families go out into adulthood with a firm conviction that they are, if not victims of cultural genocide, then people of the second kind. And given the confrontation between the east and west in Ukraine, this will completely close the way for the separatist regions back into a single state.

We are calling the Ukrainian Authorities to respect the international recommendations for the education of the national minorities.