

**Statement of the Delegation of Ukraine
at the Working Session 8 “Tolerance and non-discrimination I (continued),
including rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and preventing
aggressive nationalism, racism and chauvinism” of the
2018 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**

**Mr. Moderator,
Distinguished participants,**

First of all, we would like to express our great appreciation to all introducers for their valuable ideas shared with us.

As a country with the essential number of people, representing the national minorities, Ukraine objectively doomed for very serious covering a question of protecting these groups.

Now, when Ukraine celebrates 100 years of restoring its statehood, would be appropriately to remind that from its first steps on a way of building a modern state, among 16 ministries, founded in 1918, 3 of them had been directly involved in solving minorities’ problematic: that are the ministries for Polish affairs, for Jewish affairs, and for Russian affairs. Three mentioned minorities had been the most numerous and influential that time.

Surely, in one hundred years after described situation, now we have different picture in the corresponding area. But its importance is an undisputable thing.

Ukraine keeps unique system of institutions on the regional level, in areas of compact accommodation of minorities, designed to ensure preservation the basic elements of identity of minority groups. This system was established and shaped immediately after the Second World War, when in frames of the Ukrainian republic relatively numerous communities of Poles, Romanians, Hungarians, Moldavians, Bulgarians continued their presence. This system includes hundreds of pre-schools, secondary schools, special chairs in the universities, dedicated to study of languages and cultural heritage of minorities’ groups, also – libraries, places for performing the national arts, etc.

Unfortunately, any neighboring country, which has numerous Ukrainian minority on own territory, can’t demonstrate the same or even relatively close level of fulfilling of need of the local Ukrainians.

For example, Russian Federation, having on its territory several millions of Ukrainians is unable to found at least one Ukrainian school. At the same time, Ukraine support and completely finance 471 Russian schools, 71 Hungarian, 70 Rumanian, 5 Moldavian, and 5 Polish schools. Also there are around 600 schools with educational process in two or more languages.

It is important to emphasize, that Ukrainian government not only in practice, but on the conceptual-strategic level is trying to fix and defend these principles of tolerance and supporting existing diversity. Complete recognition and maintaining this reality is included into prepared Concept of National Ethnic Politics, which was formed in frames of intensive, one and a half year long consultations with organizations of the national minorities and scientific and expert institutions. This

concept is already adopted by the Government and passed to the Parliament for adoption in a form of obligatory law.

More than 1200 non-governmental organizations of the national minorities act in Ukraine. The main duty for communication with all of them is assigned to regional state administrations. The central governmental body, responsible for state politics on national minorities, concentrates on interaction with the umbrella' organizations of the national minorities. For this purpose, the special Council of Ethnic-National Organizations of Ukraine was created two years ago.

Also the Department for Religious Affairs and Nationalities of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, as a central governmental institution, provides activity of the Expert Council for State Ethnic Politics, which helps in formation the realistic official politics as well as for finding adequate answers for main challenges in the area.

I thank you for your attention.