

Statement

made by Mr.Zoran Todorov, member of the Delegation of the Republic of Macedonia,
delivered in exercising the right of reply during the morning session on October 9th
(democratic institutions and free elections)

Mr. Moderator,

Allow me, on behalf of the Delegation of the Republic of Macedonia, to refer to the statements just been made by the distinguished representatives of Greece and Bulgaria.

The answer to the question to belong (or not) to a national minority is not a sovereign right of the countries and saying that I refer to paragraph 32 of the Copenhagen Document: (I quote)

“To belong to a national minority is a matter of a person’s individual choice and no disadvantage may arise from the exercise of such choice”. (End of quotation).

Similar provision is foreseen in the Framework Convention on National Minorities of the Council of Europe.

The existence of a population which affiliates itself as Macedonian, in an ethnic sense, in these countries, is a fact recognized by several proficient, competent and widely accepted and known international forums and their bodies, holders of internationally accepted monitoring mechanisms. Let me list just two of them:

- The European Commission against racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe and
- The European Court of Human Rights,

Their findings, recommendations and judgments are obligatory for the members of the Council of Europe and should be respected by Greece and Bulgaria as recognized democratic countries, members of all main international organizations as well as actual (Greece), or future (Bulgaria) members of the European Union, whose standards in this respect should serve as an example for other countries.

Thank you Mr. Moderator.