

**2008 OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING**  
**Working Session 4: Freedom of Association**

**Statement of the United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden PIRIN, Bulgaria**

Thank you Mr Moderator.

Today I would like to bring everyone's attention a case concerning Bulgaria's refusal to respect the right of freedom of association.

The United Macedonian Organisation "Ilinden" PIRIN is a political party defending the rights of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. It was officially registered in 1999. However a year later the party was banned by the Constitutional Court of Bulgaria.

In 2005, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the banning of the party was a violation of Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Unfortunately, more than three years after the Strasbourg judgment Bulgaria has failed to execute this judgment. In the last two years two new applications for re-registration have been rejected by Bulgarian Courts.

Thus, UMO Ilinden PIRIN remains unregistered.

The right of a minority, which includes the right of the members of the Macedonian minority of Bulgaria to register an organisation is guaranteed in paragraph 32 of the Copenhagen Document.

Therefore the refusal, on multiple occasions, to register an association raises serious questions about Bulgaria dedication to OSCE commitments. This is especially concerning when we consider the obligation to register UMO Ilinden PIRIN stems from a judgment of the European Court of Human Rights.

Mr Moderator, UMO "Ilinden" PIRIN invites Bulgaria to declare when it will re-register UMO Ilinden PIRIN and fulfill its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights and various OSCE commitments.

I thank you for your attention.