



**OSCE – HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
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Warsaw – Poland
Working Session 7: Tolerance and non-discrimination I**

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Thank you Ms/Mr Moderator,
Distinguished Delegates,

Diversity, difference, equality, combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination and the promotion of tolerance are mostly discussed topics of the European agenda. As it is well-known Europe has become more diverse than before with approximately 500 million people from different ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds. However, discrimination towards different ethnic, religious and cultural identities is increasing in Europe day by day. The perception of “others” is important and may cause distress, tension and conflict if there is no reliable legislation.

Like in Europe, in Greece discriminative incidents towards Turkish Minority have increased recently. Especially, with the Golden Dawn, a racist and fascist political entity, ranking as the third largest party in the Parliament, the rise of racism and xenophobia in Greece has become a serious concern for the Turkish Minority.

Attacks against the Turkish Minority continue to increase as the relevant Greek authorities fail to identify and bring the perpetrators to the justice. In recent years, several mosques were attacked, an aide of the elected Mufti of Xanthi was kidnapped, the elected Mufti received death threats, pig heads were thrown in the buildings where Quran courses are held, car of a Minority journalist was arsoned, headquarters of the Friendship, Equality and Peace Party, known to represent the Minority agenda was broken into and more sadly a car in which its founding-leader lost his life in 1995 in a suspicious accident was stolen from a memorial installation, a conference organized by the Turkish Minority Party in Athens was also raided by the members of the racist party “Golden Dawn”. These are just few examples of what the Turkish Minority has been through in the last couple of years. These attacks indicate that such manifestation of hatred and defamation generally target the ethnic Turkish identity of the Minority and its religious characteristics.

Therefore, Ms/Mr. Moderator,

The Turkish Minority of Western Thrace calls upon the OSCE and other International Communities

To urge Greece to end discriminative implementations targeting the Turkish Minority immediately,

To monitor the legislation process in Greece,

And we recommend Greece

To recognize the existence of the historical Turkish Minority in the Greek territory that has been living in Western Thrace before the region of Western Thrace became a Greek territory and before the Peace Treaty of Lausanne.

Thank you for your attention.