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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
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Agenda item 4

### HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE THE COUNCIL'S ATTENTION

#### **Note verbale dated 30 September 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Turkey addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other international organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council and has the honour to put on record its comments with regard to the statement made by the representative of Centre Europe - Tiers monde (CETIM), also on behalf of Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples (MRAP), under agenda item 4 on 22 September 2009 (see annex).\*

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey kindly requests that the present note verbale and the annex be circulated as a document of the twelfth session.

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\* The present letter is circulated in all official languages. The annex to the letter is circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

## **Annex**

### **Comments with regard to the joint statement made by the representative of "Centre Europe - Tiers monde" (CETIM) on behalf of CETIM and "Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples" (MRAP) under agenda item 4 on 22 September 2009**

Turkey appreciates the work done by the NGOs in the field of human rights and continues to extend its support to them in line with the importance it attaches to the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide.

Turkey, however, disagrees with the remarks of a particular NGO regarding the human rights situation in Turkey.

At the outset, Turkey would like to underline that within its territory there is neither an administrative nor a geographical region called Kurdistan. Furthermore, to name a region as "Turkish Kurdistan" lacks respect to Turkey's territorial integrity.

This statement merely limits itself to a biased report and ignores significant developments in Turkey.

Since 2001, Turkey has actively pursued a comprehensive reform process aimed at protecting and promoting human rights, strengthening democracy and consolidating the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. A series of legal reforms have been carried out including a number of amendments to the Constitution and complete overhaul of basic laws. The new Civil Code, the new Penal Code, the new Law on Associations and the new Code of Criminal Procedure were adopted to this end. These efforts by Turkey have received wide attention of and support from the international community.

Fight against torture and ill-treatment has been a priority item on the Government's agenda. From the outset, the Government has adopted and carried out a "zero tolerance" policy for combating torture. Today, Turkey has the legislative and regulatory framework necessary to effectively combat torture. This was also acknowledged by the former President of the CPT, Ms Silvia Casale, as early as October 2004 when she stated that it would be difficult to find a Council of Europe member state with a more advanced set of provisions in combating torture.

The reform process continues to improve the standards of democracy and human rights for the benefit of all our citizens regardless of their origins. The Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) and private TV and radio channels broadcast in languages and dialects used traditionally by Turkish citizens in their daily lives. Since 2003 private courses for learning these languages and dialects have been opened. As of January 2009 a new multilingual TV channel, TRT-6, broadcasts uninterruptedly in Kurdish.

The Government remains committed to investigating all allegations of human rights violations. In addition to the judicial ones, besides the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights, there are governmental/administrative and parliamentary remedies. To further consolidate these reforms, preparations are underway for the establishment of a National Human Rights Institution compliant with the Paris Principles. The success of the reform process in Turkey is already acknowledged by relevant international organizations and mechanisms."

Geneva, 30 September 2009

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