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**Promotion and protection of all human rights,
civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Note verbale dated 19 March 2010 from the Permanent Mission of the Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to provide herewith the comments of the Government of Greece* in relation to the written statement submitted by the “Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe” (A/HRC/13/NGO/62), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status to the Human Rights Council under agenda item 3.

The Permanent Mission of Greece kindly requests the Office of the High Commissioner to circulate the attached text as a document of the thirteenth session.

* Reproduced in the annex, as received and in the language of submission only.

Annex

Freedom of Expression and Media for the Muslim minority in Greece

The members of the **Muslim minority in Thrace, Greece**, enjoy the **same rights and obligations as any other Greek citizen**, irrespective of his or her religious beliefs, in the framework of the rule of law, guaranteed by the Greek Constitution.

With respect to document A/HRC /13 /NGO/62 of February 23rd 2010, Greece would like to refer to the **following wording directly quoted from Resolution 1704 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe** [“Freedom of religion and other human rights for non – Muslim minorities in Turkey and for the Muslim minority in Thrace (Eastern Greece)”] and its attached report:

(a) Chapter II (Historical and legal context) / sub–chapter i. [Background to and identity (ies) of the minorities} / cluster 23 of the said report]: “***The Muslim minority in Thrace is estimated to number around 100,000 individuals in a region with a total population of 362,000***”. “***The minority is made up of three different ethno – linguistic population groups: Muslims of Turkish origin (approx. 50%), Pomaks (an indigenous population who converted to Islam under the Ottoman Empire) (approx. 35%) and Roma/Gypsy Muslims (approx. 15%). The status of the Muslim minority derives mainly from the 1923 Peace Treaty of Lausanne.***” (art. 45 of the Peace Treaty of Lausanne)

(b) Resolution 1704, in paragraph 18.6. (The whole of paragraph 18 of the resolution specifically concerns Greece) says: “***ensure that no attempts are made to impose an identity on a person or a group of persons, even by representatives of other groups within the minority concerned, in keeping with the spirit of Article 3 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.***”

In relation to the recommendation of Greece’s National Council for Radio and Television on the case of Tele Radio 104.2 FM, being referred to at the above document as “discriminatory”, the following should be clarified:

(a) The Council’s decision was based on Article 3, paragraph 18 of the Law 2328/1995. In accordance with this Article, radio stations are under the obligation to broadcast more than 25% of their programme in the Greek language.

(b) The National Council for Radio and Television is an independent authority. As such, it is not subject to any government or other state influence, as this would be a violation of its independent nature and code of conduct.

Finally, for presenting the wider picture in the area of freedom of expression and media in Greece, and in particular in Thrace, **please find attached a list of minority press publications and radio stations in Thrace, Greece:**

1. MUSLIM MINORITY RADIO STATIONS in GREECE

City FM 107,6
Joy FM 106,9
Işık FM 91,8
Yıldız FM 107,3
King FM 106,2 105,5 106 106,2 107,8
Tele Radio 104,2
Radio DJ 90,6

2. MUSLIM MINORITY NEWSPAPERS in GREECE

Gündem	Weekly
Birlik	Weekly
Cumhuriyet	Weekly
Bülten	Weekly
Balkan	Weekly
Trakya'nin Sesi	Fortnightly
Periskopio	Weekly (in Greek language/Muslim owner)
Olay	Internet newspaper (www.btrolay.gr)
Millet	Weekly

3. MUSLIM MINORITY MAGAZINES in GREECE

Azınlıkça	Monthly
Rodop Rüzgari	Monthly
Öğretmenin Sesi	Monthly
Arkadaş Çocuk	Occasionally
Akide	Monthly
Genç Bakış	Occasionally
Öğrencialemi	Occasionally
Rehber	Occasionally
Kartelen	Quarterly