



General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 June 2018

English only

Human Rights Council

Thirty-eighth session

18 June-6 July 2018

Agenda item 5

Human rights bodies and mechanisms

Written statement* submitted by the Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[25 May 2018]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.18-09588(E)



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The Government of the Republic of Turkey is requested to respond to proposals of Remedy and Reparation Measures towards the Greek-Orthodox Community of Istanbul

Thank you Mr. President.

The present international status of the Greek-Orthodox Community of Istanbul was established by the Lausanne Treaty at the time the Republic of Turkey (RT) was founded. The Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans (EFC) is the worldwide federative body of this Community, a Community forced to expatriate from its native land by the anti-minority policies and acts of the Governments of the RT during the period 1923-2000, which have been reported in numerous UN Human Rights Conferences and Organizations in recent years. Since 2002, the Authorities of the RT have themselves recognized on multiple occasions that the above-mentioned anti-minority measures against the non-Muslim communities (such as defined in the Lausanne Treaty), which caused the population of the Community to drop from 100.000 early in 1950's to 1.500 at present, were indeed a part of government policies implemented by past Governments of the RT.

EFC, since early 2010, has been submitting specific proposals directly to the Turkish Government, in accordance with the existing legal framework, aiming for Remedy and Reparation measures based on the UN Resolution 60/147, in order to achieve the survival of the dwindling Community. Some early positive responses were noted, such as the restitutions of citizenship or the improvement in the relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and with minority schools. However, the Turkish Authorities have yet to respond to our requests for support of the repatriation of expatriate Community members, alleviation of Community Welfare Foundations restrictions, reopening of the Heybeliada Clergy School which has remained illegally closed for 47 years, or the return of cultural items such as the archive of the Greek Literary Society, an Academic Institution of the Community during the period 1862-1922.

The EFC respectfully requests the TR to respond to its submitted proposals.

Thank you for your attention.
