

Forum on Minority Issues
Geneva, 15-16 December 2008

Statement by the Representative of the Hellenic Government
Deputy Permanent Representative of Greece
Ambassador M. Diamessis
16 December 2008
(during agenda item V.)

Thematic focus on
"Minorities and the Right to Education"

Thank you Madame President,

- We welcome the opportunity once more to exchange views and information on good practices and challenges with regard to the minorities' right to education on the basis of a draft set of **recommendations** which we find a **good basis for discussion**.
- Allow me at this point to comment on a couple of issues
- Greece has opted for the enhancement of the right to education for its Muslim minority and in this context it has given priority to the improvement of textbooks as well to teachers' training. Textbooks for the Muslim minority are provided by Turkey, according to bilateral agreements.
- Greece is also systematically improving the content of education in Thrace, respecting different religions and cultures, renewing building infrastructures and equipment, modernizing the institutional framework. The state is also trying to have in primary education as many teachers from the minority itself as possible.
- Greek policy aims at enabling every student of the Muslim minority to be educated, develop his personality freely and enjoy equal opportunities for integration into the labour market as a modern Greek Muslim European citizen. For example, a positive measure which allows Muslim students to enter Greek Universities with additional posts has been adopted, ever since 1996.
- In fact, there are copies of a paper on the educational situation of the minority in Thrace at the back of the room, with more detailed information for whoever may be interested.

