

**Forum on Minority Issues
15 December 2008
Intervention by Turkey**

Thank you Madam Chairperson,

Education is indeed a gateway to empowerment. The right to education is crucial for the enjoyment of an array of human rights. It is an effective tool to break the vicious cycle of poverty.

Turkey attaches importance to the realization of the right to education for all its citizens, including our minorities. Equal access to education is safeguarded by the Constitution. The principle of non-discrimination is also enshrined in the Constitution. Over the past years Turkey has significantly increased its budgetary allocation to education.

Madam Chairperson,

It is true that some regions in Turkey are less developed in terms of socio-economic conditions, when compared to other regions. The terrorist activities had also a negative impact on the overall development of these regions. Turkey has continued to address these socio-economic disparities and has allocated necessary financial and human resources. Turkey is committed to devising targeted development policies with a holistic approach for these regions.

I thank you.