

Ilona Kochoy Item V

Thank you very much madam chair for the possibility to present this statement. My name is Ilona Kochoy and I speak on behalf of the Union of the Kurdish youth of Georgia.

Kurdish community of Georgia is currently constituted of 18,000 members, however according to the census 1989 number of Georgian Kurds comprised up to 35,000. Massive migration of our community representatives has been caused primary by social and economic hardship, and in some cases by ethnic discrimination. A huge number of Kurdish ethnic minority in Georgia are concentrated in low wage and low skilled labour. Mostly, they are involved in street cleaning, litter collection, small skill trade, non-formal hire and firework. In many cases in particular the street cleaning industry, they are not given the work contracts to be signed or if it is given some representatives don't understand what they are signing because of the language barrier and low level of education. And after, they are forced to do more work than stated in the work contracts. Work overtime and without additional [remuneration], and work without day offs or holidays. Work everyday and often night hours. Often they are threatened with the possibility to be fired and become victims of the hate speech at the workplace. Some of the representatives of the Kurdish community have been fired as they started to protest together with the trade-unions, which also unfortunately have low level of impact in Georgia. Because of these facts, other Kurdish street cleaners have the same problems where they are afraid to lose their work and stay silent.

In 2008 Georgia considered labour inspection, we consider to be essential to control the situation and the mechanism of employment of minorities. We strongly recommend re-establishing the labour inspection services. We believe that education is a key aspect of improving economic participation of minorities and we encourage governments to follow-up paragraph 25 of the Draft Recommendations saying that governments should ensure that persons belonging to minorities have equal access to the quality education and are enabled to complete education as to have opportunity to get high wage high skilled work. We also support the recommendation under paragraph 26 saying that governments should invest in programs that build employable skills for minorities excluded from the labour market or at high risk of unemployment. As well as specific educational programs aimed at increasing knowledge and skills of ethnic minorities in the field of labour rights and labour legislation. And with regards to employable skills measures should be undertaken to force the formation of conditions for development of small medium business, first of all among young citizens. For example micro-credits on special conditions, business incubators and etc. Thank you.