

Humanitarian Organization “Icumbi” on Item V

Thank you Madam Chair.

I’m Valence Mandjaneda I’m speaking on behalf of a humanitarian organization, Icumbi which works with refugees, asylum seekers and people of African descent in the Russian Federation. This community constitutes a visible minority. In particular my intervention will focus on situation of Russians of African descent who are estimated to have a population around 75 000.

In point 21 of the Draft Recommendation it is said that the governments should also review and reform as appropriate any legislation, policy or practice that has a discriminatory or a disproportionately negative effect on certain minority groups with a view to bring them into line with the Declaration.

In order to encourage the population growth the Russian Government adopted a law on maternal financial support. During the application of this law it appears that children belonging to mixed families are discriminated against. Those, whose mothers are Russian citizens and fathers are foreigners are entitled to this support. On the other hand, those whose mothers are foreigners and fathers are Russian citizens do not get the support. In both situations we are talking about Russian citizens. Yet some of them are discriminated just because their mothers are not Russian citizens.

The Afro-descendant population in Russia is a growing community. Yet they have many barrier and a forms of discrimination as a visible minority. The government has taken a number of positive measures to combat discrimination and integrate minority communities. But this legislation in the current practice will have a have a negative impact on Russians with African descent, in particular women and children and can further increase inequality and hinder integration.

In the spirit of recommendation 21 the Russian Government should be urgent to review the indicated law in order to allow the minorities from mixed families to have their rights respected on the same level as other young Russian citizens.

Thank you Madam Chair.