

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Minorities Fellowship Programme
Kristina Arakelova, Fellow

November 29, 2018

To the Secretariat of the 11th UN Forum on Minority Issues

Statement and Recommendations

**Item 3. Statelessness resulting from conflicts, forced population movements and migration
affecting minorities: main challenges and possible solutions**

Honorable Chairperson, Dear Colleagues,

My name is Kristina Arakelova. I represent Armenian minority of Georgia. Also, I am 2018 OHCHR Fellow of the Minority Fellowship Programme.

The Ministry of Justice of Georgia, amended the migration policy, as a result of which, In 2015 around 3000 ethnic Armenians lost their Georgian citizenship.

Poor economic conditions, social inequality and high unemployment in the regions of Georgia forced many citizens of Georgia particularly ethnic Armenians to leave Georgian territory, to acquire Armenian citizenship and to move abroad to seek seasonal employment.

But double citizenship in compliance with the Georgian legislation it is automatically meant losing Georgian citizenship. Those people who have lost Georgian passports had to re-apply for Georgian citizenship. But in order to obtain it, they are required to pass exams of the official state language and here we are challenged with another issue. Georgia implements many programmes to provide minority with the knowledge of the state language but still it's not enough. Especially for a people over 30. Lack of knowledge of state language, lack of integration as well as bad economic conditions result in the situation when Georgian Armenians find themselves in the risk of stateless position.

I believe, my country, Georgia is able to put efforts into bringing our people back to Georgia.

Kristina Arakelova
OHCHR Minority

Kristiarakelova@gmail.com

From all mentioned above, I would like to give a recommendations to the Republic of Georgia:

- To ease for Georgian Armenians regaining their citizenship with less efforts, namely providing the return of Georgian citizenship to ethnic Armenians without the need to pass language exam or language requirements for the stateless should not exceed A2 level by CEFR scale;
- To disseminate programmes on social-economic empowerment of minorities which are particularly subjected to seasonal migration.

Here is also my recommendation to the UN:

- To Encourage the Government of Georgia to fully implement the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities;

Thank you!

Sincerely yours,

Kristina Arakelova

OHCHR Minority Fellow