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

Meskhetian Turks, an indigenous people of Southern Georgia who were subjected to forced deportations to Central Asia during the Soviet era, have faced issues obtaining citizenship, having their citizenship reinstated, to be more accurate. Communities of Meskhetian Turks, who, since the fall of the Soviet Union, are minorities in more than 9 countries of the world, have not been able to obtain the right to return to their historic region of residence for 74 years.

Legal mechanisms for the repatriation of populations deported from its territories, enacted by Georgia under pressure from European bodies, failed completely due to implementation difficulties and their strict temporal limitations.

According to data from a 2017 OSCE monitoring report, during the time that the law on the repatriation of deported populations, adopted by the Georgian Parliament and called the law on non-return by human rights defenders, was in effect, out of the initial 13,500 submitted applications, 6,000 were accepted, and only 12 people were able to receive citizenship.

Madame Chair, we offer the following recommendations:

- 1) Reinstatement of the Georgian law on repatriation, which was in effect for 2 years, and introduce key amendments;
- 2) Ensure that it is unconditional and without time restrictions;
- 3) Simplify the procedures for receiving repatriation status, and accordingly, citizenship, using reasonable and practical procedures;
- 4) Ensure access of civil society to the process of repatriation, including civil society organizations of Meskhetian Turks.

In closing, Madame Chair, we ask that attention is given to the policies of Georgia in relation to the repatriation of the population deported from its territory, as such unresolved problems as ours are incompatible with the legal parameters of the country, which is a member of the community of democratic nations.