

Tsakhur National and Cultural Autonomy

Thank you Madame Chair.

I'm Sofia Melikova. I'm a former OHCHR Minority Fellow, as well as the member of the Tsakhur National and Cultural Autonomy. Last month has explicitly shown to us the extreme rights of hate speech and fake news in the light of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on social media, and pivotal role that minority media was playing in terms of providing correct and sufficient information to its target audience. Namely, in the case of the Tsakhur newspaper, which is the only newspaper being published in the Tsakhur language in the entire world, it becomes the only source of information for the Tsakhur community, which is residing in two sides of the borders of Russia and Azerbaijan. Furthermore, new newspapers and other minority media outlets helped to spread awareness about COVID 19 in their respective communities, as well as to organize charity campaigns in those areas.

On the basis of this information, I would like to give the following recommendations:

- To the Russian Federation: to provide further funding for the minority media outlets, especially in terms of ongoing digitalization;
- To the government of Azerbaijan: to give permission to spread more newspapers in Tsakhur settlement, especially in Zaqatala and Qakh regions.

And to conclude on behalf on my community, I would like to express sincere condolences for families who lost their family members in recent conflict and encourage the Azerbaijan government to provide long term support for such families, especially to those with minority backgrounds.

Thank you so much!