



1928

**THE  
CONSTANTINOPOLITAN  
SOCIETY**

GREEKS EXPATRIATED FROM ISTANBUL  
BY TURKISH COERCION

## **2022 Europe-Central Asia Regional Forum on Minority Issues**

Day 2, Tuesday 3rd May 2022

10:00-12:00 Thematic Session 3:

Minority participation as a procedural and substantive right and process

### **The Greek Minority in Turkey**

We represent the Constantinopolitan Society, a civil society organization, established in 1928 in Greece by forcibly expatriated members of the Greek minority of Istanbul. Our intervention will focus on recommendations regarding the basic issues that are related to the human rights violations of the Greek minority in Turkey, which have not been resolved yet and are in contrast with what is in effect internationally and specifically with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (UNDM).

By a series of legislative and administrative measures, the Turkish government has engineered the annihilation of the Greek minority by violating not only explicit international treaty obligations but also some of its own domestic laws. Despite official reassuring statements, the Turkish government has failed to take decisive actions to make the necessary institutional and administrative reforms to reverse these conditions, which have led to the dramatic decline of the Greek population in Turkey from over 130,000 in the 1950's to less than 1,500 at present.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Turkish government is called upon to:

- take decisive actions to make the necessary institutional and administrative reforms to reverse discriminatory policies and human rights violations against the Greek minority
- fully implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and interpret the 1923 Lausanne Treaty so as to provide equal rights to the Greek Minority in Turkey
- invite Greek minority representatives to the Turkish Grand National Assembly so as to actively influence the final provisions of any legislation affecting their rights

- revise the law on the National Human Rights and Equality Institution in order to make it an operationally independent body which is adequately accountable to the public and which includes the active participation of Greek minority members in all social and political affairs
- Issue immediately new regulations for the arbitrarily suspended elections within the minority foundations and permit conduct of elections of board members in all foundations
- Grant full legal personality to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, so that the latter may enjoy ownership rights and exercise property ownership, administration and management. \_