



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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Submission by the Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR)

On the Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

The Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) warmly thanks the UN Special Rapporteur for visiting Greece and closely cooperating with the GNCHR in its preparation and on site. The GNCHR has highly appreciated the consultation held between the UN Special Rapporteur and the GNCHR in a separate meeting. We were also glad to jointly organise the consultation with the Racist Violence Recording Network members hosted in the GNCHR premises.

In his Press Statement, the UN Special Rapporteur assessed that “the economic crisis has resulted in further discrimination of the most vulnerable groups, such as migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, Roma, and LGBT communities”. The GNCHR agrees with this overall conclusion and is committed to working with the UN so that “the economic crisis [does] not become the reason for rolling back progress in the fight against racism and xenophobia”, while emphasising that it is time for the Greek State to take immediate action on crucial matters related to racism and hate crimes, such as the legal gender recognition.

In successive Statements, the GNCHR has repeatedly affirmed that austerity measures of indeterminate duration violate rules of international and European human rights law and that the financing rules of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) relating to the economic or financial support of a State cannot circumvent the obligation to respect international and European human rights law.

Moreover, and with regard to the complex challenge of mass refugee and migration flows towards Greece, the GNCHR fully agrees with the UN Special Rapporteur’s conclusion that countries already severely affected by the economic crisis cannot address on their own this challenge. In this regard, the GNCHR has repeatedly insisted on the need to re-design the EU asylum system along with the Dublin System, with a focus on human dignity and the safeguarding of long established human rights, while expressing its serious reservations about the content and implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement.

In the field of combating racist hate speech and violence with racist motives, the GNCHR has repeatedly called upon the State to take effective measures. It has maintained this line of action by establishing the Racist Violence Recording Network, in collaboration with the UNHCR and with the participation of more than 35 NGOs and other bodies, widely acknowledged for its methodology and data. Furthermore, the GNCHR welcomes, both in terms of institutional as well as civil society initiatives, the establishment by the Greek Ministry of Justice of the National Council against Racism and Intolerance, in which both the GNCHR and the Racist Violence Recording Network are represented, and the creation of the Golden Dawn (trial) Watch, as very positive steps.

The GNCHR commends the UN Special Rapporteur and urges the Human Rights Council to accept his proposals and act upon them.