

Ms. Lilia Petrosyan

20

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Review of Bulgaria

Statement by Armenia

Armenia warmly welcomes the delegation of Bulgaria and thanks for the comprehensive national report.

Armenia and Bulgaria have a long history of friendship and cooperation, which led to the formation of the Armenian community in Bulgaria. Armenia welcomes the steps undertaken for the promotion of the rights of the national minorities, including the Armenians living in Bulgaria. We commend the state policy that creates favourable environment for the national minorities to preserve their cultural heritage and identity. We highly appreciate that the Armenian churches in Bulgaria have the status of the cultural heritage, and that the Armenian language is studied as mother tongue for the Armenian communities in Sofia, Plovdiv and Burgas.

Armenia notes with appreciation the measures undertaken to fight against racism, hate speech and hate crime, particularly combating racism and hate speech in the media. We also note the steps towards the protection of the rights of the child, including amendments to the legal framework in this area.

Armenia is encouraged by the initiatives to combat human trafficking, such as the prevention information campaigns, the referral mechanism for victims of trafficking and for care in cases of unaccompanied children, as well as the establishment of the National Council for assistance and compensation to victims of the crime.

We have 2 recommendations for Bulgaria:

- 1) To continue the initiatives directed towards the promotion and protection of the rights of the national minorities, and
- 2) To continue its efforts in combating trafficking in persons.