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UPR 22nd SESSION
COUNTRY UNDER REVIEW: BULGARIA

Intervention by Turkey

7 May 2015

Mr. President,

I wish to welcome the Bulgarian delegation.

We welcome the Bulgarian Government's cooperation with the international human rights mechanisms in order to improve its human rights record.

However, concrete steps need to be taken on several persisting issues. We are particularly concerned by the ongoing discrimination and xenophobia against the minorities, as well as the impunity related to the human rights violations in the past.

Thus, Turkey **recommends** Bulgaria to *transparently prosecute the individuals who committed crimes against all minorities under the communist regime; especially on the protracted legal case of Belene concentration camp.* Turkey also **recommends** *adopting due legislation for the removal from the civil registry, of the enforced Bulgarian-Slavic names given to Turkish and Muslim minorities in the same period.*

Turkey commends the executive decision on the *Saint Alexander Nevsky Cathedral.* We **recommend** *adopting such decisions on the restitution of the confiscated property of the Muslim Denomination and all others, so as to demonstrate the nondiscriminatory character of the Executive.*

Recently, at least 20 violent Islamophobic acts have taken place against mosques in Bulgaria since the beginning of 2014. We **recommend** *taking necessary precautions to protect mosques and other religious sites against the rising incidents of racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia.*

Lastly, the Election Code restricts campaigning language to Bulgarian. Turkey **recommends** Bulgaria to *change its legislation to ensure the exercise of the political rights in the mother tongue as prescribed in the OSCE report of 7 January 2015.*

Thank you, Mr. President.