

Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Fourth session 11-15 of July 2011
Agenda item 3. Follow-up to thematic studies and advice.

Joint Statement
of International Public Organization Foundation
for Research and Support of Indigenous Peoples of Crimea and
Public Organization Milli Firka (People's Party)

Presented by Nadir Bekirov

Dear brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen!

This is rather difficult to overvalue the meaning of the first Advice worked out by EMRIP directed towards the realization of one of the principal rights of any Indigenous People to be educated and to manage its own education!

As it was justly defined in the Advice that is a basic pre-ground for the development and self-sustainability of Indigenous peoples and individuals, the first step to the Right to the Self-Determination.

At the same time this right is so far universal and well recognized that this hard to imagine that any State or Government would decide to neglect it or to undermine it for Indigenous Peoples.

Nevertheless even at the centre of the Europe we have the sad precedent of the complete disrespect of the Right to Education for the Indigenous peoples of the region at the sense as it was defined, established and recommended by the advice.

We have three Indigenous Peoples in Crimea – Crimean Tatars, Krymchaks and Karaimes. The last two have no any kind of educational institutions totally. We would compare the situation of Karaimes in Lithuania, where they are national minority as a Diaspora of Crimean Karaimes and where Lithuanian Government does everything to support culture and identity of Karaimes and their situation in Crimea, where they are the Indigenous People, but Ukrainian Government exploiting their historical sites for commercial tourism does not allocate even 10% of the benefit taken from that for cultural and educational needs of Karaimes People.

It was supposed that Study on the Rights of indigenous peoples to education and Advice issued three years ago would be disseminated at the countries and to be a subject of public concern and discussion. I am to say that Ukrainian Government despite changing of two Presidential administrations and two composition of parliament not talking about numerous re-appointments at the executive bodies did nothing for the informing of the public or even Education officials about Advice.

Vice versa despite very strong condemning of the using of Education as a weapon for the assimilation recently the strict course to the assimilation of Indigenous Peoples has become the main stream at the educational policy of Ukraine.


Nothing too much new! Those things, which were analyzed and warned against at the para.12 of Advice: wrong stereotypes, inappropriate terminologies and other negative elements referring to indigenous peoples in textbooks and educational materials. The language and culture of the dominant majority as well as insulting stereotypes about their own history and culture are being imposed to the children of Indigenous Peoples as at the textbook as at school classes and rather wider trough thousands of channels at TV, movies, books, entertainment programs and even commercial advertisement.

The public declarations of the high governmental officials and so called experts (no one of which even read that Advice) that there are not Indigenous Peoples in Ukraine and Crimean Tatars, Karaimes and Krymchaks are only ordinary citizens belonging to the national minorities have become a general and I would state the focal point of Ukrainian policy towards its Indigenous Peoples recent years despite the Constitution of Ukraine establishes the responsibility of the State for the preservation of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of Indigenous Peoples in Ukraine.

The official State education programs escape to mention the very presence of Indigenous Peoples in Ukraine but at the same time include a lot of perverted information about our past and present in Ukraine.

Concluding I would propose to the EMRIP to apply to the Human Rights Council to follow up the Advice issued in 2009 in order to collect information about real attitude of Governments to it and to make the overview of the current situation with the observation of the Indigenous Peoples Right to Education as was designed in Advice.

Thank you for your attention.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. P.' or similar, enclosed within a circular flourish.