

FUEN
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Federal Union of European Nationalities

RESOLUTIONS 2019

ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES IN BRATISLAVA · POZSONY · PRESSBURG ON 15 JUNE 2019



FEDERAL UNION OF EUROPEAN NATIONALITIES
FÖDERALISTISCHE UNION EUROPÄISCHER NATIONALITÄTEN
ФЕДЕРАЛИСТСКИЙ СОЮЗ ЕВРОПЕЙСКИХ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ МЕНЬШИНСТВ
UNION FÉDÉRALISTE DES COMMUNAUTÉS ETHNIQUES EUROPÉENNES

RESOLUTIONS

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RESOLUTION 2019 – 01

Rhodes, Kos and the Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association (ROISDER)

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg, Slovakia, on 15 June 2019:

Greece should grant the Turkish minority living on the islands of Rhodes and Kos the right to learn their mother tongue

Greece, a full member of the European Union, continues to deprive Turkish children living in Rhodes and Kos of their right to learn Turkish and be taught in their mother tongue.

As a matter of fact, minority cultural rights of Rhodes and Kos Turks have been addressed not only in a number of international treaties but also within the context of the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations and the Greek Constitution. However, Greece continues to ignore all these resolutions and decisions.

During the British Administration in Rhodes and Kos, an organisation called the Association of Turkish Schools existed.

When the islands came under the Greek sovereignty in 1947, Greek-language education was introduced in the Turkish school. Starting from this date until 1972, education/training in these schools was also given in Turkish language on a bilingual basis. Since 1972, learning Turkish has been completely banned. Today, Turks living in Rhodes and Kos attend Greek public schools. Cultural assimilation has been accelerated in this manner.

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates urges the Greek State to take the following actions:

1. The Greek State should establish a meaningful dialogue with the representatives of the Turkish minority in Rhodes and Kos to reopen Turkish schools on a basis of offering bilingual education to Turkish children.
2. The Greek State must immediately remove all obstacles placed in front of Rhodes and Kos Turks to learn their mother tongue as part of their human rights.
3. The Greek State should grant permission to reopen not only public schools but also private schools on a bilingual basis in Turkish and Greek.
4. The Greek State should remove negative and hostile statements concerning the Turkish image in the history course books used in Greek schools.
5. The Greek State should comply with the “Final Version of Council of Europe Resolution No. 1867 (2012) on the situation of the Greek citizens of Turkish descent in Rhodes and Kos“ concerning the admission of Turkish as language of instruction on the basis of a bilingual educational system in the schools in Rhodes and Kos.

RESOLUTION 2019 – 02

Turkish Minority of Western Thrace, submitted by the Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF), the Friendship, Equality and Peace (FEP) Party and the Western Thrace Minority University Graduates Association (WTMUGA)

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg, Slovakia, on 15 June 2019:

The Fundamental Problems of the Turkish Minority of Western Thrace in Education

In the 1923 Lausanne Treaty, the Turkish minority of Western Thrace in Greece is granted with the right to establish, manage and control any school and other establishment for instruction and education at their own expense, with the right to use their own language.

The autonomy in education was in practice until 1967, when the Greek military junta regime took over the power. It has been undermined and diminished by governmental practices over the years with complex legal provisions. The Minority education is thereby put under the full control of the state at all levels in a stark contradiction to the relevant international documents.

At the pre-school level, minority children are obliged to attend state kindergartens where the medium of instruction is only Greek under Law 3518/2006. There are no minority/private kindergartens or minority/private nurseries for the minority children to learn their mother tongue in their early childhood. The Government of Greece does not take position on the applications for the opening of bilingual Turkish-Greek kindergartens in the existing bilingual primary schools of the Turkish minority.

As for the primary schools of the Minority, Greek authorities arbitrarily close down the minority primary schools under the pretext of insufficient number of pupils and economic resources since 2010. There were 194 minority primary schools in Western Thrace in 2008 and this number gradually decreased to 128 in 2018. Concerning secondary education, the main problem is the lack of number of schools. There are only two secondary minority schools and two religious schools. Despite the applications of the Turkish minority, the government ignores proposals to open new secondary minority schools.

The primary and secondary schools of the Turkish minority follow a bilingual curriculum. Greek Ministry of Education provides the textbooks for the Greek curriculum in these schools. Textbooks for the Turkish curriculum come from Turkey and are subject to approval of the Greek Ministry of Education of which indeed cause great deal of delays each year.

Teachers in the Greek curriculum do not speak the mother tongue of minority pupils and have no special training for teaching in bilingual minority schools, while all teachers in the Turkish curriculum are graduates

of a former special pedagogical academy in Thessaloniki with very limited courses taught in Turkish and with no internal education training programmes.

All these factors result in a low quality of education in minority schools which in return cause social segregation, exclusion and marginalization of minority members as second-class citizens. Lack of quality education in minority schools compels some parents to consider sending their children to state primary schools, where the medium of instruction is only Greek.

The education of the Turkish minority has extensively been politicized in Greece, where the Turkish language and culture are considered as threats to the public order and national security. This educational system is characterised by racism, xenophobia, intolerance and prejudice and there are no provisions for encouraging diversity in education and for teacher training in diversity management.

The FUEN Assembly of Delegates calls upon Greece:

1. to restore autonomy in education granted to the Turkish Minority in Western Thrace by the 1923 Lausanne Treaty in full compliance with the special status of the Turkish minority in education,
2. to establish bilingual kindergartens within minority schooling system and allow the Turkish community in Western Thrace to establish private bilingual kindergartens where the language of education will be Turkish and Greek,
3. to revise its policies concerning the primary and secondary schools of the Turkish minority, including their number and location, management of school councils, recruitment and training of teachers of both Greek and the Turkish curriculum, and to secure the revision and modernisation of textbooks and education materials to be used for both curriculums together with experts from both countries and the Turkish minority as well as the distribution of textbooks of Turkish curriculum in due time,
4. to make good use of all available domestic and international instruments and establish co-operation and collaboration with the Turkish minority through advisory and consultative bodies in order to address problems in education at all levels including higher education.

RESOLUTION 2019 – 03

NGO “Russian School of Estonia”

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg, Slovakia, on 15 June 2019:

Resolution on the situation of the Russian national minority in Estonia

The Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) and the NGO “Russian School of Estonia” draw attention to the following problems of the Russian national minority in Estonia:

Estonization of Russian schools. On March 3, 2019, parliamentary elections were held in Estonia. Among the parties in the Estonian parliament, all are in favour of the complete elimination of Russian schools. Only the fact that it is impossible to implement this abolition quickly due to the lack of teachers and teaching materials prevents them to do so. At the same time, the opinion of the Russian national minority (25% of the population of the country) who wants to preserve Russian schools as the basis of its ethnical identity is not being taken into account.

Liquidation of Russian administrative districts. In 2017-2018 administrative reform took place in Estonia. Its goal was the consolidation of local governments (administrative districts). As a result of this reform, Russian districts on the coast of Lake Peipsi (where since the end of the 17th century, Russian orthodox Old Believers and fishermen have been living) were completely dissolved. Prior to that administrative reform, there was Russian self-government in five Peipsi districts. Meanwhile, no Russian self-administration exists anymore, since the Russian villages were dissolved and incorporated into larger Estonian districts. Due to this reform process, the possibility to use Russian as an official language was negated in the respective districts.

Official recognition of the full Russian name. Article 11 (1) of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities provides the right for persons belonging to national minorities to have their full national name, including the patronym, officially recognised. Estonia ratified the Framework Convention already in 1996, but despite numerous recommendations by the Advisory Committee of the Council of Europe and other international bodies as well as three trials in the court of Estonia, there is still no official recognition of the patronym for the members of the Russian national minority. In the last case, a complaint against Estonia was filed with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Communication No. 64/2018, Mihhail Tverskoi v. Estonia). This complaint is currently under examination of its admissibility.

Silence in the media and the persecution of activists of the Russian community. The Estonian authorities are trying to evoke the impression that the Russian minority in Estonia is satisfied with their situation. It is by no means. The activists of the Russian community, in particular the members of the board of the NGO “Russian School of Estonia”, take a decidedly different view from the officials and show the real circumstances of the Russian minority. They are therefore exposed to all kinds of persecution by the Estonian authorities.

The position of the NGO “Russian School of Estonia” is deliberately being hushed up by the media. All this is evidence of a unilateral and biased treatment of the Russian minority. Activists of the Russian national minority are subject of defamation by government-operated bodies and criminal persecution, which is being introduced against them under false pretences.

Based on the above situation

FUEN calls on the Estonian government:

1. to stop the estonization of Russian schools and to provide the Russian national minority with the opportunity to receive secondary education in Russian language.
2. to ensure that representatives of the Russian national minority receive public services in Russian language in the places of their permanent residence.
3. to follow the recommendations of international bodies and recognize officially the patronyms of Russian names.
4. to stop the persecution of activists of the Russian minority in Estonia.

FUEN calls on the European institutions:

1. to support the Russian national minority of Estonia in defending their rights.
2. to develop within the EU general standards that guarantee national minorities the secondary education in their native language and that provide the possibility of using it as national language in the territory of their permanent residence.
3. strongly condemn Estonia for the consistent and systematic persecution of activists of the Russian community.

RESOLUTION 2019 – 04

European Institute Pomak

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg, Slovakia, on 15 June 2019:

Resolution on the recognition of the Pomaks as an autochthonous national minority in the Republic of Bulgaria

The Republic of Bulgaria is a member of the European Union since 2007. It has ratified all international and European documents concerning minority rights. However, the Pomaks in Bulgaria do not benefit from the provisions on the protection of national minorities enshrined in these conventions. The main reason is that Bulgaria does not recognise the existence of the Pomaks on its territory, does not guarantee their rights and assimilates them or promotes assimilation policies of certain political subjects or state institutions.

The European Institute Pomak, the only officially registered non-governmental organisation protecting the rights of the Pomaks, has repeatedly sent official letters to the Parliament, the Government and the President of the Republic on the official recognition of the Pomaks. Formal responses have not been received and no official action has been taken.

Furthermore, in the last census of the population of the Republic of Bulgaria, in the official questionnaires, the column “Pomak” was not allowed.

Based on all this, the FUEN calls on the Republic of Bulgaria:

1. To recognise the Pomaks as an autochthonous minority.
2. To include in the next census a special column “Pomak” in the official questionnaire.

RESOLUTION 2019-05

Macedonian Association Ilinden - Tirana

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg, Slovakia, on 15 June 2019:

Resolution regarding the improvement of the educational policy for the Macedonian minority in Albania

The Macedonian Association “Ilinden“ - Tirana and the Macedonian national minority in the Republic of Albania seek cultural and educational autonomy for the inhabitants of the regions of Golo Brdo, Mala Prespa and Gora in order to preserve the Macedonian culture in these regions inhabited by a purely Macedonian population.

The FUEN therefore calls on the Republic of Albania to:

1. open a Department of Macedonian Language at the state University of Tirana as well as to open a Department of Macedonian Language at the state University “Fan Stilian Noli” of Korca.
2. ensure the representation of the Macedonian national minority in the structures of the State Administration, the local self-governing bodies and those local administration bodies where a significant number of persons belonging to the Macedonian national minority reside.
3. provide the representation of the Macedonian national minority to the steering committee of the State Radio Television.

RESOLUTION 2019-06

Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg, Slovakia, on 15 June 2019:

On the recognition of the genocide of the Crimean Tatar people

On 18 May 1944, on the decisions of the USSR State Defense Committee, the Crimean-Tatar people were subjected to total deportation from their historic homeland, Crimea.

In the course of the NKVD operation, about 200,000 Crimean Tatars were deported to remote areas of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation, the majority of which were women, children and the elderly.

The eviction was carried out by the troops of the NKVD of the USSR in the form of a special punitive operation, with armed encirclements of settlements, forcible expulsion of Crimean Tatars' families from houses, long stay of people in the squares of settlements or cemeteries before loading them into overcrowded cattle railcars, confiscation of all movable and immovable property.

In the places of special settlements of the Crimean Tatars, they were used for hard grueling work, including mining, logging, construction of irrigation canals.

According to various estimates, it was only in the early years of exile that more than 46% of Crimean Tatars died as a result of hunger, mass diseases, mockery and hard labor in places of special settlements.

The period of forcible retention of the Crimean Tatars in the places of exile and the prohibition of them to return and live in their homeland, in the Crimea, lasted until November 1989

The forced eviction of the Crimean Tatars from the territory of its historical residence, the deliberate creation in the places of special settlements of the living conditions that led to the mass deaths of the Crimean Tatars, especially children and women, the restriction of elementary livelihood, the ban for decades to return and settle in the Crimea the historical territory of the formation of the Crimean-Tatar people, purposeful linguistic and cultural assimilation, under international law have signs of genocide.

The 4th session of the fourth Kurultay of the Crimean Tatar people (9-11 December 2005) recognized the deportation on 18 May 1944 and the following decades of the violent holding of Crimean Tatars in places of exile as an act of genocide of the Crimean Tatar people - the indigenous people of Crimea.

In 2014 the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine recognized the Crimean Tatar people as the indigenous people of Ukraine and guaranteed the protection and realization of the inalienable right of the Crimean Tatar people to self-determination in the sovereign and an independent Ukrainian State.

In 2015 the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine appealed to the international community to condemn the forcible deportation of the Crimean Tatars by the communist regime of the USSR on 18 May 1944 and recognized the deportation of the Crimean Tatars from the Crimea in 1944 as the genocide of the Crimean Tatar people.

At the same time, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine stated that the systemic pressure on the Crimean Tatar people, repressions of Ukrainian citizens on a national basis, the organization of ethnically and politically motivated persecutions of the Crimean Tatars, their bodies such as the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people and Kurultay of the Crimean Tatar people in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine from state bodies of the Russian Federation, starting from the date of the beginning of the temporary occupation, is a conscious policy of ethnocide of the Crimean Tatar people.

Anniversary of the deportation of the Crimean Tatar people in Ukraine is annually honored at the state level.

According to everything mentioned above, the Federal Union of European Nationalities:

1. Recognizes the deportation from Crimea of the Crimean Tatars in 1944 as genocide of the Crimean Tatar people;
2. Calls upon the international community represented by international organizations and parliaments of the states to recognize the forced deportation from Crimea of the Crimean Tatars, carried out on May 18, 1944, as the genocide of the Crimean Tatars;
3. Condemns the non-fulfillment by the Russian Federation of appeals, recommendations and demands of international organizations concerning violations of the rights of the Crimean Tatar people on the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol occupied by the Russian Federation, expressed, in particular, in resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE and the Parliament Assembly of the Council of Europe;
4. Condemns the illegal conscription of Ukrainian citizens to the military service — Crimean Tatars and people of other nationalities living on the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation, which is a violation of the Geneva Convention regarding the Protection of Civilians during a War adopted in 1949;
5. Strongly condemns the massive violations of human rights on the occupied territory, the victims of most of which are the Crimean Tatars; demands the immediate and unconditional release of Crimean Tatar political prisoners illegally detained by Russia;
6. Calls on the Russian Federation to immediately implement the Order of the International Court of Justice of April 19, 2017 and lift the ban on the activities of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people - the single highest representative body of the Crimean Tatar people - the indigenous people of Crimea, also allowing its leaders to freely enter and leave Crimea.

RESOLUTION 2019-07

Public Organisation of the Meskhetian Turks “VATAN”

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg, Slovakia, on 15 June 2019:

Resolution on the situation of the Meskhetian Turks

In 1944, the indigenous population of the Meskhetian Turks was deported from their ancestral settlement area, today Georgia’s state territory, by the Soviet Union. As a result of accession negotiations to the Council of Europe, Georgia undertook to allow the return of the Meskhetian Turks as a necessary condition for its membership of the Council of Europe in 1999. The commitments included a final solution to the problem of the return of the deported population within 12 years. Arrangements have been made to resolve the problem of civilian reconstruction and to guarantee the full right of return of those who wish to return from the circle of deportees and populations living in different countries. Since 1995 FUEN has devoted itself intensively to the fate of the Meskhetian Turks in various CIS countries and visited Russia, Azerbaijan and Georgia with special commissions in order to draw the attention of the authorities to the situation of the Meskhetian Turks.

In view of the unresolved consequences of the unjust deportation of the Meskhetian Turks from Georgia in 1944, it should be noted that the Republic of Georgia did not fulfil its obligations to the Council of Europe in 1999 to return the deported indigenous population of Georgia, the Meskhetian Turks, to their homeland.

The adoption of the law ‘On the repatriation of persons forcibly removed from Georgia by the former Soviet Union in the 1940s’ in 2007 was unfortunately not fully implemented. There are no real programmes or aspirations for the return of the expelled population.

The public organisation of the Meskhetian Turks “VATAN” and the FUEN welcome Georgia’s efforts to become a member of the European Union. However, the unresolved problem of the repatriation of Georgia’s indigenous population constitutes a serious obstacle to Georgia’s admission to the EU and is therefore incompatible with the EU legal framework.

The FUEN calls on Georgia

to introduce a simplified procedure for the acquisition of Georgian citizenship for the Meskhetian Turks and their descendants deported in 1944 without time limit and proof of identity (subject to the necessary proof of the territorial origin of the ancestors).

The FUEN calls on the EU member states

to define the complete solution of the unresolved issues concerning the situation of the Meskhetian Turks a criterion for Georgian membership of the EU and to demand its implementation.



FUEN
1949–2019



FUEN Flensburg / Flensburg

Schiffbrücke 41
D-24939 Flensburg +494611 2855

FUEN Berlin

Milastraße 2
D-10437 Berlin +49 30 364 284 050

FUEN Brussel / Bruxelles

Rue Jacques Jordaens 34
B-1000 Brussel +32 262 718 22