

RESOLUTION 2023-02

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

The Delegates of the Member Organisations of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEM) adopted the following resolution at their Assembly of Delegates in Pécs • Fünfkirchen • Pečuh, Hungary on 9 September 2023:

GREECE SHOULD ACCEPT MUSLIM-TURKISH PRESENCE IN RHODES AND KOS AND RE-OPEN SCHOOLS ON THE BASIS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND STOP DESTRUCTION OF MOSQUES, SHRINES AND CEMETERIES.

Nowadays, the Greek State and the Greek media continue to allege that “there are no Turks but there are Greek Muslims” in Rhodes and Kos.

This allegation is in contradiction with many foreign documents as well as Turkish sources confirming Turkish presence in the islands. One of them is the communiqué dated April 1, 1947 which was issued by Major Konstantinos Krekoukias, the Commander of the Kos Military Administration. The said communiqué stated, “We wish to live with the Turkish inhabitants of Kos in harmony and in an atmosphere of fraternal love”. With this document, the Greek Military Administration refuted the thesis of the Greek State. Another such document is the resolution entitled “The Situation of the Greek Citizens of Turkish descent in Rhodes and Kos” that was adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on March 9, 2012.

Apart from that, Greece’s thesis that “Muslim Turks of Rhodes and Kos do not have cultural rights arising from the provisions of international treaties” contradicts the treaties to which Greece is a party. Against this background, the Island Turks have rights arising from treaties including “the Treaty of Athens (1913), Greek Treaty of Sèvres (10 August 1920), Turkey-Greece Population Exchange Agreement (30 January 1923), the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the Treaty of Athens of 1926 and Treaties of Ankara of 1930 and 1933, and Paris Peace Treaty (1947) “. The issue of the succession of states in these treaties is specified in Article 15 of the 1978 Vienna Convention, which stipulates that the concept of “territorial status “ includes not only a part of the territory of a state at the time of the treaty, but also the territory acquired by a country afterwards.

As the FUEM Assembly of Delegates, we demand the following from the Greek State:

- Greece should accept the cultural rights of the Muslim Turks of Rhodes and Kos arising from international treaties.
- The Greek State should make sure that schools that offer education and training in Turkish and Greek on the basis of bilingualism are opened for Turkish children.
- The religious autonomy of the Muslim Turkish minority living in Rhodes and Kos in Greece should be respected, and their freedom to elect their own religious leaders should be accepted.

- Rhodes and Kos Turkish Foundation Administration should not be formed by appointments, but by the free choice of Turks/Muslims living in Rhodes and Kos.
- Necessary steps should be undertaken to restore and protect Turkish cultural heritage and monuments. Deliberate destruction of historical mosques, soup kitchens, cemeteries and shrines should be prevented.