



FOLLOW-UP MEETING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

P R O G R A M M E

**Skopje, 26 January 2009
Hotel Holiday Inn**

The aim of this meeting is to take stock of progress made in the implementation of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and to discuss the steps taken and/or foreseen to implement the recommendations contained in the Second Opinion of the Advisory Committee adopted on 23 February 2007 and in the corresponding Resolution of the Committee of Ministers adopted on 9 July 2008.

Four main areas will be examined during this meeting, in the presence of the responsible authorities, minority associations, NGOs as well as international organisations.

- Inter-ethnic dialogue
- Use of minority language
- Minority education
- Minority participation in public affairs and in socio-economic life

It is expected that the results of the discussions at the meeting will be instrumental to the on-going process of the implementation of the findings of the Framework Convention's monitoring bodies in practice, in particular in view of the preparation of the third State Report to be submitted by the authorities to the Council of Europe by 1 February 2009.

9:00-9:30 **Registration of participants**

9:30- 9:45 **Opening of the seminar**
Mr Abdulkadar Memedi, State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms Eva Konecna, Secretariat of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

9:45-11:00

GENERAL EVALUATION SESSION

Chair: **Ms Svetlana Geleva**, Head of the Department for Multilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

9:45 -10:00 **Overview of the main findings of the Advisory Committee’s Second Opinion on the implementation of the Framework Convention**
Ms Regina Tavares da Silva, former member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

10:00-10:15 **Response on behalf of the Government, including information on recent developments**
Mr Zoran Dabic, State Secretary, Director of the Directorate for Political and Security Cooperation and Multilateal Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

10:15-11:00 **Discussion (Q&A)**

11:00-11:15 *Coffee break*

11:15-12:30

THEME 1 – INTERETHNIC DIALOGUE

Chair: **Ms Svetlana Geleva**, Head of the Department for Multilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

11:15-11:45 **Measures taken to improve dialogue between the ethnic communities**

Comments by a representative of the Government: **Mr Atula Kasumi**, State advisor at the Secretariat for Implementation of the Framework Agreement

Comments by **Mr Albert Musliu**, ADI - Association for Democratic Initiatives, Gostivar

Issues to be discussed include:

- long-term and short-term governmental strategy for improving interethnic dialogue and inclusion of numerically smaller minorities in this dialogue
- role of the media

- role of education

11:45-12:30 Discussion (Q&A)
12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00

THEME 2 - USE OF MINORITY LANGUAGE AND MINORITY EDUCATION

Chair: **Ms Eva Konecna**, Secretariat of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

13:30-14:30 **Implementation of language-related minority rights**
Comments by a representative of the Government: **Ms Tanja Kikerekova**, Head of Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Justice

Contribution by **Ms Vera Klopčič**, member of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority languages

Comments by **Mr Goran Kostov**, Union of the Culture of Vlach, Skopje

Issues to be discussed include:
- use of languages at local level
- language training programmes

Discussion (Q&A)

14:30-15:30 **Increasing access and interaction of national minorities to/at all levels of education**

Comments by a representative of the Ministry of Education:
Mr Redzep Ali Cupi, Director of the Bureau for Development of Education in the Languages of the Communities

Comments by **Ms Mirjana Najcevska**, Center for Human Rights and Conflict resolution, Skopje

Issues to be discussed include:
- availability of education in minority languages (including teacher training, updated textbooks and curriculum development)
- equal access to education by the Roma

Discussion (Q&A)

15:15-15:30 Coffee break

15:30-16:30

THEME 3 - EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

Chair: **Ms Eva Konecna**, Secretariat of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

15:30-16:00 Implementation of the principle of equitable representation in key areas including in the police and in the judiciary

Comments by a representative of the Government: **Ms Snezana Serafimovska**, Senior advisor at the Ministry of Interior

Comments by **Mr Asmet Elezovski**, Roma National Congress, Kumanovo

Issues to be discussed include:

- implementation of the principle of equitable representation in public institutions and in the judiciary and effective participation of numerically smaller minorities and women belonging to national minorities in decision-making and in socio-economic life (e.g. access to employment, social services, housing and healthcare)

- anti-discrimination guarantees

16:00-16:30 Discussion (Q&A)

16:30-17:00

CONCLUDING SESSION

16:30-17:00 Ms Regina Tavares da Silva, former member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention

Ms Svetlana Geleva, Head of the Department for Multilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs