

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

UN Human Rights Council: 18th Session

Item 6: Consideration of Universal Periodic Review Report of Greece,
Thursday, 22 September 2011

Chairperson, Members of the Human Rights Council I speak on behalf of the Greek National Commission for Human Rights, an A accredited National Human Rights Institution.

The Commission commends the Council for the UPR process which provides an invaluable opportunity for constructive international scrutiny of a country's human rights performance, an opportunity which of course can be widened and strengthened in certain aspects. The Commission also appreciates the Greek Government's active and sincere engagement with the UPR.

The NCHR wishes to remind the context and overall circumstances that determine, to a large extent, the enjoyment of human rights in Greece. Currently, large segments of the population are severely affected by the consequences of the financial crisis and by the extremely harsh measures adopted by the government. It is anticipated that this will have a negative impact on the protection of human rights, particularly of the most vulnerable.

Greece has responded positively to many of the recommendations. However, the challenge is to reflect those commitments in legislation and policy, at this time of financial constraints and uncertainty.

The NCHR focuses on a number of issues that have been highlighted within the UPR and which the Government has pledged to address:

- The Commission welcomes the Government's acceptance of recommendations regarding the full implementation of the National Action Plan for the reform of the asylum system and migration management.
- Furthermore, the NCHR welcomes the Government's pledge to progress ratification of OPCAT and to ensure appropriate detention

conditions in all types of facilities, as the Special Rapporteur on Torture has also strongly advised.

- The Commission approves Greece's support to the recommendation on the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as the pledge to strengthen prevention of all forms of discrimination, incitement to hatred and hate speech.
- Finally, the Commission welcomes Greece's commitment to improve police accountability.

Chair, the NCHR will advocate, monitor and report on the implementation of the commitments made through Greece's UPR. Moreover, it will request more clarity and firmness on the part of the government vis-à-vis the realization of its pledges.

Thank you

Kostis Papaioannou

President of the GNCHR