

Parliamentary **Assembly**
Assemblée parlementaire

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REPORT

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ADDENDUM 1

Progress report

The following texts were submitted for inclusion in the official report by members who were present in the Chamber but were prevented by lack of time from delivering them.

MMs PASHAYEVA (Azerbaijan) – Dear ladies and gentlemen, I highly appreciate the statement of Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. I would like him to pay attention to some problems and express his attitude towards them. In the resolution 1416 adopted by Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe, it is said that one member of the Council of Europe, Armenia, occupied 20 % of the territory of the other member, Azerbaijan. One million people have been living the life as refugees and displaced persons for more than 10 years. It is an event, which does not have any analogy in the world. One out of eight Azerbaijanis lives as a refugee and displaced person. It means that all the rights of these people have been infringed for more than 10 years. But Armenia does not leave the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in spite of the resolution of the Security Council of the United Nations and the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe. It would be interesting to know Mr. Thomas Hammarbergs opinion about this problem.

At the same time, we would like Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, to come to Azerbaijan in order to get acquainted with the conditions of these people, their thoughts and views.

Mrs HAJIYEVA (Azerbaijan) – Distinguished President, dear colleagues, there are different people in this hemicycle and different not only by political affiliation or ideological background. Indeed, we differ by something else, which is not less important than our political identity. We belong to different cultures, different religions and different ethnic groups; there is even someone who attributes us to different civilizations. Yes, I am Muslim and I am Turkish. Someone is French and catholic, another one is Russian and Provo Slav. But being different does not segregate us. On the contrary: we are strong, we are vigorous and we are rich by our diversity. We are diverse but nevertheless, we successfully coexist together. We know the only possible way to peaceful coexistence this way is respect for each other, even if we differ from each other.

Language is an inalienable part of the world cultural heritage. Linguistic identity in most cases serves as fundamental background for the ethnic identity of speakers. Language is a spirit of nation and respect, for each nation should start from the respect for its language. It is especially important nowadays in the epoch of globalisation when the growing influence of international languages starts negatively impacting upon the role of other less spread and less applicable languages. Encouraging pupils and students to study more foreign languages is crucially necessary for their academic development, but it should not be done at the expense of other tongues.

Respect and protection of the languages of national minorities is one of the key points of democracy and the best contribution to the world cultural heritage done by any state. My country, Azerbaijan, is traditionally famous for its tolerance towards people of different ethnicity and religion. About 100 000 Armenians living in the mountainous Karabakh region of Azerbaijan always got school education in Armenian, issued with Armenian newspapers and magazines and even had an Armenian theatre. In university, education was completely conducted in Armenian. The language of small Christian Armenian minority was always treated in such a friendly manner in predominantly Muslim populated Azerbaijan.

Here, I would like to draw the attention of my distinguished colleagues to the situation of the Turkish language in Muslim Iran. According to the United States department data, Azerbaijani Turks living in this country are an ethnic majority there. Their number hesitates between 30 million to 35 million, and 30 million to 35 million Iranian citizens are deprived of their fundamental rights to get education in their mother tongue and consequently to develop it. Pupils speaking Turkish at schools are severely punished and intimidated. This fact proves one truth either religious or ethnic identity by themselves can not bring the people sharing them together and make them protected and satisfied. Only adherence to common human values such as respect for human dignity, equality, fairness, mercy and soon can give us feelings of satisfaction and reliability. So, let us enjoy the life which is given us only once and let us make it happier. Eventually, we pray to the same God, even if we call him in different languages.

Thank you for your attention.