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Turkey

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I. Methodology and consultation process

1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) coordinated the preparation of this report on the basis of the guidelines issued by the Human Rights Council. Relevant governmental institutions, civil society representatives, universities and occupational chambers were consulted in the preparation process and they significantly contributed to the content of the report.
2. The civil society consultations were held in two stages. The MFA convened a consultation meeting on 27 February 2014 with participation of civil society stakeholders. In parallel, all stakeholders were invited to contribute to the process via a link created on the web page of the MFA. Civil society contributions provided decisive input in establishing priority issues in the national report. The final draft of the report (both in English and Turkish) is published at MFA's web page.
3. The recommendations Turkey received in the first cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2010 were translated into Turkish and sent to all relevant ministries and other governmental institutions.
4. This report will focus on the accepted recommendations in the first cycle and the developments in the field of human rights since the first cycle of the review.

II. Context

5. Since 2001 Turkey has undertaken a comprehensive reform process aimed at further protection and promotion of human rights. Since the first cycle of the UPR, Turkey has rigorously pursued the reform process. Accordingly, Turkey has amended its legal framework on human rights, the rule of law and democracy in line with international principles and standards. Key legislative amendments introduced since 2010 are discussed in the section on legal framework.
6. Secondly, Turkey has taken further steps to ensure effective implementation of the legal framework. To this end, Turkey has set up new national monitoring and complaints mechanisms. These mechanisms are introduced under the Institutional Framework section.
7. Furthermore, public officials charged with implementing these laws, notably law enforcement officials and the members of the judiciary have received training on human rights issues. Information on human rights training is provided in the final section of the report.

A. Legal framework

8. Government of Turkey continuously reviews its laws and regulations with a view to bringing them in line with Turkey's international human rights obligations and commitments. Relevant governmental institutions closely monitor the legislation and its implementation and accordingly propose amendments where necessary. In this context, major legal reforms which have been introduced since the first cycle of the UPR are presented below.
9. Firstly, Constitution was amended by the referendum of September 2010. Accordingly, the principle of positive discrimination for women, children, disabled and elderly people is recognized as a Constitutional right; protection of personal data is safeguarded by the Constitution; rights of children are guaranteed in the Constitution; the scope of the right to freedom of assembly and association is expanded; the right to

information is defined as a Constitutional right for the first time; the right to vote and to be elected is further strengthened; disciplinary provisions for civil servants and other public officers are included in the scope of judicial review. Furthermore, new mechanisms for safeguarding human rights – namely the Ombudsman Institution and individual application system to the Constitutional Court – have come into effect; the rule of law is strengthened, the Constitutional Court and the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors are restructured on the basis of best practices in other democratic countries and the area of military jurisdiction is restricted.

10. Secondly, six “Judicial Reform Packages” have been adopted by the Parliament since the first cycle of the UPR. These packages concern legislative amendments to basic laws [e.g. Turkish Penal Code (TPC), Criminal Procedure Code (CPC), Anti-Terror Law (ATL), Press Law] with the aim of, *inter alia*, strengthening the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, enhancing its efficiency and facilitating access to justice. The great bulk of the legislative amendments focused on eliminating the shortcomings in the legislation referred in the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) thus preventing the recurrence of human rights violations. So far, the reforms have strengthened the legal framework on various rights and freedoms, in particular freedom of expression and the media, right to liberty and security of person and right to fair trial. Details of the amendments introduced by the Judicial Reform Packages are discussed in the relevant sections.

11. Thirdly, Democratization Package, announced on 30 September 2013, introduces comprehensive reforms for further improvement and enjoyment of a wide-spectrum of civil and political rights for citizens of Turkey from all walks of life. The Law no: 6529 which legislates the provisions of the Democratization Package was adopted in March 2014. In this context, political campaigning and propaganda in different languages and dialects other than Turkish are enabled. Education in private schools in languages and dialects traditionally used by Turkish citizens is permitted. The ban on women wearing headscarves in public service is lifted. Hate crime is included in the TPC for the first time and the penalty for the offence of discrimination and hatred is increased. The amendments have broadened the scope of freedom of assembly and demonstration.

12. Furthermore, Action Plan for the Prevention of Human Rights Violations was published in the Official Gazette on 1 March 2014. The Action Plan aims at protecting fundamental rights and freedoms more effectively and minimizing the number of applications against Turkey before the ECtHR.

13. “The Law on Ending Terrorism and Strengthening Social Integration” entered into force on 16 July 2014.

B. Institutional framework

14. Since the first cycle of the UPR, Turkey has achieved significant progress with regard to institutionalization in the field of human rights. Important institutions were established in order to strengthen the institutional safeguards for human rights.

15. First of all, the right to individual application to the Constitutional Court is introduced. The Court started receiving applications as of 23 September 2012. Anyone who thinks his/her constitutional rights set forth in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) have been infringed by a public authority has a right to apply to the Constitutional Court after exhausting other domestic remedies. The Constitutional Court examines the application and decides whether the fundamental rights of the applicant have been violated or not. If it finds a violation, it may also decide what should be done in order to redress the violation and its consequences.

16. The Constitutional Court diligently implements the individual application mechanism promoting human dignity and freedom, acting upon not only domestic law but also ECtHR jurisprudence and other constitutional courts' jurisprudence. The Court has established precedents on various fundamental rights and freedoms such as the right to liberty and security of person, the right to life, the right to property, the freedom of expression, the right to respect for private and family life, the right to a fair trial and found violations of these rights. Relevant administrative and judicial authorities take due action to meet the requirements of the decisions of the Court.

17. As of 8 October 2014, 26.999 individual applications were submitted to the Constitutional Court. The Court concluded 864 applications; 267 of these were deemed admissible in 234 of which the Court found violations.

18. The law on the Ombudsman Institution entered into force on 29 June 2012 following the Constitutional amendments of 2010 which formed the legal basis for the establishment of it. The Ombudsman Institution started its activities in December 2012. As an independent and impartial entity, the Chief Ombudsman and Ombudsmen may not be given orders or instructions by any authority, body, office or person regarding their duties.

19. The establishment of Ombudsman Institution enhances the safeguards for protection of human rights in public administration. If the complaint relates to violations of fundamental rights and freedoms, rights of women and children, the Institution gives priority to the application and can conduct on-site examinations and investigations even without requiring that a "violation of interests" is fulfilled. Complaints concerning conditions of detention, detention on remand, detention centers and prisons are also examined within this context.

20. The Ombudsman Institution, the sole body in the Turkish administrative system authorized to carry out an independent and impartial "review of expediency" in respect of the administration, has an important role in improving the accountability and transparency of the administration, a significant principle of public administration reform.

21. The Institution also monitors all sorts of acts and actions as well as attitudes and behaviours of the administration within the framework of good administration principles (courtesy, transparency, accountability, fairness, etc.) during the examination and investigation of applications.

22. The applications to the Institution to date mostly concerned complaints on "public personnel regime", "education and training" and "labor and social security". Domestic law and international conventions to which Turkey is party and also ECtHR practices are taken into consideration by the Institution when making decisions.

23. The Ombudsman Institution, acclaimed in various international reports, continues its activities in close cooperation with NGOs, international institutions and organizations.

24. As of September 2014, 11.580 complaint applications were lodged with the Ombudsman. The Institution completed the examination of 6.097 applications in 2013 and 4.216 applications in 2014.

25. The Law on Human Rights Institution of Turkey entered into force on 30 June 2012. Established in compliance with the UN Paris Principles, this institution is responsible for carrying out work on the protection and enhancement of human rights, following laws and regulations on human rights, investigating allegations of human rights violations, preparing reports, submitting opinions and recommendations, conducting awareness-raising activities and providing training. The Institution is also designated as "National Preventive Mechanism" in order to perform tasks within the context of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). As a public legal entity which has administrative and financial

autonomy, the Institution is independent regarding its duties and authorities and it may not be given orders or instructions, recommendations or opinions regarding its duties. The first meeting of Human Rights Board, which is the decision-making body of the Institution, was held on 24 January 2013. 900 applications were submitted to the Institution as of October 2014.

26. Furthermore, the Human Rights Inquiry Commission of the Parliament, which is the first human rights monitoring mechanism at national level in Turkey, functions as a parliamentary monitoring mechanism since 1990.

27. With the amendment in the Commission Law in 2011, the Human Rights Inquiry Commission of the Parliament is also authorized to examine draft laws regarding human rights; thus gained a status of legislation commission as well.

28. The Commission, between 2010 and 2014, conducted works on orphanages, nurseries, child care centers, youth centers, military prisons, civil penal institutions, detention houses, practices of police officers and other security forces, human rights violations based on military activities, problems of refugees, asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants, allegations of disappearances in detention, violence against women and domestic violence, rights of the disabled and the violations they encountered, violations of the right to life within the context of terrorism and violence, allegations of profiling, rights of crime victims, Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism, labour rights and right to work, immigrant children in Europe and parental rights.

29. Furthermore, “Subcommittee to Inquire the Violations of Right to Life within the scope of Acts of Terrorism and Violence” was established on 13 October 2011 in order to investigate the problems encountered in the fight against terrorism at the time of martial law and state of emergency.

30. The Human Rights Compensation Commission is established with “The Law on Settlement of Some Applications Made to the European Court of Human Rights through Compensation” (Law No.6384). As of 20 February 2013, the Commission has started accepting applications and played a significant role in decreasing the number of pending applications before the ECtHR. ECtHR has recognized the Commission as a reasonable and accessible domestic remedy with regard to the length of judicial proceedings. Within this framework, the ECtHR ruled inadmissibility decision for 5,001 files launched against Turkey due to lengthy proceedings.

31. Finally, the Reform Monitoring Group, which was established in 2003 with the aim of high-level monitoring and implementation of the reforms being realized within the framework of harmonization of Turkish legislation with Copenhagen Political Criteria in the European Union (EU) accession process continues to hold regular meetings.

C. International obligations and level of cooperation

32. Turkey maintains her policy in the direction of being a party to regional and international conventions and mechanisms in the area of fundamental rights and freedoms and having effective cooperation with international organizations.

33. Article 90 of the Constitution stipulates that in the case of a conflict between international agreements in the area of fundamental rights and freedoms duly put into effect, and the domestic laws due to differences in provisions on the same matter, the provisions of international agreements prevail. As such, the provisions of international human rights treaties ratified by Turkey may be directly invoked before Turkish courts.

34. Turkey submits her regular reports in time to the relevant Committees in accordance with the obligations of UN conventions to which Turkey is party.

35. Turkey has extended a standing invitation to UN special procedures in March 2001. Special rapporteurs and special representatives of the UN extra-conventional mechanisms pay frequent visits to Turkey. In this context, UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Gabriela Knaul, visited Turkey in 2011 and UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Christof Heyns, visited Turkey in 2012. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, has been invited for a visit to Turkey in 2015.

36. Turkey duly replies the communications sent by the UN special procedures.

37. Turkey became party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) on 27 September 2011. With the ratification of the Optional Protocol, Turkey took the commitment to enable “Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture” to pay official visits to police stations, prisons, detention centres in Turkey. Human Rights Institution of Turkey was designated as “National Preventive Mechanism” in order to perform tasks within the context of OPCAT by a Council of Ministers decree published in the Official Gazette dated 28 January 2014.

38. Turkey has been the first country to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention. The instrument of ratification was conveyed to the Secretariat of the Council of Europe on 12 March 2012.

39. The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse was signed in 2007 and entered into force on 1 April 2012.

40. The Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime was signed by Turkey on 10 November 2010 and instrument of ratification was deposited with the Council of Europe. The Convention is due to enter into force on 1 January 2015.

41. The ratification process of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure, which was signed on 24 September 2012, is ongoing.

42. The ratification process of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which allows for every disabled person to file individual applications to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was signed on 28 September 2009, is ongoing as well.

III. Promotion and protection of human rights

Anti-discrimination

43. The constitutional system of Turkey is based on the equality of all individuals without discrimination before the law, irrespective of “language, race, color, gender, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such consideration” (Art. 10).

44. A comprehensive law on anti-discrimination and equality has been drafted. The draft law defines the types of discrimination and envisages establishment of an anti-discrimination and equality board in charge of monitoring complaints regarding discrimination in public and private sectors. The draft law is being discussed at the Turkish Parliament.

45. Furthermore, within the framework of the Law No. 6529 which legislates the reforms announced through the Democratization Package, Article 122 of the TPC on

discrimination is amended. The title of the Article is changed from “discrimination” to “hatred and discrimination” and the penalty for the offense is increased. As such, hate crime is included in the TPC for the first time. In addition, Article 115 of the TPC is revised so as to make it a criminal offense to intervene in or to force to change an individual’s preferences concerning his/her life style emanating from his/her belief, thought or conviction.

Minorities

46. Under the constitutional system of Turkey, the word “minorities” encompasses only groups of persons defined and recognized as such on the basis of multilateral or bilateral instruments to which Turkey is party. In this context, minority rights in Turkey are regulated in accordance with the Lausanne Peace Treaty, under which Turkish citizens belonging to non-Muslim minorities fall within the scope of the term “minority”. Articles 37-45 of the Treaty regulate the rights and obligations of individuals belonging to non-Muslim minorities in Turkey. These provisions are recognized as fundamental laws of Turkey.

47. Since the first cycle of the review, religious minorities in Turkey have also benefited from a comprehensive reform process, the purpose of which is to provide higher standards for all Turkish citizens, irrespective of their ethnic or religious backgrounds.

48. As regards promoting respect for and protection of minorities, the Prime Ministry Circular of 13 May 2010 emphasizes that citizens of different faith groups are an inseparable part of Turkey and all public institutions are reminded that they should eliminate any difficulties and vitiate their rights during their acts and transactions at the public institutions, as required by the Law. The Circular has been implemented meticulously.

49. Since 28 February 2012, it has become possible for newspapers belonging to the minorities as defined in the Lausanne Peace Treaty to publish official advertisements upon their written application. This development is considered as a significant step towards consolidation of the economic situation of the newspapers belonging to minorities.

50. On 4 June 2012, a Greek publishing house started its activities for the first time after 50 years.

51. Following the amendment of the Electricity Market Law No. 6446 on 30 March 2013, electricity bills of the places of worship are to be covered from the fund under the budget of the Directorate of Religious Affairs. Along with mosques, there are 387 churches and synagogues benefiting from this right at the beginning of 2014.

52. Permission was granted to open a Greek minority school in Gökçeada following the demand of the Greek community to this end. The school in question has been re-opened in the academic year of 2013–2014 and started its activities.

53. The property rights of non-Muslims have been further strengthened. In accordance with the provisional Article 7 of the Law on Foundations of 27 February 2008, 181 immovable properties were registered in the name of community foundations upon their application. A decree amending the Law on Foundations was published on 27 August 2011 for further improving the situation of non-Muslim Community foundations regarding the registration of their immovables. As a result, 332 properties were returned to the community foundations. For 21 properties, it was decided to pay compensation.

54. In addition to the return of properties to the community foundations, places of worship belonging to citizens of different faith groups have been renovated. As of 22 April 2014 renovation work of nine places of worship was completed.

Freedom of conscience and religion and dialogue with different faith groups

55. Freedom of religion and conscience is firmly guaranteed by the Constitution and relevant legislation. Everyone has the freedom of conscience, religious belief and conviction. No one shall be compelled to worship, or to participate in religious rites and ceremonies, or to reveal religious beliefs and convictions, or be blamed or accused because of his religious beliefs and convictions.

56. Dissemination of religious beliefs or convictions is not prohibited under the Turkish law. To the contrary, prohibition of expression or dissemination of religious belief through coercion or threat constitutes an offence.

57. In terms of promoting the environment of tolerance and mutual understanding, Turkish citizens belonging to different faith groups can freely hold their own religious ceremonies. Since 2010 religious ceremonies have been held at various places for worship including The Historical Sumela Monastery in Trabzon, Surp Hac Armenian Church on the Akhdamar Island of Lake Van, Surp Giragos Armenian Orthodox Church in Sur district of Diyarbakır and Aya Yorgi Church in Alanya.

58. Dialogue with different faith groups has intensified since the first cycle of the review. Accordingly, high level Turkish authorities met with representatives of different faith groups and spiritual leaders of the communities. Priority was given to tackling the problems faced by these groups.

59. Positive steps have continued to be taken in favor of different faith groups in the area of education and culture. In this context, Ministry of National Education (MoE) annually reviews course materials to remove connotations that might be perceived as discriminatory by different faith groups. Moreover, Ankara 13th Administrative Court ruled that there is no obstacle before the request of the Assyrian citizens towards delivery of Assyrian courses along with the curriculum of the MoE in certain days or hours of the week in a pre-school to be opened under a community foundation.

60. Democratization Package of September 2013 brought about significant improvements in the area of freedom of religion and conscience as well. Accordingly, the ban on women wearing headscarves in public service is lifted. Sanctions on preventing persons from individual worship and fulfilling requirements of religious beliefs are introduced in TPC. Respect for lifestyle is given legal protection. Hate crime is included in the TPC for the first time. Last but not least, Council of the Directorate General of the Foundations unanimously approved to return the property of Mor Gabriel Monastery to the Monastery Foundation on 7 October 2013.

Freedom of expression, the media and the internet

61. Freedom of expression and the media are safeguarded by the Constitution and other relevant legislation. Since the first cycle of the review, Turkey has resolutely continued its efforts towards expanding the scope of freedom of expression and the media. As a result of the reforms undertaken in the field of freedom of expression, many topics previously perceived as sensitive are openly debated by our citizens.

62. With the amendment of Article 301 of the Turkish Criminal Code in 2008, filing a case under this article requires the permission of the Minister of Justice. As a result of the amendment of this Article – which was subject to various recommendations in the first review – number of cases filed under the article has considerably decreased. Within this

framework, between 2010 and 2014, permission to file a case was given only to 10% of the applications.

63. Within the framework of third and fourth Judicial Reform Packages adopted in 2012 and 2013, major amendments expanding the scope of freedom of expression and freedom of the media were introduced. Significant improvements have been made, in particular within the scope of the TPC and ATL, in order to align the legislation on freedom of expression and freedom of press with universal norms. Within this scope:

- It has become possible to suspend the cases and execution of penalties for offences committed through the press. Consequently, prosecution, trials and execution of sentences based on such offences were suspended and many detainees were released.
- With the amendments to the TPC, provisions that provide for an increase of the penalty when the crime is committed through the press or broadcasts were revoked. Furthermore, the penalties will no longer be increased if the offense is committed through the press or broadcasting.
- Through the addition of a provisional article to the Law on the Press, a number of decisions, taken by various courts on different dates regarding the confiscation of printed works, have been revoked in line with the provisions of the ECHR and the rulings of the ECtHR.
- The temporary suspension of publications indicated in Article 6 (Announcement and Publication) of the ATL has been repealed.
- The elements of “praising the offence and offender” have been reformulated and narrowed so that in order for actions to constitute an offence, a clear and imminent danger to the public order must exist.
- The elements of offence of “making propaganda on behalf of a terror organization” were narrowed down with the introduction of a more concrete criteria through the addition of the phrase “making the propaganda for the methods of a terrorist organization constituting coercion, violence or threats”. Accordingly, only the persons who explicitly legitimize, praise or encourage the methods of terror organizations which contain coercion, violence or threat, shall be punished.
- Article 6 of the ATL has been amended to ensure that only printing and publishing declarations and statements that legitimize terrorist organizations’ methods involving coercion, violence and threat as lawful or that praise these methods or encourage them, are deemed as punishable.
- Those, despite not being members of a terrorist organization, who “printed or published leaflets and declarations of terrorist organizations” will no longer be prosecuted for being a member of the terrorist organization.

64. Furthermore, the Law no: 6529 of March 2014, which legislates the provisions of the Democratization Package also expands the scope of freedom of expression. Accordingly, political campaigning and propaganda in languages and dialects other than Turkish is enabled and education in private schools in languages and dialects traditionally used by Turkish citizens in their daily lives is permitted.

65. Moreover, “Law No. 6112 on the Establishment of Radio and Television Enterprises and Their Media Services” which entered into force 3 March 2011 was prepared in conformity with the European Convention on Transfrontier Television – to which Turkey is a party – and EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive. The law enables retransmission, lifts the restrictions on language of broadcast and bans the prior inspection of the content, all of which are very important for freedom of expression.

66. The draft Law on Amending the Press Law and Other Laws has been submitted to the Parliament. Accordingly, in addition to persons who work in printed newspapers, periodicals, news and photojournalism agencies, those who perform the same jobs on internet news sites will also be defined as journalists and will be entitled to the same rights as journalists.

67. Finally, the internet law was amended in 2014 with a view to protecting personal rights and ensuring privacy online. In this context, measures have been taken to ensure that the internet is used in a safer and freer manner, and that personal rights and privacy are protected.

Right to liberty and security of person

68. The right to liberty and security of person is safeguarded by the Constitution. Judicial Reform Packages introduced significant legislative amendments with a view to strengthening this right in line with international standards. The amendments made possible to significantly reduce the number of detainees in prison, decrease the length of detention on remand, establish and increase the use of preventive measures as an alternative to detention. For instance, the ratio of detainees in prisons which was 49.2% in 2006 decreased to 14.3% as of 13 October 2014. The amendments can be summarized as follows:

- No order of detention shall be rendered for offences requiring an imprisonment up to two years. (Previously the upper limit was one year, the new law increased the upper limit from one to two years).
- The maximum duration of detention on remand is reduced from ten to five years.
- Decisions relating to detention or continuation of detention should be supported by adequate reasoning, referring to specific facts.
- New forms of judicial control (as alternatives to detention) are introduced; including prohibitions on leaving the house or a certain location, or on visiting a specific place or area.
- The use of judicial control is increased without regard to the duration of the sentence.
- With a view to ensuring the principle of equality of arms, in the course of investigation, the judge should hear the suspect or his lawyer when reviewing whether the conditions for continued detention are met.
- Where an objection is lodged against the detention, a copy of the opinion of the public prosecutor shall be communicated to the applicant or his lawyer. Consequently, principle of the equality of arms is strengthened by granting the relevant persons the right to reply to the prosecutor's opinion.
- "*Criminal magistrates' offices*" which shall be exclusively in charge of issuing decisions on protective measures in the course of investigation are introduced. The offices will specialize in protective measures, review cases and examine complaints with more diligence, prevent prolonged detentions and establish nationwide standards on the decisions concerning protective measures.
- Issuing orders for detention and detention on remand are made more difficult and the new criterion of "strong suspicion based on specific evidence" is introduced.
- The right to demand compensation for the lack of effective appeal against the detention is granted.

Right to fair trial and access to justice

69. Article 36 of the Constitution safeguards the right of litigation either as plaintiff or defendant and the right to a fair trial before the courts through legitimate means and procedures. Judicial Reform Packages amended certain laws with a view to further strengthening the right to fair trial in line with international standards. Many of the amendments introduced in the section on the right to liberty and security of the persons indirectly solidify many aspects of right to fair trial as well. The amendments introduced by the judicial reform packages that specifically enhance the right to fair trial and improve access to justice are summarized below:

- -Specially authorized courts were abolished. These courts caused controversy with regard to right to fair trial. As the use of specially authorized courts and prosecutors as well as their special procedures with regard to investigation and prosecution are brought to an end, all heavy penal courts are now subject to same rules of procedure.
- Conditions for granting legal aid have been made easier.
- Re-opening of procedures on the basis of certain ECtHR judgments has been made possible.
- A new appeal court procedure is introduced in administrative justice. The new procedure will help speed up legal proceedings and strengthen the principle of legal security.
- In the full remedy actions before the administrative court and the Supreme Military Administrative Court, the complainant is given the opportunity to increase the requested just satisfaction amount until the final judgment is rendered.

70. Furthermore, the CPC was amended in January 2013 to allow defendants to conduct their defense in a language of their preference other than Turkish at certain stages of the judicial process even if they can express themselves adequately in Turkish.

Right to peaceful assembly and association

71. Right to peaceful assembly and association is safeguarded by the Constitution.

72. The Law no: 6529 of March 2014, which legislates the provisions of the Democratization Package, contains several articles which expand the scope of freedom of assembly and association. In this context, the Law on Political Parties is amended so as to ensure better political participation and representation, scope of state aid to political parties is expanded, local organization of political parties is facilitated, barriers before membership to political parties are removed, co-chair system in political parties is introduced and political propaganda in different languages and dialects other than Turkish is enabled.

73. Furthermore, the Law on Assembly and Demonstration Marches was amended with a view to broadening the scope of freedom of assembly. The amendments ensure that the authorities consult stakeholders before making decisions on rallies and demonstrations, extend the time periods within which rallies and demonstrations can be held, and give authority for monitoring and terminating the demonstrations to a body which will include representatives of demonstrators.

74. The Ministry of the Interior (MoI) published a Circular titled as “Riot Police” on 26 June 2013 and a Circular titled as “Course of Actions during Social Incidents” on 22 July 2013. These Circulars, which indeed regulate the use of force by law enforcement forces, were prepared by the MoI to remind the rules to be implemented by the law enforcement

authorities during the intervention in social incidents and the rules to be conducted during the use of gas or other tear gas.

75. In accordance with the constitutional amendments of 2010, Law Amending the Law No. 4688 on Trade Unions of Civil Servants and Collective Agreement entered into force on 11 April 2012. The law regulates the use of collective bargaining accorded to the public officials and other civil servants, the scope of the collective bargaining and issues related to those who will benefit from the collective bargaining.

76. Law No. 6356 on Trade Unions and Collective Agreements, adopted on 18 October 2012, regulates the functioning of the labour and employer unions and confederations and determines the issues related to collective bargaining. Article 62 of the Law significantly reduced the ban on strikes and accordingly notary services, businesses producing vaccines and serums, clinics, sanatoriums, preventoriums, dispensaries and pharmacies, educational institutions, institutions providing child care services and nursing homes - which were formerly prohibited to go on a labour strike – are excluded from the scope of the ban on strike/lockout.

Prohibition of torture and ill-treatment

77. In accordance with the policy of “zero tolerance towards torture”, Turkey has made all legal amendments as may be necessary for the prevention of torture and for the investigation of all such allegations and has set up monitoring and judicial mechanisms.

78. Within the framework of the prevention of torture and ill-treatment, Turkish prison establishments are open to national and international monitoring. At the national level, all establishments are overseen by a total of 136 Prison and Detention Center Monitoring Boards and 139 prison enforcement judges, who perform their duties independently. The establishments are also overseen at international level by the relevant monitoring mechanisms of the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

79. In addition to these bodies, the officials of the General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Centers, public prosecutors, prosecutors responsible for prisons, judicial inspectors and prison controllers are under the task of monitoring practices related to human rights violations and intervening in a legal way where necessary.

80. Moreover, the establishments are also monitored by the Human Rights Inquiry Commission of the Parliament, the Ombudsman Institution and the Human Rights Institution of Turkey.

81. Draft law for the establishment of an independent Law Enforcement Monitoring Commission and a centralized registration system, which shall be in charge of investigating complaints concerning law enforcement officials is before the Parliament. The legislation procedure is expected to be completed soon.

82. Allegations concerning torture inflicted by prison staff to inmates are investigated in a serious manner and the necessary judicial and administrative proceedings are conducted in respect of those responsible. No authorization is necessary for initiating an investigation in respect of prison staff; judicial investigations can be opened directly.

83. With a view to eliminating and uncovering allegations of torture and ill-treatment at police stations, all provincial security directorates were instructed on 2 October 2013 to keep under surveillance the relevant sections, primarily detention cells of police stations (and in addition the entrance, corridors, application spots, questioning rooms and other areas where people are served), and to store camera footage for at least 30 days.

84. Furthermore, “General Directorate of Security Detention Cells Regulation”, which regulates the rules and procedures to be followed by the officials after the completion of legal proceedings of detained suspects until their transfer to the proper judicial authorities, entered into force on 24 June 2014.

85. The 4th Judicial Reform Package, which came into force in April 2014, abolished the statute of limitations with regard to the offence of torture, thus enabling more effective investigation.

86. The administration of unlawful methods in taking statements from suspects and defendants, such as torture and ill-treatment, which impair their free will, are forbidden under law. Statements extracted in contravention of this provision are considered inadmissible evidence, notwithstanding the fact that they may have been given with consent.

87. The latest developments and statistical information on the prevention of torture and ill-treatment is provided in detail in the periodic report of Turkey, submitted to the UN Committee against Torture on 29 September 2014.

The right to education

88. Guaranteeing the right to education with equal rights and opportunities to every citizen in accordance with the principles of modern science and education, regardless of language, race, color, gender, political view, philosophical belief, religion or sect constitutes the basis of the education policy of Turkey.

89. Education services are provided to every child of compulsory education age on the basis of equal means and opportunities. In this context, education and training programs and materials are prepared with a view to enhancing human rights of individual freedoms.

90. More than 17 million students are currently schooled in Turkey. Since 2012, compulsory education has been extended to twelve years (4+4+4). This arrangement raised schooling rate at all levels and the number of students per classroom was considerably reduced. During the 2013–2014 academic year, schooling rate was 99.57% in primary schools, 94.52% in middle schools and 76.65% in high schools. Schooling rate of girls reached 99.61% in primary schools, 94.47% in middle schools and 76.05% in high schools in the 2013–2014 academic year.

91. With a view to raising attendance rates in the first eight years of the twelve-year compulsory education plan (primary and middle schools), the MoE launched the two-year EU funded “Project for Raising Attendance Rates in Primary Education” on 21 October 2013, in cooperation with the Ministry for EU Affairs.

92. The project, launched in 2011, for “Raising Girls’ Schooling Rates” was completed in 2013. Within the framework of the project, which aimed at the enrolment of girls in eastern and southeastern provinces and to maintain their attendance, activities which encourage their participation in formal or non-formal education were carried out. Student assistance program was applied in 160 pilot schools located in 16 provinces. 3,200 homes were visited and more than 2,000 children were schooled. By the assessment of more than 1,200 calls received by the MoE hotline, 800 children were lead to formal or open education facilities. 218 girls were enrolled to open primary school, 2,270 girls to open high school and 326 girls to open vocational school. 3,302 girls returned to formal education, 1,390 resumed primary and 1,403 resumed high school. 1,032 girls/women became literate.

93. Following the amendment of the relevant law, public schools began to offer elective courses on “Living Languages and Dialects” as of 2012–2013 academic year. Accordingly, upon request, Kurdish (Kurmanji and Zazaki), Circassian (Adige and Abkhaz) and Laz

language classes are available in public schools. In the past two academic years, 23,697 fifth graders and 19,896 sixth graders in total enrolled at these language classes.

94. It became possible to conduct academic research on different languages and dialects used by the Turkish citizens, to open elective courses and to set up departments/institutes. Within this framework, programs of Kurdish Language and Literature, Armenian Language and Literature, Zazaki Language and Literature, Georgian Language and Literature and Syriac Language and Literature are offered in various universities.

95. In accordance with the Democratization Package of 30 September 2013, amendments were made so as to permit education in private schools in languages and dialects traditionally used by Turkish citizens.

96. Education institutions owned by non-Muslim minority groups are governed by the Law on Private Education Institutions (2007). At these schools, education is offered in the relevant minority's language, except for the courses of Turkish language and Turkish culture. Students who are members of a non-Muslim minority group can alternatively choose any general state or private school without any restrictions.

97. Since the 2010–2011 academic year, the MoE has published course books in Armenian language and has delivered them free of charge to students at Armenian minority schools.

98. Efforts aimed at ensuring disabled students' transportation and access to their schools continue. Except for moderately or severely disabled persons, students with mild disabilities were included in the integration program within the twelve-year compulsory education plan.

99. The enrolment of refugee and asylum seeker students in schools is carried out in accordance with the relevant legal provisions. Turkey currently provides temporary protection and education services to approximately 68,000 Syrian students in classrooms established for Syrians. 3,063 teachers, 2,643 of whom are native Arabic speakers, work in these facilities.

Women's rights and gender equality

100. Ministry of Family and Social Policies was established in 2011 so as to unify a number of Government Agencies responsible for developing policies and providing services for the enhancement of the rights of women, children, the disabled and the elderly under a single structure. More resources have been allocated for the improvement of women's rights since the establishment of the Ministry.

101. Equality between women and men before the law is one of the basic principles of the Turkish Constitution. Article 10 stipulates that "women and men have equal rights" and that "the State is responsible for overseeing that this equality is upheld in practice".

102. The latest Constitutional Amendment of 2010 introduced "positive discrimination" with regard to so-called "vulnerable groups" including women and hence provided for special temporary measures in this respect.

103. The National Action Plan for Gender Equality has been implemented for the period of 2008–2013, and reviewed every six months. The Action Plan, which included sections on the enhancement of gender equality, health, participation to decision-making, education, media, environment, poverty and economy, is currently being renewed for the period of 2015–2020.

104. Since the first cycle of the review, the Commission for Equal Opportunity between Women and Men of the Parliament conducted works on early marriages, identifying

shortcomings in law and practice with regard to combatting violence against women, mobbing at work place, Constitution with respect to gender equality, increasing women's employment in every field. The Commission presented its conclusions to the Parliament and relevant governmental institutions.

105. The representation of women in parliament increased sharply from 4.4% in 2002 with 21 women parliamentarians to 14.1% in 2011 with 78 women parliamentarians. This is a significant improvement towards the achievement of the 17 percent target for the representation of women in parliament by 2015 as was referred to in the Millennium Development Goals Report in 2005. Furthermore, the representation of women in local administration rose from 4.2% in 2009 to 9.2% in 2014.

106. Turkey is the first country to sign and to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence. With a view to conforming the domestic law with the Convention, the Law on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women (no. 6284) came into force on 20 March 2012. This is the first law in Turkey which defines and tackles domestic violence. The terms "violence", "domestic violence" and "violence against women" were defined to include physical, verbal, sexual, economic and psychological violence. The law broadens the scope of the previous legislation to cover all women victims regardless of their marital status, as well as other members of the family. An impact analysis of the law is currently being conducted.

107. The law envisaged the establishment of Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers. These centers receive applications from women who have suffered or who are under the risk of violence and provide counseling, guidance and instruction and empowerment and supporting services they may need in any field. These services are currently provided in 14 provinces and monitoring is performed on a 24/7 basis. As of 13 October 2014, 24,921 women, 839 men and 6,821 children received such services.

108. The "Regulation on the Establishment and Management of Women's Shelters" entered into force on 5 January 2013. The number of women's shelters are on a rapid rise. The number of shelters in service as of October 2014 is 130 (which was 65 in 2010). A total of 3,328 persons can be accommodated in these shelters.

109. In addition to shelters and Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers, 25 first admission centers are operational, where initial observations of applicants are made, their psychosocial and economic status are determined, temporary admission is made. The applicants may stay at the facilities for up to two weeks.

110. A "183 Women and Children Hotline" has been set up, through which women who are victims of violence or who are under such risk may call and seek assistance. The practice of panic buttons, which are delivered by the decision of a judge and enable the vulnerable person to make an instant distress call, have begun in two provinces to help female victims of violence or who are under such risk.

111. The "National Action Plan on Combating Domestic Violence against Women" was revised with the contribution and participation of the relevant governmental institutions, NGOs and women's studies centers and the "2012-2015 National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women" was adopted on 10 July 2012.

112. In cooperation with the European Union, the "Project for the Elimination of Domestic Violence against Women" was launched in 2014. The Project aims at providing support services for the victims as well as increasing cooperation among the central government and local administration and NGOs.

113. The "Committee for the Prevention of Early and Forced Marriages" is established under the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, which consists of representatives from the

relevant governmental institutions, universities, NGOs and Ankara Bar Association. The committee is to make a literature review, carry out legal research and legislative works, qualitative research, quantitative assessment using data from the Turkish Statistics Institution and determine support services for the victim. The committee held its first meeting on 24 September 2013. Moreover, the “National Strategy Document and Action Plan on Children’s Rights”, which had come into force on 14 December 2013 in order to review the efforts for combating early and forced marriages in an integrated way, was updated in 2014. The developments to this end have been covered in children’s rights section.

114. With a view to identifying and eliminating current problems on women’s employment, the “Women’s Employment National Monitoring and Coordination Board” has been established pursuant to the Prime Ministry Circular on the “Improvement of Women’s Employment and Ensuring Equal Opportunities”.

115. A new law which came into force in February 2011 provides for positive discrimination in terms of employment opportunities for women over 18 years of age by covering insurance premiums by the Unemployment Insurance Fund for a period of 12 to 54 months, conditional upon certain factors.

116. Labour Law and Civil Servants Law was amended so as to improve maternal and parental leave opportunities.

117. In March 2011, a Prime Ministry Circular on the Prevention of Mobbing in the Workplace came into force.

118. In 2010, female labor participation rate was 26.3% and employment rate was 20.3%. In 2013 these rates rose to 30.8% and 27.1%, respectively.

119. The number of Centers for Women’s Studies at universities reached 58. Master’s programs on women’s studies are currently offered at 12 universities.

120. Formal and vocational education opportunities are improved for female inmates. Kindergarten services are provided for the children of female inmates.

121. Trainings on gender equality and combating violence against women have been provided for law enforcement officers, health professionals, judges, prosecutors, religious officers, members of the press, students of journalism and various public officials.

Children’s rights and juvenile justice

122. For an effective implementation of children’s rights and to ensure coordination, the “National Strategy Document and Action Plan on Children’s Rights”, which covers the period of 2013–2017 was adopted in December 2013. This strategy document is aimed at ensuring the welfare of all children, raising their standard of living and that children are able to enjoy, to the full extent, their fundamental rights such as the right to life, development, protection and participation.

123. The sixth strategic goal of the Action Plan concerns ‘Improvement of Support and Protection Services for the Family and the Child’. In July 2014, the goal was amended so as to include taking effective legal and administrative measures for the prevention of early marriages and following activities to this end were added to the article:

- carrying out scientific research on the causes and effects of early and forced marriages;
- taking necessary measures for the registration of all children in the civil register;

- taking necessary measures for maintaining girls in school and for the identification and follow-up of unschooled girls and ensuring that they resume formal education;
- taking systemic, rather than local measures to include in the formal education system for children carrying out seasonal agricultural work;
- taking measures for the identification and reporting of girls who married at an early age and gave birth;
- measures to ensure that judicial proceedings concerning marriages at an early age be carried out speedily and with priority;
- measures to avoid any elements in the preparation of training programs which can justify or encourage marriages at an early age.

124. With a view to conducting works for children's rights in a systematic manner and ensuring coordination and cooperation among the institutions, a "Children's Rights Monitoring and Evaluation Board" has been established. The Board is composed of high-ranking representatives from all Ministries relating to children's rights, and juvenile representatives from the relevant nongovernmental organizations and committees for children's rights.

125. Works are underway for putting in force the National Strategy Document and Action Plan on Combating Violence against Children, which shall cover the period from 2014 to 2018. The Action Plan is aimed at the determination and implementation of works to be carried out in all fields for the protection of children from all kinds of violence, in cooperation with all State bodies and organizations and NGOs. The prevention of child labor and violence against children at the workplace are among the goals contained in the draft Action Plan.

126. The Prime Ministry Circular aimed at preventing and addressing victims of child abuse and in an informed and effective way calls for establishment of "Child Monitoring Centers" at hospitals and institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Health. The operation of these centers shall be supervised by the Ministry of Health. Pilot application of the centers began in Ankara. The centers enable all judicial and medical operations to be carried out at a single point and at once, where relevant institutions perform their duties in coordination so as to avoid hurting the child once more. Child Monitoring Centers currently provide services in nine provinces.

127. "Justice for Children Project", carried out with the financial support of the EU and technical assistance of the UNICEF, aims at the effective implementation of the terms of Child Protection Law.

128. It has been stipulated in Article 50 of the Constitution that children and the youth shall enjoy special protection with regard to working conditions.

129. Placing highest priority on the worst forms of child labor, the "Project for Activating Local Resources in Preventing Child Labor" (2013–2014) is being implemented with a view to eliminating child labor. Moreover, to the same end, the "Time-bound Policy and Programme Framework for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour" and the ILO "Project for the Prevention of the Worst Forms of Child Labor" have been put in effect.

130. At the UN, Turkey supports the initiatives concerning the rights of the children. Turkey co-sponsored the Resolution on the "Right of the Child on the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Health" that was adopted in April 2013 at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. Turkey also co-sponsored together with Canada and Peru the resolution on the designation of 11 October as the International Day of the Girl Child which is being observed since 2012.

131. The second week of October has been declared “Girls’ Week” to contribute to the protection and promotion of girl child’s rights, to draw attention to the problems they face and raise awareness on this matter.

132. As to the improvement of the juvenile justice system, the ATL was amended so as to ensure that children under the age of 18 shall be tried in juvenile courts.

133. Additional measures have been taken for the improvement of conditions in juvenile reformatories. In places where juvenile closed prisons exist, juveniles who have been detained on remand are held in these establishments. Otherwise, in provinces where the number of juveniles is low or separate closed prisons do not exist, they are held in the separate units (block or room) of adult prisons. In case no separate sections exist in juvenile closed prisons for girls on remand, they are held in the separate units of women’s closed prisons. Convicted juveniles (girls and boys) are held in juvenile educational reformatories.

134. There are currently three separate closed prisons in operation for juveniles on remand and three reformatories for sentenced juveniles. The Ministry of Justice has recently put in service a significant number of separate juvenile closed prisons, taking into account the physical, mental, psychological and social development requirements and needs. Within the framework of the 2012–2017 fiscal investment program, plans are afoot to build juvenile and youth closed prisons in six provinces. At these establishments, rooms are designed so that every juvenile is able to spend time and sleep alone, except for the time spent collectively during educational, training and social activities. Except for private areas, these rooms are under surveillance with modern security devices.

135. Education and rehabilitation works are carried out for reintegrating remand and sentenced juveniles into the society. In this context, juveniles are able to talk to the psychologists and social service experts serving at the establishment in order to find solutions to their psychological and social problems.

136. With a view to determining the risk status of remand and sentenced juveniles and ensuring that they are able to take advantage of the programs and activities suitable for them, the “Individualized Treatment System” (BİSİS) has been developed, which enables an individual assessment in respect of every prisoner, identification of the level of risks and the implementation of an appropriate rehabilitation plan. Pilot applications have been completed and widespread application of the system is planned.

Rights of the persons with disabilities

137. Turkey is committed to supporting the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in social life; advancing their rights; protecting their dignity; and promoting their access to employment, education, goods and services.

138. The basis of the policy of Turkey for persons with disabilities constitutes employing a rights-based approach in all fields of policy and ensuring their participation in the decision-making mechanisms.

139. The “Disabled Rights Monitoring and Evaluation Board” was established in 2013 with a view to carrying out necessary administrative and legal arrangements for the protection and promotion of the rights of the disabled; drafting and approving strategy documents and action plans; and ensuring cooperation and coordination between institutions on the rights of the disabled.

140. In line with the purpose of developing a rights-based approach and reflecting in the legal framework the paradigm shift from medical to social approach, the words “handicapped”, “faulty” and “impaired”, contained in all legal texts were replaced with the phrase “person with disability”.

141. The Law on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities was amended on 6 February 2014 in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In this context, the definition of the disabled was altered. A separate article was laid down on the prohibition of discrimination and it was stated that the necessary measures shall be taken for reasonable arrangements to be made in respect of the disabled to achieve equality. Moreover, so as to strengthen the exercise of the right to work and education by the disabled, additions were made in the Basic Law of National Education and Labour Law, which prohibited discrimination in the field of education and labour specifically based on disability.

142. With a view to promoting their access to employment, the relevant law was amended in 2011 so as to introduce a new Central Placement into Civil Service Test for Persons with Disabilities.

143. Within the framework of the “Human Rights and Disability Seminars Project”, which was organized in 2012 by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, informative seminars were organized and implementation guidelines were prepared. The project was aimed at taking into consideration the CRPD and promoting an integrated approach to the issue of disability, and addressed four different groups (legislative experts, members of the judiciary, members of NGOs and representatives of governmental institutions).

144. In cooperation with the UNDP, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies is conducting the “Project for Supporting the Implementation and Monitoring of the CRPD” for the period of 2013–2014.

Refugees, asylum seekers, international protection and fighting human trafficking

145. The Law on Foreigners and International Protection, which is the basic legal framework in respect of foreigners, applicants for international protection and regular and irregular immigrants was put in force on 11 April 2013. The Law sets the basis for the establishment of the Directorate General for Migration Management under the MoI. The Directorate is in charge of implementing policies and strategies concerning migration issues, maintaining coordination among various institutions, and carrying out actions and proceedings pertaining to foreigners’ entry and residence in Turkey, their exit and deportation, international protection, temporary protection and protection of victims of human trafficking.

146. Article 62 (entitled “conditional refugee”) of the Law provides for international protection in respect of foreigners coming from non-European countries until they settle in a third country. Those coming from European countries can be given refugee status under the Law. (As Turkey is party to the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Additional Protocol with “geographic limitation”, the provisions of the 1951 Convention apply to asylum seekers entering Turkey from “European countries”). Notwithstanding this difference in definition, no distinction is made in terms of refugee procedures and all requests by applicants are considered in accordance with the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol and the new Law on Foreigners and International Protection Law. Both groups receive social and health assistance and they are able to use employment, labor and education rights without discrimination.

147. In keeping with international conventions, Turkey strictly complies with the principle of *non-refoulement* and does not return any asylum seeker to a territory where he/she would face persecution.

148. In accordance with her obligations stemming from international humanitarian law, Turkey maintains open border policy for Syrians fleeing violence and places Syrian nationals in temporary protection under international law, without any discrimination. Currently 220 thousand Syrians are under temporary protection in 22 camps. In total, nearly 1.6 million Syrians are hosted in various cities and towns of Turkey.

149. Combating human trafficking continues to be a priority. Works are underway on the draft “Law on the Prevention of Human Trafficking and Protection of Victims”.

150. Efforts for combating human trafficking are aimed at bringing down organized crime networks, identifying the individuals who are in victim or witness status, allowing foreigners in such position to reside in our country by providing protection, psychological support and rehabilitation, and thus identifying criminals by encouraging such foreigners to cooperate with the law enforcement and ensuring the victims’ safe and voluntary return to their countries.

151. Moreover, Turkey contributes to the efforts of regional and international organizations in combating human trafficking and maintains bilateral cooperation through agreements signed with neighboring and regional countries.

152. As a result of operations carried out between 2005 and October 2014, a total of 2069 traffickers were arrested and 1119 victims were rescued.

Human rights education and training

153. Human rights training constitutes one of the most important factors in the full implementation of the sound legal basis formed within the framework of the reform process. To this end, human rights training is provided periodically for the personnel of all governmental institutions, particularly judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials. Moreover, several institutions and NGOs organize public awareness-raising campaigns.

154. Justice Academy of Turkey runs several courses on human rights for candidate judges and prosecutors which include the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms and the case-law of the ECtHR. The Academy also provides various courses on human rights as part of the in-service training for staff of the Ministry of Justice (judges and prosecutors). The trainings focus on the right to fair trial, prohibition of discrimination, Turkey’s obligations under the relevant UN and Council of Europe Conventions and the case-law of the ECtHR.

155. Training of the members of the law enforcement agencies has intensified in the past decade. The MoI organizes periodic seminars, conferences and workshops for the staff at various levels as part of the human rights training. These seminars cover topics such as human rights provisions in Turkish domestic law; the duties and responsibilities of senior managers and law enforcement officers with regard to human rights under the international conventions to which Turkey is party.

156. Courses on human rights have become mandatory in the curricula of the Police Academy and Colleges as well as Gendarmerie schools. Selective language courses such as Kurdish and Armenian are offered at the Academy as of 2014–2015 academic year.

157. The prison staff is given pre-service and in-service training on human rights and fundamental freedoms, particularly on prisoner’s rights.

158. Many measures have been taken to improve respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms through education and training. The selective course of “Democracy and Human Rights” has been added to middle school curriculum. A number of universities have launched human rights masters and doctoral programs. The Textbook Regulations of

the MoE prohibits the use of discriminatory elements and elements contrary to human rights principles.

159. Within the framework of the project entitled “Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education” (EDC/HRE), the MoE in partnership with Council of Europe analyzes and strengthens the education legislation and curricula based upon the principles of EDC/HRE, trains the personnel of the MoE in order to raise their capacity on EDC/HRE, develops training programmes and materials to be used by teacher trainers to train other teachers, publishes bulleting for a wide audience.

Looking ahead

160. Turkey is fully committed to the UPR process. Turkey will continue to pursue its comprehensive reform process bearing in mind its international commitments including through the UPR and engage with all stakeholders with a view to further promoting and protecting human rights.
