



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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REFERENCE: CERD/EWUAP/
98th session/Latvia/JP/ks

10 May 2019

Excellency,

I would like to inform you that in the course of its 98th Session, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination considered information received under its early warning and urgent action procedure, related to the new regulation on pre-school education (No. 716) and minority rights, in Latvia.

The information received indicates that on 21 November 2018, the State party adopted a new regulation No. 716 on pre-school education. The new legislation will enter into force on 1 September 2019 and includes in its annexes mandatory model programmes. Accordingly, the main medium of communication in a play-lesson shall be Latvian, except activities organised with the aim of learning minority's language and ethnic culture.

The Committee is concerned that this new law may be discriminatory towards ethnic minorities in the field of education. In this regard, the Committee would like to recall the State party its recommendations made in paragraph 17 of its concluding observations of September 2018 (CERD/C/LVA/CO/6-12).

The Committee recommended that the State party take measures to ensure that its language policy and laws do not create direct or indirect discrimination or restrict the rights of ethnic minorities to access education, employment and basic services. The Committee also recommended that the State party ensure that there are no undue restrictions on access to education in minority languages and reconsider the necessity of amendments to the Law on Education that create further restrictions on the number of lessons of minority language in public and private schools.

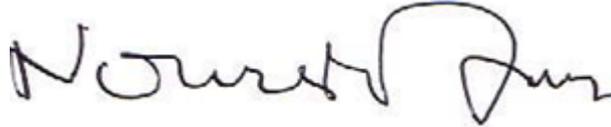
Accordingly, the Committee requests the State party to provide information on the steps taken to implement the above-mentioned concluding observations and to ensure that the new regulation No. 716 on pre-school education is in line with the Convention.

His Excellency Mr. Janis Karklins
Permanent Representative of Latvia
to the United Nations Office
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In accordance with article 9 (1) of the Convention and article 65 of its Rules of Procedure, the Committee requests the State party to submit its response by 8 July 2019.

Allow me, Excellency, to reiterate the wish of the Committee to continue to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Government of the Republic of Latvia, with a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention.

Yours sincerely,



Nouredine Amir
Chair

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination