



REFERENCE: CERD/81st/FU/GH/FM

31 August 2012

Excellency,

I wish to inform you that the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, in the course of its 81st session, considered the follow-up report submitted by the Government of Lithuania, pursuant to Rule 65(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

The Committee welcomes the timely submission of the report, in response to its request to receive information within one year on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 12, 15, 18 and 19 of the Concluding Observations (CERD/C/LTU/CO/4-5), adopted following the consideration of the State party's combined fourth and fifth periodic reports during its 78th session in March 2011. The Committee appreciates the opportunity provided to continue its dialogue with the State party, and would like to draw the State party's attention to the observations mentioned below. The Committee requests that comments and responses to actions taken by the State party on these issues be included in its sixth to eighth periodic reports to be submitted in a single document by 9 January 2014.

Paragraph 12 of the Concluding Observations: The Committee thanks the State party for the detailed information provided, in particular on racial discrimination cases and awareness-raising campaigns to prevent racial discrimination and promote tolerance. However, the Committee notes that no information has been provided regarding remedies granted to victims of racist and xenophobic acts. The Committee also requests further information on the impact of training courses and campaigns on the elimination of racial discrimination.

In view of the recent resurgence of activities by neo-Nazi groups (including a march held in February 2012), the Committee requests further information on any prosecutions or convictions based on Law No XI-330 of 9 July 2009 criminalizing activities of groups and organisations which promote racial hatred and discrimination. The Committee requests information on further efforts undertaken by the State party, including legislative, judicial, policy and educational measures to halt activities of such organizations and prevent racial discrimination.

His Excellency
Ambassador Rytis Paulauskas
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Paragraph 15 of the Concluding Observations: The Committee welcomes the adoption on 20 March 2012 of the Action Plan for 2012-2014 on Roma Integration into Lithuanian Society as required by the European Union. The Committee requests updated data on targeted initiatives, and the impact and concrete results of this Plan in terms of education, employment and access to health services by Roma community. It also requests information on the impact of awareness-raising campaigns to be organized to increase public tolerance and promote intercultural dialogue.

Paragraph 18 of the Concluding Observations: The Committee requests details on the progress made in implementing the 'Strategy on Development of Ethnic Minority Policy', which was meant to be implemented by 2015. The Committee welcomes the comprehensive study initiated on the situation of women from various social groups. The Committee welcomes further information on the outcome of this study.

The Committee takes note that no complaints on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic origin or gender have been received by the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson in 2011. In light of its General recommendation 31 (2005) on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system, the Committee reminds the State party that the absence of the complaints relating to acts of racial discrimination is not necessarily positive and may reveal that victims have inadequate information concerning their rights, have limited resources or do not trust the complaint body or the police. The Committee encourages the State party to increase popular awareness of the work of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson and on legal remedies available.

Paragraph 19 of the Concluding Observations: The Committee welcomes the new Law on citizenship which came into force in April 2011 with more favourable conditions, especially for children of stateless parents. The Committee is interested in receiving information on the impact of the new law on the reduction of statelessness in the State party.

Rest assured, Excellency, that the Committee looks forward to continuing its constructive dialogue with the Government of Lithuania, with a view to providing it with assistance in its efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Alexei Avtonomov
Chair
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination