



SYRIAC UNIVERSAL ALLIANCE

ܣܘܪܝܝܐ ܘܢܝܘܫܝܐ ܥܘܠܡܝܐ

NGO in Special Consultative Status with
the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

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**Human Rights Council
15th Session
Geneva, 22 September
Item 6: Consideration of the UPR report on Turkey**

**Oral Statement by the Syriac Universal Alliance:
*Human Rights Related Comments on Turkey's UPR Report
by the Christian Aramean (Syriac) Indigenous People of Turkey***

Dear Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,

The Syriac Universal Alliance represents the indigenous Aramean (also known as Syriac) people of Turkey.

We are thankful to the Chairperson and the Human Rights Council for giving marginalized people like the Arameans a voice at this significant interactive dialogue.

Currently, we can only very briefly mention a few of our thoughts expressed in our written statement which is entitled: *human rights related comments on Turkey's UPR Report by the Christian Aramean (Syriac) Indigenous People of Turkey*.

We cordially invite Turkey to take cognizance of our document and we are looking forward to start a constructive dialogue with its Government on critical issues that need to be addressed both by Turkey and the international community.

We appreciate the report's recommendations regarding human rights, minority rights, anti-discriminatory measures and legislation to ensure equality. We also welcome Turkey's cooperation and replies. Yet we wish to stress that still much more work can and should be done by the Turkish State in these key areas.

For example, Turkey restricts equality, non-discrimination and human rights aspects to *individuals* only. Issues of *group* rights are usually circumvented and misrepresented.

Turkey continues to deny the official existence of the Arameans, unlike the Armenians, Greeks and Jews. Hence we invite Turkey to offer a rational explanation of this unjust and unreasonable fact.

We regret the fact that recently, on 12 September, Turkey missed the historic opportunity to modernize its outdated concept of 'minorities' in its constitutional amendment and align its constitution with international standards.

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