COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

APPLICATION OF THE CHARTER IN CYPRUS

3rd monitoring cycle

A. Report of the Committee of Experts on the Charter

B. Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter by Cyprus

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages provides for a control mechanism to evaluate how the Charter is applied in a State Party with a view to, where necessary, making Recommendations for improvements in its legislation, policy and practices. The central element of this procedure is the Committee of Experts, established in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter. Its principal purpose is to examine the real situation of the regional or minority languages in the State, to report to the Committee of Ministers on its evaluation of compliance by a Party with its undertakings, and, where appropriate, to encourage the Party to gradually reach a higher level of commitment.

To facilitate this task, the Committee of Ministers has adopted, in accordance with Article 15.1, an outline for the periodical reports that a Party is required to submit to the Secretary General. The report shall be made public by the government concerned. This outline requires the State to give an account of the concrete application of the Charter, the general policy for the languages protected under its Part II and in more precise terms all measures that have been taken in application of the provisions chosen for each language protected under Part III of the Charter. The Committee's first task is therefore to examine the information contained in the periodical report for all the relevant regional or minority languages on the territory of the State concerned.

The Committee's role is to evaluate the existing legal acts, regulations and real practice applied in each State for its regional or minority languages. It has established its working methods accordingly. The Committee gathers information from the respective authorities and from independent sources within the State, with a view to obtaining a just and fair overview of the real language situation. After a preliminary examination of a periodical report, the Committee submits, if necessary, a number of questions to the Party concerned on matters it considers unclear or insufficiently developed in the report itself. This written procedure is usually followed up by an "on-the-spot" visit of a delegation of the Committee to the respective State. During this visit the delegation meets bodies and associations whose work is closely related to the use of the relevant languages, and consults the authorities on matters that have been brought to its attention.

Having concluded this process, the Committee of Experts adopts its own report. This report is submitted to the Committee of Ministers, together with suggestions for recommendations that the latter may decide to address to the State Party.

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A. Report of the Committee of Experts on the application of the Charter in Cyprus

adopted by the Committee of Experts on 19 September 2011
and presented to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
in accordance with Article 16 of the Charter

Chapter 1 – Background Information

1.1 The Charter's ratification by Cyprus

1. The Republic of Cyprus signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereafter referred to as "the Charter") on 12 November 1992 and ratified it on 26 August 2002. The Charter entered into force with regard to Cyprus on 1 December 2002. Cyprus declared at the time of deposit of the instrument of ratification that the Charter would apply to the Armenian language. On 3 August 2005, Cyprus withdrew its declaration and replaced it with a revised declaration. The revised declaration clarifies that the Republic of Cyprus undertakes to apply Part II of the Charter to the Armenian language as a "non-territorial" language.

2. The Republic of Cyprus further submitted a declaration on 5 November 2008, pursuant to which the authorities recognise that Cypriot Maronite Arabic also meets the Charter's definition of a regional or minority language. The instrument of ratification is set out in Appendix I to this report.

3. Article 15, paragraph 1 of the Charter requires States Parties to submit three-yearly reports in a form prescribed by the Committee of Ministers.[1] The Cypriot authorities presented their third periodical report to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on 18 January 2011 (MIN-LANG/PR (2011)1).

1.2 The work of the Committee of Experts

4. This third evaluation report is based on the information obtained by the Committee of Experts from the third periodical report of Cyprus, as well as through interviews held with representatives of the regional or minority languages in Cyprus and the Cypriot authorities during the "on-the-spot" visit, which took place on 4 – 5 July 2011.

5. The third monitoring round was conducted without a Committee member from Cyprus, as the previous Cypriot member's mandate had expired in October 2009 and the Cypriot government had not presented a list of candidates for the election of a new member by the Committee of Ministers. The Committee of Experts nevertheless decided that the monitoring, based on the national report, had to be carried through, and the Cypriot authorities agreed to this. The Committee of Experts urges the Cypriot authorities to nominate candidates for a Cypriot member in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter.

6. In the present third evaluation report the Committee of Experts will focus on the provisions and issues which were singled out in the second evaluation report as raising particular problems. It will evaluate in particular how the Cypriot authorities have reacted to the issues detected by the Committee of Experts and, where relevant, to the recommendations made by the Committee of Ministers. The report will firstly recall the key elements of each issue. The Committee of Experts will also look at the new issues detected during the third monitoring round.

7. The present report contains detailed observations which the Cypriot authorities are encouraged to take into account when developing their policy on regional or minority languages. On the basis of these observations, the Committee of Experts has also established a list of general proposals for the preparation of a third set of recommendations to be addressed to Cyprus by the Committee of Ministers, as provided in Article 16, paragraph 4 of the Charter (see Chapter 4.2 of the present report).

[1] MIN-LANG (2009) 8 Revised outline for 3-yearly periodical reports as adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

8. The present report reflects the policies, legislation and practice prevailing at the time of the on-the-spot visit. Any changes will be taken into account in the next report of the Committee of Experts concerning Cyprus.

9. The present report was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 19 September 2011.

1.3 Presentation of the regional or minority language situation in Cyprus: update

10. As mentioned in the previous evaluation reports, the Constitution of Cyprus divides the Cypriot population into two "Communities", Greek and Turkish. The Communities are defined on the grounds of ethnic origin, language, culture and religion. The Constitution further makes reference to "religious groups". As the denomination implies, religious groups are defined by their religious affiliation only. According to this classification, the recognized religious groups of Cyprus are the Armenians, the Maronites and the Latins. The Latin religious group does not have a language separate from the state language. In 1960, a referendum was carried out by which members of the three religious groups, in accordance with Article 2 of the Constitution, had to decide which of the two Communities they wanted to belong to. All three groups chose to belong to the Greek Community. For the purpose of this report, the religious groups will be referred to as minority groups.

11. For all other basic information on the situation of regional or minority languages in Cyprus, the Committee of Experts refers to the relevant paragraphs of the first evaluation report (paragraphs 9 – 33).

12. The regional or minority languages covered under the Charter in Cyprus are at present the Armenian and the Cypriot Maronite Arabic languages.

13. As regards the number of speakers, in the second monitoring cycle the Committee of Experts was informed that a team of experts on the revitalisation of the Cypriot Maronite Arabic language was planning to carry out a detailed survey on the number of speakers of Cypriot Maronite Arabic, a project funded by the University of Cyprus. The Committee of Experts welcomed the information and looked forward to receiving the results of the survey in the next periodical report.

14. According to the third periodical report, approximately 900 persons, all originating from the village of Kormakitis, in the non-government controlled area, speak Cypriot Maronite Arabic at different levels. The information is based on the data provided by the Committee of Experts for Cypriot Maronite Arabic (see also paragraph 43 below). Official data concerning the number of Cypriot Maronite Arabic-speakers will be available after the 2011 population census.

15. According to additional information available to the Committee of Experts[2], alongside the 900 speakers mentioned above, there are also 600 young Maronite adults who have a good to basic understanding of the language.

Kurbetcha/ Romani

16. In the second monitoring cycle, the Committee of Experts was informed that Roma in Cyprus speak mainly Turkish and only some Kurbetcha words. The Committee of Experts asked the Cypriot authorities to provide more detailed information on the use of Kurbetcha in the next periodical report.

17. According to the third periodical report, data on the use of Kurbetcha will be available after the 2011 population census. During the on-the-spot visit, the authorities explained that Roma in Cyprus are considered to be part of the Turkish Community and are regarded as Turkish-speakers. They generally commute between the government-controlled area and the non-government controlled area and it appears that some of them speak Kurbetcha.

18. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide detailed information on the use of Kurbetcha in the next periodical report.

[2] See *Introduction to the Sanna Project*, Costas M. Constantinou, Brian Bielenberg, in The Sanna Project, Empowerment through Language Revival: Current Efforts and Recommendations for Cypriot Maronite Arabic, edited by Brian Bielenberg and Costas M. Constantinou, PCC Paper 2/2010, p. X

1.4 Particular issue concerning the Turkish language

19. According to Article 3 of the Constitution of Cyprus, the official languages of the Republic are Greek and Turkish. Based on the information received in the first monitoring cycle, it appeared to the Committee of Experts that Turkish in the government controlled area was *de facto* in a similar position to a regional or minority language but that it did not benefit from the protection under the Charter because of its official status under the Constitution. In the second monitoring cycle the Committee of Experts received limited information on the use of Turkish. It was informed about a primary school in Limassol, attended by Turkish and Greek Cypriot pupils, where part of the education for Turkish Cypriots was in the Turkish language. It further received information that some officials in public administration spoke and used Turkish, as well as some doctors and other staff working in hospitals in the government-controlled area. The Committee of Experts requested more information on the use of Turkish in hospitals and public services in the next periodical report. The Committee of Experts was also informed that weekly sermons at a Mosque in Limassol were held in Turkish and that the public broadcaster Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC) continued to broadcast programmes in the Turkish language. The Committee of Experts invited the Cypriot authorities to provide more information on the situation of the Turkish language.

20. In the third periodical report, as well as during the on-the-spot visit, the authorities stressed that as an official language of Cyprus Turkish, was not considered to be covered by the Charter. However, in the present situation in Cyprus, Turkish is *de facto* in a minority language situation in the government controlled area. The Committee of Experts considers it important to include data about the situation in regard of Turkish in the part of its report where the language situation in Cyprus is presented. The Committee of Experts commends the Cypriot authorities for providing information regarding Turkish, both in periodical reports and during the on-the-spot visits.

21. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts received information about the teaching of Turkish in Limassol, both at primary and secondary level, as an elective subject in upper secondary education and as a subject during afternoon classes organized by state institutions. The Committee of Experts was also informed that CyBC broadcasts radio programmes in Turkish, daily from 6 am to 5 pm, on the second channel.

22. The Committee of Experts invites the Cypriot authorities to provide further information on the situation of the Turkish language.

Chapter 2 - Conclusions of the Committee of Experts on how the Cypriot authorities have reacted to the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers

Recommendation 1
"adopt a structured policy for the protection and promotion of the Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic languages;"

23. There is still no structured policy for the protection and promotion of the Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic languages. As regards Cypriot Maronite Arabic, an Action Plan for the revitalisation of the language has been prepared, but there are still steps to be taken before it is implemented.

Recommendation 2
"*make the policy for financial support to the Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic languages more targeted and transparent;"*

24. The Cypriot authorities continue to provide support for various activities of the Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic speakers on the basis of submission of applications. The Parliamentary Representatives of the minority groups are consulted during the process related to the funding of projects.

Recommendation 3
"strengthen the teaching in and of Cypriot Maronite Arabic;"

25. There has been little development in this respect. Cypriot Maronite Arabic is still offered only as an elective extracurricular subject twice a week in the afternoon schedule at the St Maronas school. The Sanna Project, a non-governmental initiative co-funded by the European Economic Area Grants and the Cypriot authorities, has established, *inter alia*, a "language nest", offering childcare and language immersion.

Recommendation 4
"*provide teacher training for Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic.*"

26. There are still no possibilities for teacher training for Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic. The authorities are preparing to start in-service training seminars for teachers who teach pupils of ethnic minority backgrounds.

Chapter 3 - The Committee of Experts' evaluation of the application of the Charter

27. No languages have been designated by the Cypriot authorities for protection under Part III of the Charter. The Committee of Experts has therefore evaluated how the State has fulfilled each undertaking in Part II (Article 7).

28. The Committee of Experts will focus on the provisions of Part II which were singled out in the second evaluation report as raising particular issues. It will therefore not comment in the present report on provisions where no major issues were raised in the second evaluation report and for which the Committee of Experts did not receive any new information requiring it to reassess its implementation. These provisions are as follows:

Article 7, Paragraph 1.b ;
Article 7, Paragraph 2.

29. For these provisions, the Committee of Experts refers to the relevant paragraphs of its previous reports, but reserves the right to evaluate the situation again in future reports.

Article 7 – Objectives and principles

Paragraph 1

In respect of regional or minority languages, within the territories in which such languages are used and according to the situation of each language, the Parties shall base their policies, legislation and practice on the following objectives and principles:

a the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth;

30. In the second monitoring cycle, the Committee of Experts was informed of considerations to draw up a new constitution in the framework of a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus question and of the demand of the Parliamentary Representative of the Armenian community with respect to the recognition, by any new constitution, of the minority groups as national minorities or communities in accordance with international legal instruments, and not as religious groups.

31. In the third periodical report the authorities state that the interests and rights of the religious groups will continue to be guaranteed and safeguarded and their opinions will be considered in any final settlement for the Cyprus question on the basis endorsed by the United Nations Security Council of a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

32. The Committee of Experts did not receive any further information regarding the possible establishment of a new constitution and the status of the minority groups and would welcome more information on any new developments in this respect.

c the need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them;

33. As noted in the second monitoring cycle, the Government of Cyprus does not have an earmarked budget for measures related to the protection and promotion of the Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic languages and projects are granted on the basis of submission of applications.

Armenian

34. In the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts noted that, although applications were always granted, the Armenian speakers were dissatisfied with the lack of transparency with respect to the level and allocation of funding and called for a structured funding policy and an involvement of the Armenian-speakers in the decision-making process. The Committee of Experts encouraged the authorities to make the funding procedure more transparent and to find a satisfactory solution to the allocation process of funds, in co-operation with the speakers. Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Cypriot authorities **"adopt a**

structured policy for the protection and promotion of the Armenian […] [language]" and **"make the policy for financial support to the Armenian […] [language] more targeted and transparent".**

35. In the third periodical report, the authorities refer to the funding policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which is based on five strategy pillars (enrichment of cultural institutions; protection and promotion of Cyprus' cultural heritage and contemporary culture and their incorporation in everyday life; enhancement of the relationship between culture and education; support and promotion of contemporary Cypriot artistic literary creation; promotion and dissemination of contemporary Cypriot artistic and literary creation abroad). In addition, the above-mentioned ministry offers ad hoc funding, depending on the need of the community and the proposed action. The authorities also reiterate that no funds are earmarked for minority languages in the budget of the Ministry of Education and Culture. They further explain that the request of the representatives of the minority groups to be informed about all applications submitted by members of their community and to have the final word on the amount awarded cannot be satisfied, as it contravenes legal provisions and the principle of good governance. However, the authorities informed the Committee of Experts that the Parliamentary Representatives of the minority groups are consulted during the process related to the funding of projects.

36. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed by the Armenian-speakers that they are generally satisfied with the cooperation with the authorities and the financial support, although this still does not cover all the costs related to their activities. They underlined the importance of the support for the Nareg schools[3], which are completely financed by the state, as well as for the Armenian Church.

37. The Committee of Experts is aware that the Cypriot authorities provide support to the Armenian-speakers for various projects and activities. It is, however, of the view that there is still the need for a more structured approach with respect to the Armenian language in order to ensure its protection and promotion. A more structured approach means in practice that the most important and/or most immediately needed measures are given priority, based on a comprehensive perspective or plan on the protection and promotion of the language.

Cypriot Maronite Arabic

38. In the second monitoring cycle the Committee of Experts received information on various steps taken by the authorities to safeguard Cypriot Maronite Arabic. A scientific symposium aimed at initiating the process of protecting the language had been organized and as a result, a team of experts advised on further measures. A Cypriot Maronite Arabic revitalisation group, composed of experts and representatives of the speakers and of the authorities had been set up, working on four areas: language awareness, language revival, language documentation and financial resources. Furthermore, the Cypriot authorities decided to formally set up a team of experts responsible for drafting and implementing an action plan for Cypriot Maronite Arabic. In the meantime, the language had also been codified and could be employed as a written language. As an immediate measure, the authorities had also provided financial support for the organization of a one-week language immersion summer camp in the village of Kormakitis, in August 2008. The Committee of Experts commended the authorities for the measures taken and welcomed the concerted action between the experts, the speakers and the government. It pointed out that more financial resources needed to be allocated for the action plan to be implemented and for the work of the team of experts and the revitalisation group to be carried out effectively in the long run. The Committee of Experts was also of the view that any action plan should be embedded within a comprehensive language policy, as recommended by the Committee of Ministers. The Committee of Experts encouraged the Cypriot authorities to allocate adequate funds to further the protection and promotion of Cypriot Maronite Arabic. Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Cypriot authorities **"adopt a structured policy for the protection and promotion of the […] Cypriot Maronite Arabic [language]" and "make the policy for financial support to the […] Cypriot Maronite Arabic [language] more targeted and transparent".**

39. According to the third periodical report, the Cypriot authorities have continued to contribute financially to the organization of the one-week language immersion summer camp, which has taken place yearly in the village of Kormakitis. They also subsidise the production of a CD with songs for children in Cypriot Maronite Arabic and cover the costs for the participation in the summer-camp of a Lebanese instructor, who teaches children

[3] There are three Nareg Armenian schools in Cyprus (Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca). They have a special status and provide Armenian language education.

traditional dances. During the on-the-spot visit, the Maronite Parliamentary Representative suggested that the language immersion camp should be organised more often, in order to provide young Maronites with an opportunity to practice and maintain contact with the language.

40. The authorities also informed that they continue to fund afternoon classes of Cypriot Maronite Arabic at the St. Maronas Primary School in Anthoupolis and the production of unofficial teaching material, developed by the teachers of Cypriot Maronite Arabic. Free transport is offered to all secondary education pupils, as well as to the pupils attending St Maronas Primary School.

41. During the on-the-spot visit, the authorities further explained that Maronite NGOs receive annual financial support from the Ministry of the Interior for various projects, including in the village of Kormakitis. It is, however, not clear to the Committee of Experts how many of these projects actually target the promotion and protection of Cypriot Maronite Arabic.

42. During the on-the-spot visit the Committee of Experts was also informed about the Sanna Project, a non-governmental initiative co-funded by the European Economic Area Grants and the Cypriot authorities. The project specifically aimed to create a community cultural and language centre for Maronite children and youth, which would combine recreation activities with language immersion, raise awareness of the benefits of protecting and reviving Cypriot Maronite Arabic and transfer experiences from the Sámi revitalisation process[4]. The project, setting up *Payt el Sanna/* House of Sanna*,* developed various activities dedicated to Cypriot Maronite Arabic: a "language nest", a theatre class, a music class, a multimedia Greek to Cypriot Maronite Arabic dictionary and phrasebook, a workshop on minority language protection and revitalization in cooperation with a Sámi NGO[5]. The Committee of Experts welcomes this initiative, which it considers as an important step in the revitalisation of Cypriot Maronite Arabic and its promotion among the young speakers.

43. According to the information received in the third periodical report and during the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts for Cypriot Maronite Arabic was appointed by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cyprus in September 2008. Its members are academics, representatives of the Cypriot Maronite Arabic-speakers and representatives of the authorities. A comprehensive Action Plan for the codification and revitalisation of Cypriot Maronite Arabic was prepared by May 2009. This contains a general description and a pre-assessment of the current situation of Cypriot Maronite Arabic, a proposed action plan for the revitalisation of the language, including budgetary justification and special provisions in the budget (budget analysis for the codification, for developing instructional methodology and material and for the revitalisation), funding resources, the mandate of the Committee of Experts and of the Coordination Committee of Cypriot Maronite Arabic and a final proposal for the adoption of an alphabetical codification. According to the proposed roadmap, all the actions have to be concluded within two fiscal years. However, the Committee of Experts has been informed by the authorities that there are still formal steps to be taken before the adoption and implementation of the proposed Action Plan. The authorities are planning to address these issues, together with the Committee of Experts for Cypriot Maronite Arabic, in September 2011.

44. The Committee of Experts notes that there has been little progress regarding the implementation of a structured and comprehensive policy with respect to Cypriot Maronite Arabic. While the authorities support various activities and projects, important measures specifically targeting the Cypriot Maronite Arabic language seem to depend on the approval and implementation of the above-mentioned Action Plan. Bearing in mind the situation of Cypriot Maronite Arabic, the Committee of Experts underlines the need for immediate structured action in this respect.

The Commitee of Experts urges the Cypriot authorities to adopt and implement a structured policy with respect to Cypriot Maronite Arabic.

[4] See *Introduction to the Sanna Project*, Costas M. Constantinou, Brian Bielenberg, in The Sanna Project, Empowerment through Language Revival: Current Efforts and Recommendations for Cypriot Maronite Arabic, edited by Brian Bielenberg and Costas M. Constantinou, PCC Paper 2/2010

[5] See *Introduction to the Sanna Project*, Costas M. Constantinou, Brian Bielenberg, in The Sanna Project, Empowerment through Language Revival: Current Efforts and Recommendations for Cypriot Maronite Arabic, edited by Brian Bielenberg and Costas M. Constantinou, PCC Paper 2/2010

d the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life;

Armenian

45. In the second monitoring cycle, the Committee of Experts did not receive any information regarding the extent to which the 2006-2008 programme, concluded in the framework of the Agreement on cooperation in the field of culture, education and science between Cyprus and Armenia, was implemented in practice. It therefore asked the Cypriot authorities to provide information on any activities carried out under the programme in relation to the promotion of the Armenian language. As regards media, the Committee of Experts had been informed that the Cypriot authorities provided subsidies for the production costs of the print media of the recognized minority groups. The Armenian-speakers welcomed this, but did not consider the amount of funding sufficient.

46. According to the third periodical report and the information received from the representatives of the Armenian-speakers during the on-the-spot visit, there is significant cooperation with Armenia in the cultural field and various activities are carried out. The authorities report that they provide financial support for a number of cultural activities (subsidies for transport, accommodation and fees of Armenian dance instructors, subsidies for the participation of Armenian dance groups in "Kypria" Cultural Festival). They further report that the University of Cyprus co-operated with the Armenian authorities in promoting the setting up of a Chair of Armenian History and Civilisation. As to the field of language and education, there seem to be limitations, also reported by the speakers, because of the language differences between the varieties spoken in Armenia and by the Diaspora. The authorities stated that they have consulted the community with respect to the exchange of experts for the in-service training of teachers of the Nareg schools in Armenian, and it was decided that the Nareg schools should appoint an expert from Armenia to deal with the language issues. The Committee of Experts looks forward to receiving more information in this respect.

47. With respect to media, according to the third periodical report, the authorities have provided support to an Armenian newsletter. The Committee of Experts has been informed by the representatives of the speakers that the financial support granted by the authorities to the Armenian print media partly covers the costs for the production of the monthly publication *Artsagang* and has contributed to improving it and ensuring its regular publication.

48. The Committee of Experts has also been informed that the authorities offer financial support to the Armenian Church, which holds services in Armenian.

49. Documents in Armenian are also admissible in judicial proceedings as evidence.

50. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide more information with respect to the measures taken to facilitate and/or encourage the use of Armenian in public life.

Cypriot Maronite Arabic

51. In the second monitoring cycle, the Committee of Experts was informed that an alphabet for Cypriot Maronite Arabic had been developed and this had been launched by the Maronite community in December 2007. An official recognition from the Ministry of Education and Culture was still pending. Some news articles in Cypriot Maronite Arabic were already appearing in the Maronite periodicals. The Committee of Experts commended the authorities for initiating the process of codifying Cypriot Maronite Arabic, thus enabling its use in other areas of public life. With respect to the establishment of a culture and youth centre for the Maronites, the Committee of Experts noted in the second evaluation report that the authorities suggested the use of the facilities of the Maronite primary school St Maronas in Anthoupolis for the cultural needs of the Maronite community, until a solution could be identified. The Committee of Experts did not receive any further information with regard to this issue and looked forward to receiving information on any developments in the next periodical report.

52. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed that there are two monthly publications of the Maronite community, which receive financial support from the authorities. Some articles continue to appear in Cypriot Maronite Arabic, using the previously developed alphabet.

53. According to the third periodical report, there are no further developments with respect to the establishment of a Maronite Cultural Centre. During the on-the-spot visit the authorities explained that a plot of land for the centre had been granted in 1996, but no further steps towards the establishment of a Maronite Cultural Centre have been taken.

Broadcasting media

54. In the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts noted that CyBC continued to broadcast a daily one-hour radio programme in Armenian, but the annual one-hour television programme, broadcast on the Armenian Christmas Day, had been discontinued. The CyBC weekly radio-programme dedicated to the Maronite community had been extended to a total broadcasting time of 55 minutes, out of which ten minutes were in Cypriot Maronite Arabic.The Committee of Experts was also informed that CyBC was planning to include a 30-minute television programme dedicated to the minority groups and held discussions with representatives of the three minority groups. No agreement had yet been reached. The Committee of Experts encouraged the Cypriot authorities to encourage and/ or facilitate the broadcasting of television programmes in Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic.

55. According to the third evaluation report, CyBC is examining the possibility of broadcasting television programmes in Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic. During the on-the-spot visit, the representatives of CyBC explained that they are considering broadcasting at least one live programme per year in Armenian and in Cypriot Maronite Arabic, starting with the new season in autumn 2011.

56. CyBC continues to broadcasts a daily one-hour radio programme in Armenian, from 5 pm to 6 pm. The Armenian Christmas religious service is also broadcast live on TV.

57. It also continues to broadcast a one-hour radio-programme dedicated to the Maronite community, in Greek. The representatives of the Cypriot Maronite Arabic-speakers informed the Committee of Experts of their wish for programmes also in their language, which could include, for example, teaching of the language.

58. The Committee of Experts did not receive any information on how the authorities have encouraged and/or facilitated the broadcasting of television programmes in Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic. It asks the authorities to provide such information in the next periodical report.

e the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using a regional or minority language and other groups in the State employing a language used in identical or similar form, as well as the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages;

59. In the second periodical report, the Committee of Experts was informed that the Cypriot authorities encouraged the Parliamentary Representatives of the Armenians and the Maronites to engage in closer relations, but that there did not seem to be a demand for this.

60. According to the information received during the on-the-spot visit, the Parliamentary Representatives of the Armenians and of the Maronites have been cooperating. However the Committee of Experts received no information on cooperation of the two groups outside the cooperation of its Parliamentary Representatives and asks the authorities to provide such information in the next periodical report.

f the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages;

Armenian

61. In the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts was unclear about the actual number of classes taught in Armenian at the different levels of education at the Nareg schools and whether they were taught as an integral part of the curriculum. It asked the Cypriot authorities to provide detailed information in this respect in the next periodical report. With respect to textbooks, the Committee of Experts had been informed in the second monitoring cycle that the Ministry of Education and Culture agreed to finance a three-year project to develop schoolbooks for Armenian education in Cyprus. The Committee of Experts also noted in the second evaluation

report that the future of the valuable library of the Melkonian Educational Institute (MEI) [6] was unclear and the plans to integrate it into the University library had not yet been implemented. It asked the authorities to provide information on the implementation of these plans. Furthermore, the Committee of Experts asked the Cypriot authorities to provide further information on new developments concerning the MEI in the next periodical report. With respect to teacher training, the Committee of Experts noted in the second monitoring cycle that there was still no possibility to receive specific teacher training for teachers of Armenian-medium education and the Ministry of Education and Culture would examine the possibility of offering teacher training under the strategic plan for the educational reform. Considering the delicate position of Armenian secondary education prevailing at that time, the Committee of Experts reiterated the need to provide teacher training in Armenian. The Committee of Experts urged the Cypriot authorities to arrange teacher training in Armenian. Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Cypriot authorities **"provide teacher training for Armenian […]".**

62. According to the third periodical report, at the Nareg schools Armenian is the language of instruction at primary level. English and Greek are both taught as a second language. Armenian Language is taught for six to ten lessons of 35 minutes each per week. At secondary level, the school follows the general curriculum. Armenian Language and Literature, Armenian History and Religion are taught as a part of a special additional curriculum, for a total of six lessons of 45 minutes each per week. These are also the only subjects taught in Armenian. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed that the teaching of Armenian takes place at the end of the school day and that its teaching should be strengthened. The Armenian-speakers expressed their concern about the low level of the language competence of the young generation.

63. The third periodical report also refers to afternoon classes in the history, the language and culture of the recognized minority groups, provided free of charge at the state-funded educational institutions.

64. 180 pupils currently attend the Nareg schools, most of them at pre-school and primary level. The Nareg secondary school covers only the first three years of secondary education and most of the Armenian-speaking pupils attend other schools, including private schools. The authorities offer subsidies to the Armenian pupils attending private schools, but the Committee of Experts has been informed that these cover at present only a low percentage of the fees. Most of the former MEI pupils chose to enrol at the American Academy[7], which offered a special curriculum related to the Armenian language.

65. The Armenian community intends to strengthen the Nareg schools. In 2011, a summer school was organized for the first time for the Nareg pupils.

66. The Committee of Experts did not receive any further information with respect to the project to develop schoolbooks for Armenian education in Cyprus.

67. The Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to strengthen Armenian secondary education.

68. As regards the MEI library, according to the information received in the third monitoring cycle, consultations took place between the authorities, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU)[8] and the Representative of the Armenian community, in order to integrate the Library of the MEI in the national network of public libraries. However, the AGBU, the owner of the library, strongly opposes this project. During the on-the-spot visit, the representatives of the Armenian-speakers expressed their concern about the situation of the library, which contains valuable books, documents and maps. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide further information in the next periodical report.

69. With respect to the MEI, according to the third periodical report, there have been no further developments, as AGBU maintains its position concerning the closure of the school. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed that an organisation from Armenia is interested in reopening the school. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide further information in the next periodical report.

[6] The Melkonian Educational Institute was an internationally recognised Armenian private school in Nicosia, providing bilingual Armenian-English secondary education. It had existed for over 70 years and was closed down in 2005. (see also paragraphs 88-91, 1st evaluation report)
[7] The American Academy is a private secondary school in Nicosia.
[8] The AGBU is the organisation entrusted with the custodian and management rights of the MEI.

70. As regards teacher training, according to the third periodical report, the authorities are prepared to organize, through the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, starting with the current academic year, in-service training seminars and conferences for teachers who will teach pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute is currently preparing in-service training for the teachers of Armenian, especially designed for the educators at the Nareg schools, and the Ministry of Education and Culture will fund the entire project.

71. The Committee of Experts understands that at present there are still no possibilities for teachers of Armenian-medium education to receive specific teacher training. During the on-the-spot visit, the Armenian-speakers expressed their concern with respect to teacher training and the future of Armenian-education. They have again underlined the negative impact the closure of the MEI had for teacher training and for Armenian education as a whole.

72. The Committee of Experts has also been informed that the Nareg schools board has started to organise specialized training seminars for the Armenian teachers, led by an Armenian teacher competent in Western Armenian.

The Committee of Experts strongly urges the Cypriot authorities to provide teacher training for Armenian.

Cypriot Maronite Arabic

73. In the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts noted that despite some important measures taken to improve the offer of Cypriot Maronite Arabic education at primary level, the teaching of Cypriot Maronite Arabic still needed to be strengthened. It urged the authorities to provide for the teaching of Cypriot Maronite Arabic at primary school level and in particular to arrange for the training of teachers and the production of teaching materials. Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers recommended that the Cypriot authorities **"strengthen the teaching in and of Cypriot Maronite Arabic" and "provide teacher training for […] Cypriot Maronite Arabic".**

74. The Committee of Experts also noted, in the second evaluation report, that the Ministry of Education and Culture had agreed to offer Cypriot Maronite Arabic classes within the regular curriculum hours as from school year 2008/ 09. Due to the contradictory information received on the implementation of this offer, the Committee of Experts invited the authorities to clarify how the teaching of Cypriot Maronite Arabic has been integrated into the regular curriculum. It also encouraged the authorities to consider increasing the number of hours of Cypriot Maronite Arabic. The Committee of Experts also encouraged the authorities to consider the possibility of offering Cypriot Maronite Arabic classes at other schools if there was a sufficient number of pupils who wished to learn the language. The Committee of Experts furthermore encouraged the authorities to consider the possibility of offering Cypriot Maronite Arabic classes at pre-school and secondary school level. In the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts also encouraged the authorities to produce teaching materials.

75. According to the third periodical report and the information received during the on-the-spot visit, Cypriot Maronite Arabic is still offered only as an elective extracurricular subject twice a week in the afternoon schedule at the St Maronas school and is attended by 20 pupils.

76. The authorities also state that there has been no request for the teaching of Cypriot Maronite Arabic at other schools. During the on-the-spot visit, the Representative of the Maronite community pointed out that Cypriot Maronite Arabic classes in other schools, such as St Mary School in Limassol and Terrasanta School would be necessary steps for the promotion of the language. The Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to offer Cypriot Maronite Arabic classes at other schools.

77. According to the third periodical report, there has been no request for Cypriot Maronite Arabic classes at pre-school and secondary level. However, the Committee of Experts has been informed of the Sanna Project, which established, *inter alia*, a language nest.

78. As regards teaching materials, the authorities explain that unofficial teaching material, developed by teachers, is currently used. Before being officially adopted, it has to be submitted to the Ministry of Education and Culture for assessment. The Ministry of Education and Culture has asked the community to designate an expert, to work with them on the assessment of the teaching materials.

79. With respect to the training of teachers and the production of teaching materials, the authorities also refer to the proposed action plan for Cypriot Maronite Arabic, which contains specific proposals.

80. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed that, as regards the development of curriculum and teaching materials, the Cypriot Maronite Arabic teachers are doing voluntary work and would need professional support.

81. The authorities explained that the new curriculum would allow for more flexibility in teaching and would have beneficial effects for the teaching of Cypriot Maronite Arabic.

82. The Committee of Experts notes that little progress has been made with respect to the teaching of Cypriot Maronite Arabic, to the training of teachers and production of teaching materials.

The Committee of Experts strongly urges the authorities to strengthen the teaching of Cypriot Maronite Arabic at all levels and to arrange for the training of teachers and the production of teaching materials.

g the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire;

Armenian

83. The University of Cyprus Language Center, in cooperation with the Armenian community, launched a course for learning Armenian, divided in two parts, with 75 teaching hours each, leading to A1 level of CERF (see also paragraph 88 below). According to the information received during the on-the-spot visit, this course is mainly attended by non-speakers of Armenian.

Cypriot Maronite Arabic

84. In the second monitoring cycle, the Committee of Experts had been informed by the Cypriot Maronite Arabic-speakers that they had offered Cypriot Maronite Arabic language courses to adults. However, the project had proved to be difficult, as courses were carried out on a voluntary basis and the teachers lacked support in teaching methodology. According to the authorities, Cypriot Maronite Arabic language courses could be offered at the adult education centres, but that had not been the case.

85. According to the third periodical report, the Ministry of Education and Culture is willing to include the teaching of Cypriot Maronite Arabic at the adult education centres, if there is a sufficient number of interested students.

86. The Committee of Experts encourages the authorities to provide facilities enabling non-speakers of Cypriot Maronite Arabic to learn it.

h the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions;

Armenian

87. In the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts noted that the University of Cyprus had considered the proposal of the Armenian community to establish a department of Armenian language and culture. It accepted to offer courses of Armenian language and culture within the already existing Department of Turkish Studies and Middle Eastern Studies. The Armenian-speakers were dissatisfied with this option and the issue was being reviewed. The Committee of Experts was of the view that the offer of Armenian studies could alleviate the current shortage of trained teachers in Armenian. The Committee of Experts did not receive any information on whether the future lecturing post would also carry out research or study on the Armenian language and therefore asked the Cypriot authorities to provide such information in the next periodical report.

88. According to the third periodical report, the University of Cyprus Language Center, in cooperation with the Armenian community, launched a course for learning Armenian, divided in two parts, with 75 teaching hours each, leading to A1 level of CERF. The course started in January 2011. During the on-the-spot visit, representatives of the Armenians-speakers informed the Committee of Experts that the course is mainly attended by non-speakers (see also paragraph 78 above), but it is a positive development and they hope it will be strengthened in the future.

89. The Committee of Experts was informed during the on-the-spot visit that a Chair of Armenian History and Civilisation has been established at the University of Cyprus. The Committee of Experts would welcome more information about its activities in the next periodical report. The authorities also report that the University of Cyprus offers PhD grants to students continuing their studies in the field of culture, history or language of the national minorities.

Cypriot Maronite Arabic

90. In the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts noted that there was still no possibility to carry out study and research of Cypriot Maronite Arabic at universities or equivalent institutions. The Committee of Experts was informed that, as part of the revitalisation plan, members of the team of experts and the Cyprus Research Centre would create an archive of oral Cypriot Maronite Arabic and collect data on the language with the aim of preserving the language and of creating a database for producing teaching materials. The project to record Cypriot Maronite Arabic spoken in the village of Kormakitis had already been carried out and the next project would focus on Cypriot Maronite Arabic spoken in the government-controlled area. The Committee of Experts was also informed that the University of Cyprus had provided funds for the survey on the language competence of Cypriot Maronite Arabic-speakers and on other socio-linguistic aspects. The Committee of Experts looked forward to receiving further information on the survey in the next periodical report.

91. The Committee of Experts did not receive any information with respect to the outcome of the project related to data collection and would welcome more information in the next periodical report.

92. Apart from the number of Cypriot Maronite Arabic speakers (see paragraph 14 above), the Committee of Experts has received no further specific information with respect to the survey. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide such information in the next periodical report.

i the promotion of appropriate types of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for regional or minority languages used in identical or similar form in two or more States.

Armenian

93. In the second monitoring cycle, the Committee of Experts did not receive any information regarding the extent to which the programme for the years 2006 – 2008, within the Agreement on Co-operation in the Fields of Culture, Education and Science between Cyprus and Armenia, was implemented in practice. It therefore asked the Cypriot authorities to provide information on any activities carried out under the programme in relation to the promotion of the Armenian language. The Committee of Experts was also informed that, during the first meeting of Armenian minorities from Cyprus and five other countries that was organized in Cyprus in 2006, it was decided to create an umbrella organisation and develop cross border co-operation in the field of sports and culture under a four-year plan. The Committee of Experts had no information whether the government supported this umbrella organisation and asked for more information about this co-operation in the next periodical report.

94. According to the third periodical report and information received during the on-the-spot visit, various activities in cooperation with Armenia, especially in the cultural field, are carried out (see also paragraph 46 above). There are regular visits of the Armenian graduates to Armenia, as well as joint cultural activities.

95. During the on-the-spot visit, the representatives of the speakers also referred to co-operation with Lebanon in the field of teacher training. The Committee of Experts would welcome more information on the promotion of exchanges with Lebanon in relation to the Armenian language in the next periodical report.

96. No relevant information is provided in the third periodical report with respect to the Armenian umbrella organization.

Cypriot Maronite Arabic

97. In the second evaluation report, the Committee of Experts noted that a bilateral agreement between the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Government of the Lebanese Republic in the field of cultural, educational and scientific co-operation had been concluded in 2003. The Committee of Experts had no information on any exchanges related to the languages (or to the Maronites) or to what extent such an exchange would be desirable for the Cypriot Maronite Arabic-speakers and asked the Cypriot authorities to provide more information in this respect in the next periodical report.

98. The Committee of Experts did not receive any specific information in this respect. The authorities state, however, that as the language spoken by the Maronites in Lebanon is different from Cypriot Maronite Arabic, the benefit from an exchange programme for teachers is questionable.

99. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide information on activities carried out in the framework of the above-mentioned agreement with Lebanon.

Paragraph 3

The Parties undertake to promote, by appropriate measures, mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country and in particular the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages among the objectives of education and training provided within their countries and encouragement of the mass media to pursue the same objective.

100. In the second periodical report, the Committee of Experts noted that the Cypriot education system was undergoing a major reform. Within the context of revising the curriculum, consideration was to be given to revising the existing history books, in collaboration with the minority groups. A separate book on the history and culture of the minority groups was also foreseen, which was to be disseminated in mainstream public schools. The Committee of Experts had also been informed that one of the sub-groups of the Cypriot Maronite Arabic revitalisation group was raising awareness of Cypriot Maronite Arabic as a language, both within the Maronite community and within the community at large. The Committee of Experts looked forward to receiving information on the outcome of these activities in the next periodical report. In the second evaluation report the Committee of Experts noted as well that apart from the Turkish language radio and television programmes, CyBC produced a bi-communal (Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot) and bilingual programme, involving journalists from both communities and dealing with current affairs of both communities in the entire country. The Committee of Experts invited the authorities to supply further information in this respect in the next periodical report.

101. According to the third periodical report and the information received during the on-the-spot visit, the educational reform, which is still ongoing, takes special account of the promotion of tolerance and acceptance of different cultures. A new core curriculum has been prepared and it is expected to be applied in all state schools by September 2012. The representatives of the minority groups have been involved in the restructuring of the national curriculum. They were informed about the objectives and philosophy of the new curriculum and the issues regarding the language, religion, history and culture of the minority groups were addressed.

102. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed that the new curriculum will include the teaching of the history and cultures of the minority groups in all schools. A text about the history of the Armenians in Cyprus has been prepared by a member of the community and submitted to the authorities.

103. The authorities also referred to measures taken to promote respect and understanding through circulars addressed to schools, activities for teachers, pupils and parents and the promotion of human rights education and training.

104. As regards the awareness raising activities related to Cypriot Maronite Arabic, in the third periodical report, the authorities refer to the proposed Action Plan for Cypriot Maronite Arabic, which is yet to be implemented. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed that there was still a need for awareness raising with respect to Cypriot Maronite Arabic both within the Maronite community and within the society at large.

105. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was also informed that, as a result of an initiative of the Representative of the Armenian Community, the Cypriot newspapers publish monthly articles about the Armenian community in Cyprus. A documentary about the Armenians in Cyprus has also been produced.

106. The Committee of Experts asks the authorities to provide information in the next periodical report on measures taken to promote awareness of and understanding for regional or minority languages.

107. No further information with respect to the bi-communal (Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot) and bilingual programme has been provided.

Paragraph 4

In determining their policy with regard to regional or minority languages, the Parties shall take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages. They are encouraged to establish bodies, if necessary, for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to regional or minority languages.

108. In the second monitoring cycle, the Committee of Experts noted that the Cypriot Council of Ministers directed a Policy Decision on 18 October 2006 to all ministers to consult with the elected Parliamentary Representatives in order to promote their interests and find solutions to issues concerning their respective communities. The Parliamentary representatives had also suggested the setting up of a government commissioner for national minorities.

109. According to the information in the third periodical report, the authorities consult with the Representatives of the minority groups on various issues concerning the respective group.

110. During the on-the-spot visit, the Committee of Experts was informed that the Religious Groups Representation Law was amended in spring 2011 and, as a result, the role of the representatives has been strengthened. According to the amendment, the House of Representatives and any other authority, before taking measures related to, *inter alia*, education, culture and religion of the minority groups, shall "ask for the views of the elective representative of the relevant group, which it shall take duly into account"[9]. In practice, the representative shall be invited to express his opinion on the matter orally and/or in writing and if the final decision contradicts the representative's view, the authority must justify its position in writing. In the view of the Armenian representative, this represents a significant improvement in that it provides for clear procedures for the way consultation has to be carried out and the obligation to justify in writing the adoption of a different position.

Paragraph 5

The Parties undertake to apply, mutatis mutandis, the principles listed in paragraphs 1 to 4 above to non-territorial languages. However, as far as these languages are concerned, the nature and scope of the measures to be taken to give effect to this Charter shall be determined in a flexible manner, bearing in mind the needs and wishes, and respecting the traditions and characteristics, of the groups which use the languages concerned.

111. Armenian has been declared a non-territorial language in the instrument of ratification. In considering the position of Armenian vis-à-vis paragraphs 1 – 4 of Article 7, the Committee of Experts has kept in mind that those principles should be applied *mutatis mutandis*.

112. Although the Cypriot authorities did not specify Cypriot Maronite Arabic as a non-territorial language in their instrument of ratification, the Committee of Experts observed in its first evaluation report (paragraph 58) that the situation of the language in the government-controlled area corresponded to the definition of a non-territorial language. The Committee of Experts has therefore evaluated paragraphs 1 – 4 accordingly in a flexible manner.

[9] The Religious Groups Representation Amendment Law, 66 (I) of 2011, English translation

Chapter 4 - Findings of the Committee of Experts in the third monitoring round

A. The Committee of Experts appreciates the excellent co-operation it enjoyed with the Cypriot authorities in the organisation of its on-the-spot visit.

B. The attitude of the Cypriot authorities towards regional or minority languages remains characterised by goodwill and openness towards the needs and wishes of the speakers.

C. The authorities are aware of the need to protect the Cypriot Maronite Arabic language. A Committee of Experts for Cypriot Maronite Arabic has been formally appointed by the Council of Ministers and an Action Plan has been prepared. A formal government approval is still pending . Bearing in mind the situation of Cypriot Maronite Arabic, the Committee of Experts considers that it is vital that formal approval of an action plan is taken and that effective implementation starts as soon as possible.

D. The authorities continue to provide financial support for various activities carried out by the Armenian and Maronite communities, on the basis of submissions of applications. The Committee of Experts finds that a more structured approach targeting specifically the Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic languages is necessary.

E. Financial support of the print media of the minority groups continues to be offered. With regard to the broadcasting media, there are no television programmes in regional or minority languages, apart from the Armenian Christmas religious service. Considering the role that television broadcasting plays in the promotion of minority languages, there is an obvious need for a presence on television for both languages.

F. Armenian education at pre-school and primary school level remains satisfactory. Secondary education is however still in a delicate position. The Armenian Nareg school offers only the lower level of secondary education. Teacher training in Armenian is still not available in Cyprus.

G. Decisive efforts still need to be made to further strengthen Cypriot Maronite Arabic education, making it available at all appropriate levels of education, and to produce teaching materials and offer teacher training possibilities.

H. There is still a need to raise awareness among the majority population about Cyprus' regional or minority languages as an integral part of Cyprus' cultural heritage.

The Cypriot government was invited to comment on the content of this report in accordance with Article 16.3 of the Charter. The comments received are attached in Appendix II.

On the basis of this report and its findings the Committee of Experts submitted its proposals to the Committee of Ministers for recommendations to be addressed to Cyprus. At the same time it emphasised the need for the Cypriot authorities to take into account, in addition to these general recommendations, the more detailed observations contained in the body of the report.

At its 1137th meeting on 14 March 2012, the Committee of Ministers adopted its Recommendation addressed to Cyprus, which is set out in Part B of this document.

Appendix I: Instrument of ratification



Cyprus :

Declaration contained in a letter from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Representation of Cyprus, dated 3 August 2005, registered at the Secretariat General on 4 August 2005 - Or. Engl.

In ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Republic of Cyprus deposited on 26 August 2002, a declaration which appears to be incompatible with the provisions of the Charter on undertakings to be applied by it.

In order to remove uncertainty and clarify the extent of the obligations undertaken, the Republic of Cyprus hereby withdraws the declaration of 26 August 2002 and replaces it with the following :

The Republic of Cyprus, while reiterating its commitment to respect the objectives and principles pursued by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, declares that it undertakes to apply Part II of the Charter in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 1, to the Armenian language as a "non-territorial" language defined in Article 1c of the Charter.

The Republic of Cyprus would further like to state that its Constitution and laws uphold and safeguard effectively the principle of equality and non-discrimination on the ground of a person's community, race, religion, language, sex, political or other convictions, national or social descent, birth, colour, wealth, social class or any ground whatsoever.

Period covered: 4/8/2005 -

The preceding statement concerns Article(s) : 2

Declaration contained in a Note verbale from the Permanent Representation of Cyprus, dated 5 November 2008, registered at the Secretariat General on 12 November 2008 - Or. Engl.

Further to its Declaration of 3 August 2005, the Republic of Cyprus declares that the Cypriot Maronite Arabic is a language within the meaning of the European Charter for Regional on Minority Languages, to which it will apply the provisions of Part II of the Charter in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 1.

In doing so, the Republic of Cyprus further declares that, since the Cypriot Maronite Arabic is also used in the village of Kormakitis, cradle of the said language, situated in an area of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus under Turkish military occupation since 1974 in which the Republic does not exercise effective control, it excludes any interpretation of the Charter's provision in this regard that would be contrary to it, particularly its Article 5.

Period covered: 12/11/2008 -

The preceding statement concerns Article(s) : 2, 5

Appendix II: Comments by the Cypriot authorities

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES
Report of the Committee of Experts presented to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in accordance with Article 16 of the Charter,
Strasbourg, 19 September 2011

COMMENTS BY THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

Chapter 1: Background Information

1.2 The work of the Committee of Experts

§5. "The Committee of Experts urges the Cypriot authorities to nominate candidates for a Cypriot Member in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter".

Cyprus would like to take this opportunity in order to inform all the counter parties that the list of candidatures for a Cypriot Member to the Committee of Experts has been submitted to the relevant authorities of the Council of Europe in early December.

1.4 Particular Issue concerning the Turkish Language

§22. "The Committee of Experts invites the Cypriot authorities to provide further information on the situation of the Turkish language".

Turkish being an official language of the Republic of Cyprus does not fall within the scope of the European Charter.

Chapter 3: The Committee of Experts' evaluation of the application of the Charter

Article 7- Objectives and principles, Paragraph 1

§30-32 "In the second monitoring cycle... new developments in this respect".

During the current monitoring cycle, the negotiations initiated in 2008 aiming at a comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem on the basis endorsed by the United Nations Security Council of a bizonal, bicommunal federation have been ongoing. As stated in the Third Periodical Report by the Republic of Cyprus, the rights and interests of the religious groups in Cyprus will be guaranteed and safeguarded, and their Representatives' opinions will be considered in any final arrangements for the settlement of the Cyprus problem, on the abovementioned agreed basis.

Armenian

§47. "With respect to media according to the third periodical report, the authorities have provided support to an Armenian newsletter. The Committee of Experts has been informed by the representatives of the speakers that the financial support granted by the authorities to the Armenian print media partly covers the costs for the production of the monthly publication Artsegang and has contributed to improving it and ensuring its regular publication".

The Ministry of Interior provides financial support to the Armenian Newsletter Lradou and to the two monthly Armenian print media/newspapers Artsagang and Azat Tzayn since 2006.

The Republic of Cyprus' authorities would like to emphasize that the recommendations of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages are seriously considered while drafting policies for the improvement of legislation and practices. The information included in the Third Report would be evaluated and further clarification in the areas of need will be provided in the next periodical report.

B. Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter by the Cyprus

Recommendation RecChL(2012)1
of the Committee of Ministers
on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Cyprus

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 14 March 2012
at the 1137th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers,

In accordance with Article 16 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;

Having regard to the declarations submitted by Cyprus on 3 August 2005 and 5 November 2008;

Having taken note of the evaluation made by the Committee of Experts on the Charter with respect to the application of the Charter by Cyprus;

Bearing in mind that this evaluation is based on information submitted by Cyprus in its third periodical report, supplementary information given by the Cypriot authorities, information submitted by bodies and associations legally established in Cyprus and the information obtained by the Committee of Experts during its on-the- spot visit,

Having taken note of the comments made by the Cypriot authorities on the contents of the Committee of Experts' report;

Recommends that the Cypriot authorities take account of all the observations and recommendations of the Committee of Experts and, as a matter of priority:

1. adopt a structured policy for the protection and promotion of the Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic languages;

2. strengthen the teaching in and of Cypriot Maronite Arabic;

3. provide teacher training for Armenian and Cypriot Maronite Arabic.