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Press Release

**Autochthonous and national minorities and linguistic communities in Europe came together
at 68th FUEN Congress**

The 68th Congress of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) was held in Husum/Hüsem, Germany on 19-22 September 2024, hosted by the North Frisian minority. The Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe (ABTTF) representing the Western Thrace Turks, Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese Turks Culture and Solidarity Association (ROISDER) representing Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese Turks and the International Meskhetian Turks Association “VATAN” representing Meskhetian Turks from the Working Group of Turkic Minorities/Communities in FUEN (TAG) attended the Congress where FUEN’s 75th anniversary was also celebrated. The organisation of Bashkirs from Ukraine “Duslyk”, which has applied for supporting membership to FUEN, also attended the Congress.

In his opening speech at the Congress attended by approximately 200 people from 26 countries, FUEN President and Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Loránt Vincze indicated that Hungary has an important place in the history of FUEN because the first congress was held in Budapest after the fall of the Iron Curtain and FUEN opened up to Central and Eastern Europe with this Congress. Stating that FUEN has become the biggest minority rights advocacy organisation in Europe, Vincze noted that FUEN is now a leading organisation for European and international organisations.

The host North Frisian minority and its organisations were introduced with cultural performances and dances at the Congress attended by 180 people from 30 European countries. The history of FUEN, the future of minority rights in the European Union (EU) and FUEN’s vision for 2099 were discussed in panel sessions with the participation of MEPs, national politicians, experts and representatives of civil society organisations.

Cavid Aliyev, President of the International Meskhetian Turks Association “VATAN”, took part as a speaker in a panel themed on the fall of the Iron Curtain and the 90s. Aliyev underscored that the Meskhetian Turks were deported to Central Asia on 14 November 1944 by Soviet leader Josef Stalin and pointed out that with the efforts and initiatives of FUEN, Georgia was accepted as a member of the Council of Europe in 1999 with the condition of ensuring the return of the Meskhetian Turks to their historical ancestral homeland of Meskhetia as a condition of membership, but Georgia has still not fulfilled this aforementioned condition.

At the FUEN TAG working group meeting held on the second day of the Congress, the work and activities of TAG since the 9th Annual Meeting of TAG in November 2023 were presented and the latest developments in the Turkic minorities and communities that are members of TAG were assessed. The programme and organisation of the 10th Annual Meeting of FUEN TAG were also discussed at the meeting.

**The draft resolutions submitted by Western Thrace Turks, Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese
Island Turks and Crimean Tatars were adopted**

On 21 September, FUEN TAG Spokesperson Halit Habip Oğlu informed the delegates with a presentation on the activities of FUEN TAG for 2023-2024.

At the FUEN Assembly of Delegates, the draft resolutions submitted by the Turkish community in Western Thrace, the Turks of Rhodes, Kos and Dodecanese Islands and the Crimean Tatars were adopted with the votes of the delegates.

The FUEN main resolution demanding the protection of national minorities in Ukraine and the establishment of a permanent consultative body between policy makers and national minorities in Europe under the auspices of the European Parliament was adopted.

The Assembly of Delegates also adopted the FUEN main resolution on the development of a European legal framework for the protection and promotion of minorities.

Six new organisations became members of FUEN

The organisations of the Slovenian minority in Austria and the German minority in Lithuania became associate members of FUEN, while the organisations of the Roma minority in Austria, the Swedish minority in Finland, the Hungarian minority in Romania and the Bashkir organisation “Duslyk” in Ukraine were admitted as supporting members of FUEN.

The FUEN 2025 Congress will be hosted by the German and Ladin minorities and EUROPEADA 2028, the football championship of the national minorities in Europe, will be organised in Italy by the Slovenian minority and the Friulians.