

18 Sept. 2013

UPR Turkmenistan

First and foremost we regret that the English version of addendum of the report of the working group on the UPR review of Turkmenistan was not available and practically that makes it impossible for us to comment on the recommendations stated in paragraph 113. Sudwind welcomes the accession of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children at 2005. In the meantime, we strongly support recommendations to increase the efforts to fully implementation of the protocol. Nevertheless, we urge Turkmenistan to offer human rights education and its principles to her border forces in order to prevent the unfortunate incidents such as last year's murder of a young Iranian Turkmen while fishing in the Caspian Sea.

According to an agreement between the then Soviet Union and Iran, Turkmens on both sides were permitted to visit relatives 4 times a year and for two weeks without visas. Four border points were assigned for the purpose. This agreement was later faced with restrictions. Iranian Turkmens were granted the right to travel only within 45 kilometers inside Turkmenistan. The restrictions were apparently imposed to prevent drug trafficking and imposed by the country's border guards.

As we understand the agreement was not renewed after expiry and travel between the two countries went under tourism which meant relatives had to stay in a hotel. Otherwise, they would be fined in US Dollar.

Furthermore, there were violent clashes in the border and according to and Iranian Turkmen Imam in the city of Gonbad Ghabus a number of Iranian Turkmen fishermen were shot dead by the Turkmenistan border police. Iran urged the Turkmenistan government to investigate and bring to justice those who murdered innocent fishermen.

It is necessary to mention that due to stormy weather and lack of technical equipment such as compass the fishermen lost their way and were fired upon and killed.