NOTE VERBALE

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and, with reference to the latter’s Note Verbale GVA234 with regard to the “Draft Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights” resolution (A/HRC/15/19), dated 18th March 2011, has the honour to forward relevant information, provided by the Greek Government.

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, May 26, 2011

To: The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Fax: +41 22 917 90 08
REPLY BY GREECE

With regard to the “Draft Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights” Resolution

Ministry of Labour and Social Security

On the Right to Social Security (Section 3 of the questionnaire):
Greece believes that the list of recognised human rights is comprehensive and no significant issues have been omitted.

On para. 87 of the Draft Guiding Principles:
The social security system of Greece is reciprocal but it also contains provisions of non-reciprocal nature. More specifically, through the special retirement account for non insured superannuated persons of the Organisation of Agricultural Insurance, a monthly pension of 360 euros is granted to approximately 70,000 beneficiaries. Health care is included.

The Pensioner Social Solidarity Allowance is granted to financially vulnerable groups such as the low income pensioners while special measures have been taken for the financial relief of persons with disabilities as well as for alleviating, in general, extreme poverty.

Additional measures have been taken for the protection of mothers insured with the Social Security Fund (IKA-ETAM) who are entitled to a special leave for the motherhood protection of 6 months after the end of the maternity leave and a leave equal to the reduced working hours with emoluments (3 ½ months). During the special leave, mothers are entitled to emoluments which are paid by the Employment Agency (OAED) and are equal to the minimum salary with a proportion of holiday and leave allowances. This period of time is also counted as social security time in the IKA-ETAM pension branch. Any contributions that would burden the insured mother are deducted and paid to IKA-ETAM Fund by the Employment Agency (OAED) along with the employer’s contribution.

Ministry of Interior, Decentralisations and e-Governance

The development of guiding principles would provide concrete ground for the formulation, by the States, of specific policies to combat extreme poverty, thus establishing the fight against extreme poverty as a separate policy field, possibly facilitating the design, in the future, of an integrated policy against poverty.

Since extreme poverty is closely related to multiple discrimination, by definition it refers to specific groups, which in the social context often interact. Child poverty may be related to female poverty (poverty of the mother), unemployment of the parent or parents, lack of proper education of the child or the parent or parents, disability of the parent or parents etc. Therefore the guiding principles should encompass all specific groups.