

# HUMAN RIGHTS AS RAM ROD

By Special Correspondent  
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A just released UN Human Rights Commission report, drawn by "independent" observer Gay McDougall, takes Greece to task on the issue of minorities, namely those of the "Macedonian" and "Turkish" persuasion.

This is certainly not the first time Greece faces this predicament. Routinely, in recent years, the annual US State Department report on human rights does approximately what Ms McDougall did – it outlines what its compilers conclude are Greek felonies and misdemeanors against proper human rights norms as outlined in an endless number of charters, resolutions, road maps, agreements, and accords, some published by congressional mandate, others issued by various international bodies, including the European Union, and all purporting to aim to correct individual country behaviors deemed harmful to the treatment of minorities.

At first glance, this is a noble endeavor that lies beyond criticism. On closer scrutiny though, serious questions begin to pop up. While there is general (but not always forthcoming) agreement that blatant acts of mass violence against groups of people because of who they are should be approached with severity by the so-called "international community" (which doesn't really exist), anything beyond that glaring extreme is subject to justified scrutiny, political or otherwise, with results not always edifying for the human rights advocates and their camp followers weaving careers and funding out of this altruistic-sounding "defense of basic individual liberties."

The practice of human rights advocacy has assumed such overwhelming political undertones, and has become such an inseparable part of 16-cylinder "public diplomacy" platforms, that any attempt to criticize both the practice and its practitioners is automatically condemned as sacrilege – not to mention the deluge of accusations about racism and xenophobia that surges against any villain who dares utter a word against the human rights Holy Office and its self-appointed status as judge and jury, with the right to execute.

Indeed, any attempt to question the sanctity or usefulness of the human rights stylized "emancipatory" vocabulary, or highlight the contradictions between a push for authentic "individual rights" vs. putting well-meaning, bona fide democratic governments in a corner over "violations" that *would have never raised even a single eyebrow only a few years back*, whips up a self-righteous storm among the Advocates and places countries under the long shadow of permanent "human rights violations." Some would go as far as arguing that the human rights worldwide movement has developed its own, very effective, Holy Inquisition-like methods against which little can be done -- even if one has the courage to publicly disagree with the various roving special envoys in the first place.

Again, it should be emphasized that the debate here is not about whether we should go after unabashedly culprit regimes like Zimbabwe's or North Korea's or the Sudan's, or second-tier violators like Turkey, Pakistan, and the former Soviet republics, but rather about *the political wisdom of ripping into pluralist democracies, imperfect as they may be, over "human rights" that emphasize disconnection from the home country; development of a rejective mindset among large groups of citizens that oscillates between the "other" and borderline refugee status; and persistent cultivation among such people of the identity of the victim that is **absolutely entitled** to various forms of compensation, material and otherwise, for perceived injustices usually defined with the help of legal advisers with no clue of the history and traditions of particular places.*

Human rights, as part of the Western liberal package, remain alien to the vast majority of countries around the world. This may be sad but it is also true. And while we might be able, here in Europe, to agree that ruthless treatment of one's citizens is hardly in accordance to an all-embracing Western humanist and secular tradition, such points of political philosophy and practice may not be as obvious to individual national traditions that predate the modern West by many centuries and still observe Very Different Customs.

This observation *does not in any way signal acceptance of such practices as "inevitable,"* or correct, for that matter, but, rather, tries to highlight the fact that "human rights" may be a vastly more complicated issue than what the Advocates have come to impose as *common* and **accepted** wisdom, whose even mild questioning

shall bring the wrath of God upon the perpetrator's head.

In the particular case of Greece, pressures to recognize minorities – for all their perceived justification as "improving" citizenship and promoting "equality" for "underclass" individuals demanding, we are told, an ethnic status separate from Hellenic – comes at a sensitive time, to say the least. Potential emancipators consistently fail to appreciate the purposes of Greece's neighbors and provocatively ignore the not-to-veiled and targeted attempts by friend and ally Turkey to foment unrest among the Muslim population of western Thrace, the very "Turks" Ms McDougall discovered during her trip in 2008 *aided by the Greek government*.

Both "independent" and "dependent" advocates, for example, completely ignore the activities of a very energetic Turkish consulate located in the Thracian town of Comotini, seeking every step of the way to engage Muslim Greek citizens as "repressed Turks," efforts that are left unmolested by the Greek Government largely because of fears that any determined attempt to curtail the activities of the consulate, despite their obvious tendency toward the subversive, could lead to a "human rights" backlash against the country.

The Advocates also conveniently forget that human rights, with or without quotation marks, have now become a standard ingredient in justifying *external military intervention in the affairs of independent states* and legitimizing the calamitous impact of foreign-driven war on the vast majority of indigenous populations whose governments have been accused of human rights violations. Turkey became an early practitioner of the "human rights protection" military invasion when it attacked the Republic of Cyprus in 1974, effectively partitioning the island and occupying its northern half, although the vocabulary in those days was somewhat different.

More recently, it was the "humanitarian bombers" who created an independent Kosovo, despite the many somber warnings about the disastrous "logic" behind allowing such an occurrence to take place. Again, the "humanitarian bombers" ignored deliberately key facts, like the narco-terrorist connections of the Kosovar Albanian leadership, the commanding role of Albanian organized crime organizations in the "independence movement," not to mention the ample evidence of links between Kosovar Albanian "freedom fighters" and fanatic Islamic terrorists. Although it is not recognized officially, the whole Kosovo project has deeply affected the Greek government and has stirred locally very old fears of invasion and territorial amputation.

While Greece is distant from making the grade in many aspects of "minorities" management, *according to the Gospels delivered by foreign governments and the ubiquitous boutique non-government organizations* (many of which are lavishly funded by the very governments they deny having anything to do with), she still needs to exercise *sovereign control* on all the demands placed upon her by The Advocates.

Unfortunately, recent Greek governments have been less than prepared to openly challenge such "friendly" interference and signal a different attitude toward the constant pressure for more investigations, fact finding missions, discovery activities, and arbitrary imported tests of compliance that are, to say the least, the wrong way of promoting "stability."

Using human rights as ram rod against countries like Greece highlights the changing nature of "subtle" foreign intervention masqueraded under multiple layers of emancipation and self-determination legalese that remain contradictory and obscure to even some of its creators. The routine polemics deployed by the Advocates, and the disdain they invariably demonstrate toward such concepts as sovereignty, jurisdictional boundaries, and what they unilaterally declare as *de mode* notions of local culture and politics, should be adequate incentives to countries like Greece, already faced with an enormous threat from illegal immigration, to begin treating the professional "human rights" advocates, and their demands, much less reverently.

Well-meaning mutual cooperation is one thing. Pulpit fulminations, bullying, and thinly-veiled insults is another.