

SOCHUM

Preservation of Rights and
Facilitation of Participation
for Religious, Ethnic and
Linguistic Minorities.



Table of Contents

Letters

- 1.1. Letter from the Secretary-General
- 1.2. Letter from the Under-Secretary-General

Introductions

- 2.1. Introduction to the Third GA, the SOCHUM Committee
- 2.2. Introduction to the Agenda Item

Historical Background of Independence of Minorities

- 3.1. French Revolution and Nationalism
- 3.2. The Outcomes of Independence Wars
- 3.3. Current Situation

Mass Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities Around The World

- 4.1. Ethnic and Linguistic Minorities
 - 4.1.1. Roma
 - 4.1.2. Afro-Americans
 - 4.1.3. Kurds
- 4.2. Religious Minorities
 - 4.2.1. Muslim Minorities in Europe
 - 4.2.2. Christian Minorities in China

Autonomous Region Minority Problems

- 5.1. Uyghurs and Tibetans
- 5.4. Chechens and Ingush

Discrimination

- 6.1. Nationalism- Racism- Xenophobia
- 6.2. Islamophobia
- 6.3. Forced Assimilation- Genocide
- 6.4. Victims of discrimination: Rohingya Muslims

Facilitation of Participation for Minorities in Society

Questions to be Addressed

Further Reading and References

1.1. Letter From Secretary General

Most Esteemed Participants of OAALMUN'24,

It is with great excitement that I extend my warmest invitation to each one of you for the upcoming conference; OAALMUN'24.

As the Secretary General of OAALMUN'24, it is my utmost pleasure to present to you our meticulously crafted study guides, designed to enhance the delegate experience and promote meaningful discussions on critical global issues.

I am honored to welcome you to this significant gathering, where we will embark on a journey of intellectual exploration, collaboration with fellow delegates from various backgrounds and the formation of lasting connections.

Throughout the three days ahead of us, we anticipate engaging debates that will not only enhance your understanding of global affairs but also contribute to the development of critical diplomatic skills. Our dedicated academic team has spared no effort in ensuring that this event becomes a reality, working tirelessly to curate an enriching and memorable experience for all participants.

I encourage you to seize this moment, participate wholeheartedly, and embrace the chance to broaden your horizons academically and professionally. I wholeheartedly wish you all the creation of lasting memories.

Let us all recognize our potential as catalysts for global progress, ready to transcend borders and make a handful out of the opportunities that lie ahead.

Best of regards,

Selma Süeda Çayır,
Secretary General

1.2. Letter From Under Secretary General

Most esteemed participants,

It is a great honor for me to serve as acting Under-Secretary-General of the Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Committee. I am greeting you all with my deepest respect, and I would like to welcome you all to OAALMUN'24.

I am Talha Gönül, a high school student from Akif İnan Anatolian Imam Hatip High School. I enjoy reading a lot and am very interested in literature and language. Speaking with people about these topics is something I also enjoy doing. I have had an amazing MUN career filled with many treasured memories. I have experienced a variety of professions and people. Rather than the academic value of this platform, I have benefited from its socializing value. As in every conference, I look forward to meeting you, my esteemed delegates from various parts of Istanbul.

At OAALMUN'24, we will discuss one of the most important human rights agendas of the last century "Preservation of Rights and Facilitation of Participation for Religious, Ethnic, and Linguistic Minorities"

With the influence of the ideology of nationalism, multinational states began to disintegrate. However, some people could not gain their independence and started to live together. The emergence of problems in an environment where different peoples lived together was very predictable and therefore the necessary international steps were taken. However, in this world where the weak are always oppressed, international steps were not sufficient to protect the rights of these minorities. It is precisely at this point that we, the SOCHUM committee, will discuss the rights and situation of minorities.

I'm deeply indebted to thank my reverenced secretariat, especially, my Deputy Secretary Rawia Musa for provided me with patience that cannot be underestimated and guidance throughout the duration of this preparation process. I also would like to express my deepest appreciation to my assistant Kaan Çelik for his invaluable effort on this document.

Faithfully,

Talha Gönül

Under-Secretary-General

2.1. Introduction to the Third GA, the SOCHUM Committee

The third committee of the General Assembly, also known as the Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee, was established in 1947, following the Charter of the United Nations. It mainly focuses on a wide range of topics revolving around humanitarian and social issues in the international community. SOCHUM is made up of all 193 member states of the United Nations, and its decisions are made by consensus. The committee focuses broadly on the welfare and human rights of protected groups such as children, refugees, victims of discrimination, and many others. The committee also discusses the international criminal justice system, issues related to the rights of indigenous peoples, the elimination of discrimination, the questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination.

The Committee works in union with other organs, such as the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as its sub-body Economic and Social Council. session usually begins in late September and finishes at the end of the year. Some of the most impactful actions of the SOCHUM can be seen as the proposal in 1990 regarding prisoners and the resolution written in 2000 about gender equality and women's rights, which still hold value. Today for the global issues stated above, SOCHUM comes up with various laws, policies, and practices that can be implied by the states to reach a more equal world.

2.2. Introduction to the Agenda Item

Minority rights and problems coincide with the history of the emergence of multinational states or nations with the idea of dominating the whole world. The Holy Roman Empire, the Abbasid Empire, and the Ottoman Empire had made many regulations on minorities and had taken many steps for better or worse. At various times in history, minorities were often oppressed and kept under constant pressure and surveillance. Even in times when they were free or when their rights were most respected, they were far away from the idea of self-determination, which was their greatest right. Until the French Revolution... An ideology that spread from the center of France to the whole world instilled in minorities and all nations a sense of nationalism and reminded them of their right to self-determination.

Understanding the French Revolution is important for the subject of minorities, but today, as the United Nations, we will be interested in how we can protect the rights of people who are far from self-determination, but who are close to losing values such as culture, language, and religion that make up their existence, which the French Revolution could not save.

3. Historical Background of Independence of Minorities

3.1. French Revolution and Nationalism:

The French Revolution was a movement whose effects are still being seen and that spread nationalism in Europe and the world. In the development and formation of the French Revolution, the British Declaration of People, John Locke's ideas, which represent liberalism, and the American Declaration of Independence have an important place.

When the date shows 1787, King Louis XVI of Bourbon convened the assembly of notables (consisting of bishops, noblemen, and a few bourgeois representatives) to close the budget deficit through a reform proposal that suggested increasing the taxation of the privileged classes. The assembly refused to take responsibility for reforms and suggested the summoning of the General Estate, which represents the clergy, the aristocracy, and the third estate (the public). After the turmoil caused by some edicts issued for the implementation of reforms in 1789, the General Estate convened with 300 proxies from the clergy, 300 proxies from the aristocracy, and 600 proxies from the third estate (public). The convening of the assembly also brought to light the contradictions between social classes: the privileges of the nobles and clergy, the fact that they do not have the same privileges and rights as the third estate (public) and the bourgeois, the debauchery of the nobles and clergy while the people are crushed under heavy taxes... At the end of the discussions, the third estate left the General Estate and opened a constituent assembly under the leadership of Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyes. They sent letters to the other two classes, pointing out that they would participate in the administration of the country with or without them. After the events of two years, the National Constituent Assembly could see only one way to check the peasants: on the night of August 4, 1789, it decreed the abolition of the feudal regime and the tithe. Then, on August 26, it introduced the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, proclaiming liberty, equality, the inviolability of property, and the right to resist oppression. This was one of the turning points. The revolution continued in a turbulent manner until 1799.

Without a doubt, the proclamation of the National Constituent Assembly as a revolutionary principle of international law, that is, the right of a people to self-determination, was a development that changed the fate of Europe and multinational empires and states and shook the world deeply. Even the dream of states where no one interferes with anyone and where each person freely decides their own fate without being under the exploitation of another nation was very promising for minorities and the public. And these ideas completely influenced the spread and emergence of nationalism. Most of the later parts of history in these years were occupied by the independence struggles of minorities who were tired of oppression and wanted to live their own culture freely and to self-sustain themselves, taking refuge in nationalist ideology. And this idea of nationalism influenced the way they think, not just in small minorities but in large states and empires. In the great states and empires, nationalism manifested itself more with the idea of creating a pure-blooded subject based only on desired characteristics and loyalty to the state.



3.2. Outcomes of the Independence Wars:

Before the French Revolution, independence wars were generally the result of uprisings of colonies that were subjected to unjust oppressions. One of the most important examples is American War of Independence/American Revolutionary War. However, with the right/theory of self-determination of the people that emerged as a result of the French Revolution, wars of independence began to emerge and be seen with the base/influence of nationalism. As a natural consequence, nationalism and the subsequent wars of independence affected multicultural states/kingdoms and large empires most, wore them down, and even caused their collapse with the revolts of minorities and independence movements. Although these wars emerged with the concepts of freedom, peace, and tranquility, they did not always end in this way. It has also caused civilian casualties, instability in regions, irregular migrations, and long-lasting unrest in regions. We can see examples of independence wars and the effect of nationalism on multicultural states and empires in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire had lands that stretched over three continents and included minorities of many different nationalities and ethnicities. With the spread of the nationalism idea, the affected minorities started revolting with the dream of establishing their own administration so that no one oppresses them or even respects them; their fate does not depend on other people. Firstly, in 1828, the Greeks gained their independence. By following this in 1878 in Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania, in 1908 in Bulgaria, in 1912 in Albania, and finally in 1914-1918 during the First World War, Arabs gained their independence. The best example that can be given of losses in these wars and regional unrest is Algeria's war of independence against France. In this war, which lasted for 8 years between 1954-1962, 1.500.000 people died. Millions of people have been displaced, causing irregular migrations.

Interestingly, another consequence of independence wars, thanks to nationalism, is racism. Although they may seem irrelevant, the spread of nationalism also prepared the ground for racism. “Nationalism is a community of people who want to preserve or enhance their national identity, culture, language, history, and interests”. Looking at this definition, people concentrated in a single profile who share the same heritage emerge. When living with people who do not fit this profile, the public and rulers who have adopted nationalism are either trying to assimilate the people in order to create a single nation with the same heritage or excising them from society to declare that they do not belong here in some way.

3.3. Current Situation

While there are nations that have gained their independence and ensured their own authority and security, there are still nations and monitories that are under pressure; they have not been able to obtain their freedom and their legal rights. Our focus as SOCHUM will be on defending the rights of minorities who have not been able to fully achieve their independence. Every human being, regardless of language, religion, or race, deserves equal treatment and human rights. These rights are guaranteed by constitutions and international treaties. Unfortunately, looking at today, it is difficult to say how much these treaties are respected. We are faced with increasing incidents of racism and antisemitism, day by day.

To give an example, the increasing anti-Islamism in Europe can be given as an example. In 2020, it was revealed that 9.4% of the posts made on social media about hate crimes were related to Islamophobia. Apart from this, increasing racist actions against Afro-Americans can be given as another example. Especially with the recent police violence against Afro-Americans and the murder of George Floyd, things are in a good state of flux. Historically, in 1921, America suffered a massacre named Tulsa. And still, 53 percent of the Afro-American population declares that they are facing racism, and they don't believe things will be better.

The Chinese-Uygur-Uygurem and Christian minorities in China are other examples that can be given and require action. Most minorities in China, regardless of their religious or ethnic origin, are systematically oppressed and forced to assimilate. Day by day, the big ones oppress the small minorities and oppress them to manipulate them as they wish. And many of the findings we have show that we are still not free from dangers such as genocide or rights violations.

The events in Germany that have happened in recent days have reminded us of another problem that requires us to act: racism. At a meeting attended by AFD (a political party in Germany) officials, neo-Nazis, some politicians, lawyers, and some politicians at the Landhaus Adlon Hotel in Germany, the implementation of the reverse immigration policy by canceling the permits of immigrants and foreigners who have residence permits but have not been assimilated in the country was on the agenda. The aim of the participants is for Germany to consist only of Germans. Right-wing extremists who spoke at the meeting, Martin Sellner Martin, said, “There are three types of immigrant groups who need to leave

Germany: asylum seekers, foreigners who have residence permits, and unassimilated German citizens. The meeting also reportedly discussed a proposal to deport 2 million migrants to an unnamed country in North Africa. Considering that Germany is the second country with the highest number of immigrants in the world and has a total of 15.762.457, the realization of such a scenario is a horrifying possibility for both the region and all the countries in the world.

The increase in these and similar incidents involving racism and oppression against minorities poses great dangers to world security and peace. As SOCHUM, we will do our best to defend human rights and put an end to racism, which is one of the itching wounds of the world.

4. Mass Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities Around The World

4.1. Ethnic and Linguistic Minorities

You will read about the major minority groups that face persecution worldwide due to linguistic or ethnic differences, as well as their issues, in this section. However, we must first define what is meant by "linguistic rights protection."

Human rights that affect how state authorities, people, and other entities use or prefer to use language are known as "linguistic rights" or "language rights." Language is one of the most significant ways that identity is expressed and is fundamental to human nature and culture. Therefore, language-related issues are especially important and sensitive to linguistic minority communities that are trying to preserve their unique cultural and group identities, sometimes in the face of marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination.

Linguistic rights can be described as a series of obligations on state authorities to either use certain languages in a number of contexts, or not interfere with the linguistic choices and expressions of private parties. These could include a duty to acknowledge or encourage minorities' or indigenous peoples' language use. Language-related human rights comprise legal obligations derived from international human rights treaties, guidelines for handling language or minority concerns, and linguistic variations within a state. International human rights law contains several provisions that protect language rights, including the freedom of expression, the right to privacy, the right to education, and the ability of linguistic minorities to communicate with members of their own community in their native tongue.

4.1.1. Roma

After the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, most Romanians were displaced by armed conflicts and were unable to obtain official citizenship in the countries of dispersion. One of the most neglected social, political, and economic groups in Europe is the Roma community. Roma generally experience high rates of illiteracy, especially among children, poor health outcomes, limited access to education, and significant economic disadvantages in addition to

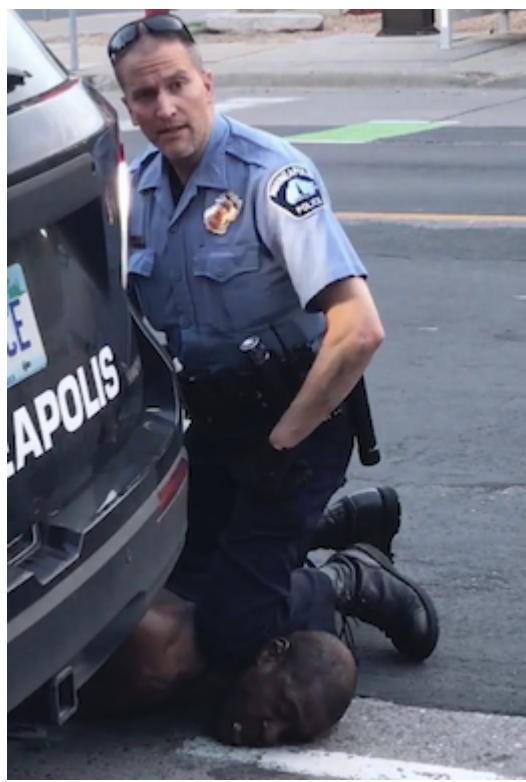
pervasive societal discrimination. The accuracy of these figures is highly contested, and estimates of the community's actual size range from 80,000 to 150,000.

4.1.2. Afro-Americans

The general policies of the United States towards black people have historically included discriminatory and racist practices. Starting from the slavery period, black people have faced various discriminatory laws and practices. For example, practices such as Jim Crow laws and discriminatory housing policies prevented black people from enjoying equal rights.

Today, the United States of America is still struggling with racism and discrimination. Black people are still disadvantaged compared to other groups in the enjoyment of equal opportunities. Problems such as police violence and racial discrimination also continue to affect black communities. Especially police repression and some racist rhetoric sometimes ignite the fuse of protests in America.

Murder of George Floyd



George Floyd, a 46-year-old African American man, was killed in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020, by 44-year-old white police officer Derek Chauvin. Floyd was placed under arrest following a store employee's claim that he used a fake \$20 bill to make a purchase. For more than nine minutes, Chauvin remained on Floyd's neck while he was face-down in a street with handcuffs on. Chauvin was helped in the restraint of Floyd by J. Alexander Kueng and Thomas Lane, two other police officers. Before Floyd was placed in handcuffs, Lane had also aimed a gun at his head. A fourth police officer, Tou Thao, prevented bystanders from intervening.

Floyd had shown symptoms of anxiety prior to being put on the ground, claiming to be claustrophobic and having trouble breathing. He grew more agitated after being restrained,

continuing to complain of breathing problems, the knee on his neck, and his fear of dying soon. Floyd spoke for a few minutes before stopping. He had been lying still for a few minutes, and when Kueng felt around for a pulse, she could find none. Chauvin refused to move his knee away from Floyd's neck in spite of this plea from onlookers. The next day, after videos recorded by witnesses and security cameras became public, the Minneapolis Police Department fired all four officers. Two autopsies, and one autopsy review, found Floyd's death to be a homicide.

4.1.3. Kurds

The Kurdish minority issue has influenced the domestic and foreign policies of Turkey in a very effective way since the 1990s. There is much at stake for both Turks and Kurds, and the Kurdish question in Turkey will be long debated. Former Turkish president and prime minister, Süleyman Demirel, declared, that: "the opening of the Kurdish issue will lead up to disintegration of the state, so it is strongly connected with the state security". There are about 12 millions Kurds in Turkey. They live mostly in southeast Anatolia. The Kurdish issue is strongly connected with the economical underdevelopment of this region of Turkey. Poverty and a strong desire for independence are the main reasons for the rise of ethnic terrorism. It is a key factor of the internal and foreign policy of Turkey. The recently-ended war between Turkish security forces and the Kurdistan Workers Party creates the climate of fear and danger in the society and the political leaders. PKK is recognized as a terrorist organization by the European Union and the United States as well as Turkey.

It is very important to improve the economic conditions of Kurds living in Turkey. The economic deprivation of the southeastern provinces of Turkey with high Kurdish populations is a crucial problem, and breeds discontent that can nourish terrorism or other forms of political violence. The Turkish government invested 20 billion dollars in the Southeast Anatolia Project (Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi – GAP) – a massive irrigation and hydroelectric scheme on Tigris and Euphrates rivers between 1982-1992, building 20 dams, including great Atatürk Dam, the ninth largest in the world. Its irrigation network was designed to service 1,7 million hectares, increase agricultural production and create 3,3 million jobs in the Kurdish provinces of Gaziantep, Urfa and Mardin. This has brought a new prosperity to both agricultural laborers and textile factory owners and employees in the area. Turkey also introduced a GAP Social Action Plan, emphasizing human development and social services.

The Kurdish language problem is a long-standing and hotly contested topic with continuous attempts at resolution. Kurdish is the primary language spoken by Kurds, an ethnic group that is widely distributed throughout the Middle East but is not officially recognized in many areas. Over the years, this lack of acknowledgment has presented a number of difficulties. Speaking Kurdish has historically been forbidden, persecuted, or ignored, which has made it more difficult for Kurds to maintain and express their cultural identity. Nonetheless, a number of nations have made strides recently to promote and utilize Kurdish more widely. More latitude has been given to Kurdish language media and education in some areas. But more comprehensive laws that support and acknowledge Kurdish as an official language are still required. Encouraging cultural diversity and completely defending the rights to the Kurdish language depend on such policies.

4.2. Religious Minorities and Religious Pressure

Freedom of religion is a fundamental principle that upholds the right of individuals or communities, both in public and private settings, to express their religious beliefs through teaching, practice, worship, and observance. It also encompasses the right not to adhere to any religion or belief system, often referred to as "freedom from religion.". Freedom of religion is accepted by everyone and every country in the world. However, at this point, it is hard to say how much this right is protected and defended by countries around the world. Unfortunately, day by day, religious oppression and restrictions around the world are showing their faces more and more, and they are increasing. According to reports by the Pew Research Center, in 2007, the number of countries with "high" and "very high" restrictions on religion was 40, while this number increased to 52 in 2017. In the report, it was stated that the restrictions of governments on religious activities in European countries increased by an average of two times, and harassment and pressure against religious groups increased by an average of 70 percent during the period in question. These repressions of religions directly affect minorities, deny them their rights and are often used as a tool to intimidate minorities. To give an example, government repression and harassment of religious groups in Middle Eastern and North African countries has increased by an average of 72 percent in 10 years. Repression of minority faiths was the most prominent form of oppression in this category. Not only that, but these pressures exerted by states also cause prejudice and discrimination in society and other institutions/agencies. The best way to convey this to us is through the protests that have taken place in France in recent years. A 17-year-old Muslim and Algerian boy was subjected to disproportionate pressure by the police simply because of his ethnic and religious identity and was killed by the police as a result of the incident. Thereupon, the Muslim minority living in France started protests that almost amounted to an uprising, both because of the pressures and because this event was the last straw. By the way, things got even worse. Such incidents cause irreparable wounds in terms of world security and human rights.

4.2.1. Muslim Minorities in Europe

The population of Muslim minorities in Europe is approximately 26 million. This figure corresponds to the percent 4 of the total population in Europe. In Europe, Muslims are approached with prejudice and exclusionary and oppressive attitudes due to terrorist organizations such as DAESH and Al Qaeda, and grave events such as the September 11 attacks. To make matters worse, Muslims/Islam and their rights have become a cheap political tool/interaction tool in Europe. Some rights violations are covered up under the name of freedom of opinion and defended by states for political interests. For this, it is enough to look at the Quran-burning protests in Sweden in 2022. In Sweden, far-right party deputies and far-right leader Rasmus Paludan set fire to the Muslim holy book, accompanied by court permission and police protection. While the court defended the actions under the name of freedom of opinion, the action received reactions from many countries of the world. Sweden, which is negotiating with Turkey for NATO membership, used these actions as a political trump card/bargaining method.

In addition to these, the restrictions and regulations imposed against Muslims, led by France and Germany, where the ratio of the Muslim population to the total population is 10 percent, are seen in most European countries. France is trying to implement the principle of secularism in a very strict and repressive way. In France, with the decision of the Constitutional Court in 2004, public spaces were declared neutral zones, and the use of any religious symbols or clothing was prohibited because it would disrupt secularism. And Muslim women who wear headscarves as part of their religious obligations have been most affected by this. Unfortunately, in 2010, Nicolas Sarkozy took this a step further and caused a lot of public outrage by saying that veil wearers "are not welcome in France.".

When we look at the economic situation, we see that half of the Muslim population in European countries is working in low-income jobs or struggling with unemployment. Studies show that Muslim groups have much lower financial income than the majority. For example, while 59% of Muslims of Turkish origin living in Belgium are on the poverty line, this rate is around 10% for the indigenous people of the country.

Unfortunately, these pressures and practices taken by the states against Islam and Muslims in Europe cause an increase in discrimination among the local people. In France, polls show that at least 42 percent of Muslims have experienced some form of exclusion. In recent years, a total of 700 mosques have been attacked in Germany, and threatening letters have been left. Opinion polls have shown that one in three Germans strongly opposes a Muslim member in their family. In 2020, it was revealed that 9.4% of the posts made on social media about hate crimes were related to Islam.

4.2.2. Christian Minorities in China

As of 2020, there were 116 million Protestant Christians living in mainland China. Since the 40s or even earlier, there have been systematic attempts to block or censor Christian minorities in China. These include the closure of churches, the arrest of some community leaders, the imprisonment of lawyers involved in Christian cases for crimes such as disturbing public order, aiding and abetting actions aimed at undermining the authority of the state, and even the detention of community members in detention centers for the purpose of intimidation. Especially after 2013, with the inauguration of Xi Jinping, the rhetoric has become harsher, and the steps taken have become even more repressive. In China, only the state is usually allowed to open churches. The state can influence and determine the sermons to be given in these churches to the religious speeches to be made. Reacting to this, Christian minorities open churches that are not registered in the state, sometimes in a small shop or in the house.

Since March 2013 officials in Zhejiang province, in practice, they launched a 3-year campaign called Three Fixes, One Demolition, which mainly focused on church buildings. As of mid-2016, the officials removed crosses from the roofs or facades of at least 1,500 churches and demolished more than 20 churches. In the years that followed, churches were

required to sing patriotic songs, and even Xi Jinping's pictures and words were engraved on church walls. Initially implemented in big cities such as Wenzhou, the campaign soon spread throughout the province and even to rural villages. Authorities tried to legitimize demolitions by retroactively citing illegal construction or zoning violations. Tensions came to a head as congregations tried to defy the official campaign. Sit-ins, mass arrests, and the deployment of riot police in front of churches have become a daily occurrence. Some acts of defiance ended in sad ways. In April 2016, the wife of a pastor in Henan was killed when bulldozers buried her and her husband while trying to prevent the demolition of their church.

As a product of state repression in 2015, many lawyers and rights activists who supported the Christian community against the unjust arrests and repression were arrested, imprisoned, tortured, and even allegedly subjected to sexual assault and persecution. Among the cases, the cases of lawyer Zhang Kai and legal assistant Zhao Wei stand out. Unfortunately, many lawyers and lawyers were sentenced to many years in prison on charges of overthrowing state power. The pressures have even reached funerals. The state asks families to continue funerals without religious rituals. Only a group of 10 close relatives are allowed at the funeral, and they are only allowed to sing hymns at the level of silent humming.

When we look at the ideological reasons for these decisions at the state level, Chinese nationalism plays a very important role. Fenggang Yang, a sociologist and professor at Purdue University, told Time magazine on Jan. 2 that "by 2030, there will probably be more Christians living in China than in any other country in the world." Willy Lam, an adjunct professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said the Chinese Communist Party, which has an estimated 90 million members, and government leaders are concerned about the situation. Lam also said that secret churches are "spreading rapidly" in China, adding, "The Chinese government fears that more people, including people with less education, will turn to the church for their spiritual needs rather than official nationalism and patriotism.". Xu Xiaohong, chairman of the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of Protestant Churches in China, claimed in March 2019 that Western powers were trying to use Christianity to "penetrate Chinese society" and even "overthrow" the government. Noting that the name of the movement he leads ends in "China" rather than "West," Xu said, "We support our country to bring to justice the hundreds of people who participated in activities to undermine national security under the banner of Christianity.". "Only by steadily approaching the good traditions of Chinese culture can Chinese Christianity take root in the fertile soil of Chinese culture and become a religion that the Chinese themselves will accept," Xu added.

“What remains of a house church razed to the ground in Henan province (AP)”



5. Autonomous Region Minority Problems

The issues pertaining to minorities who maintain the right to autonomous regions will be covered in this section. Undoubtedly, one of the primary issues is the paucity of information we have regarding the issues faced by minorities living in autonomous regions. Are the actions taken by the states just the product of integration efforts, or are they a kind of oppression or genocide, as in the case of the Uyghurs? Without a doubt, the UN should handle the solution to this issue. The free world needs to find out with objectivity exactly what is going on in these autonomous areas.

5.1. Uyghurs

Speaking their language, practicing their religion, and expressing other essential aspects of their identity are prohibited for Uyghurs. There are limitations in many facets of life, such as language, attire, and schooling. The People's Republic of China government keeps a careful eye on Uyghur religious establishments. Even routine activities like visiting a mosque or praying could be grounds for an arrest, detention, or questioning.

The Chinese government has established a vast system of enforced disappearances and arbitrary detentions. At present, these facilities house about a million Uyghur prisoners for offenses ranging from simple religious practice to maintaining connections or communications abroad to enrolling in a university in the West. The Chinese government has established the camps as “vocational training centers” to combat violent extremism.

According to leaked government documents, the state targets people who practice certain religious observances, like praying or shaving their beards.

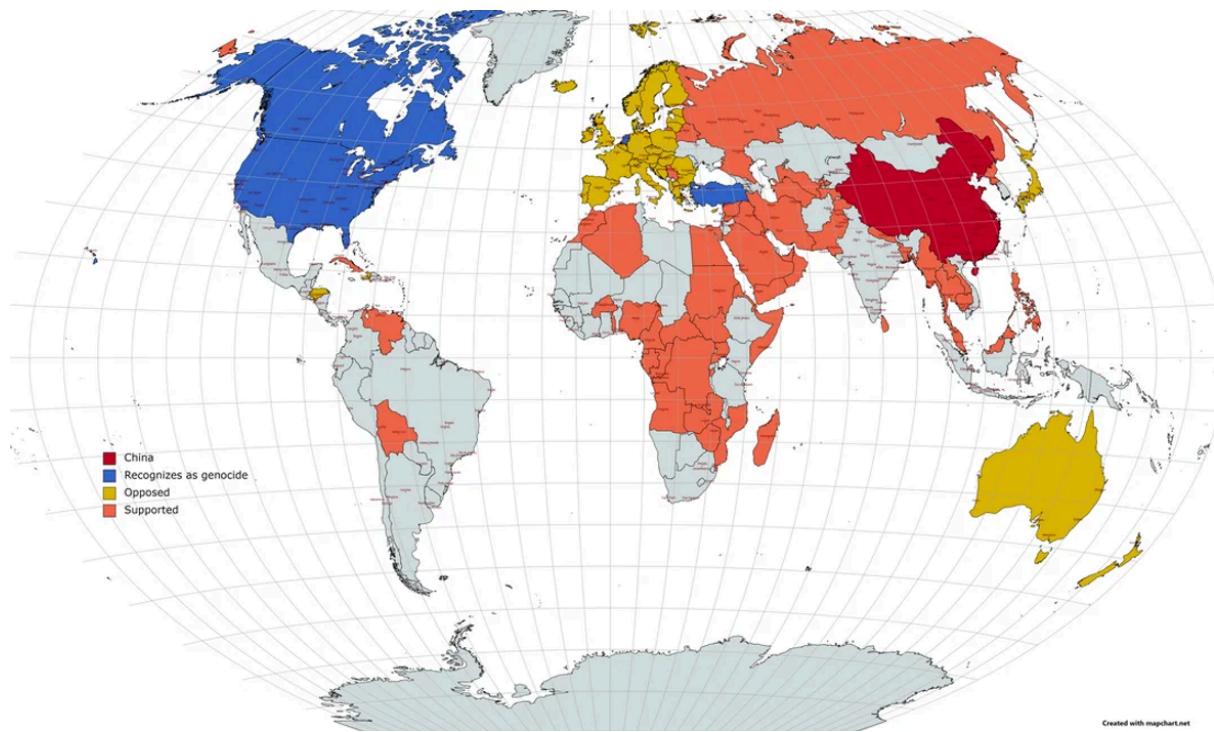
Researchers have reported that people in the camps often are subjected to ill-treatment and brainwashing. Detained Uyghurs claim they were made to sing songs and swear allegiance to the Communist Party, as well as to give up their religion. Some have reported experiencing torture rape and massacres. Families are frequently unable to visit or communicate with those who are detained. Government-run adoption centers are used to place children whose parents are in jail; these facilities are occasionally located far from the parents' homes.

China's persecution and mistreatment of the Uyghurs has increased attention from the international community and the US. On January 19, 2021, then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo issued a determination that the brutalities against Muslim Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang created genocide and human right violations.

In June 2020, the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020 became US law. This law requires pursuing and reporting on human rights violations against Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and other Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang. It also calls for sanctions on people participating and supporting in the persecution of these groups. Regulations specifically addressing forced labor and corporate supply chains in Xinjiang has also been introduced in Congress. Federal agencies have taken some actions in support of the Uyghurs:

The US Department of the Treasury applied sanction to several senior officials in China who responsible for crimes against the Uyghurs, including Communist Party Secretary for the Xinjiang region Chen Quanguo. The US Department of Commerce restricted scores of Chinese presences implicated in crimes in Xinjiang from accessing US markets. The US Department of Homeland Security detained shipments at United States ports of entry containing cotton products originating from the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps based on reliable information that these products were made using forced labor.

One of the biggest issues regarding the Uyghurs is the lack of international recognition and evidence of the oppression they face. The USA is among the few countries that have brought attention to this issue.



5.4. Chechens and Ingush

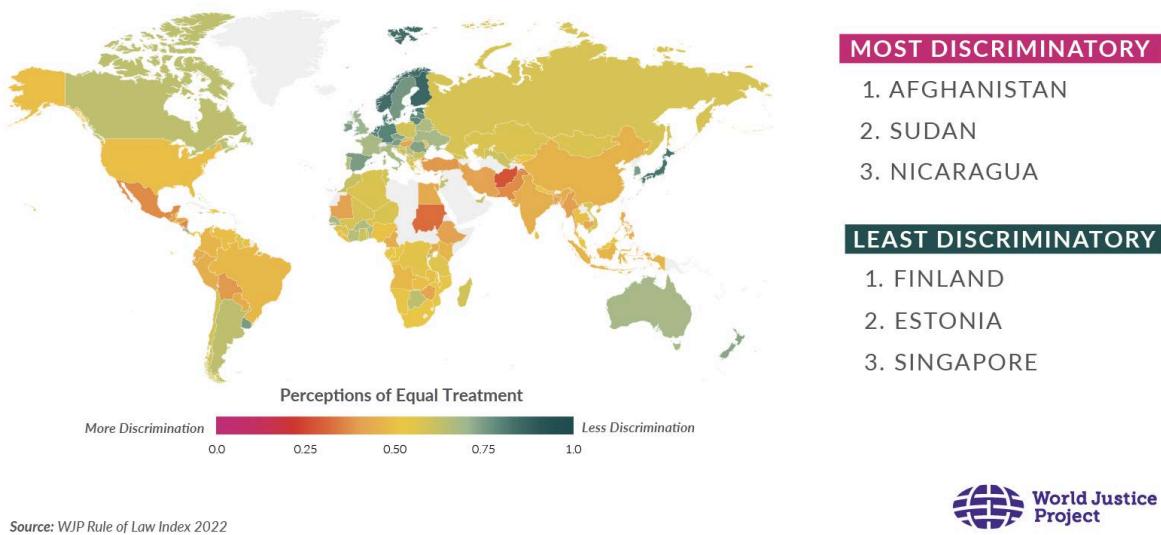
Chechens in Moscow have long been the victims of mistreatment by the police. But the mass hostage-taking at a Moscow theater by Chechen rebel fighters in October 2002 triggered an intense police crackdown and widespread discrimination against ethnic Chechens living in Moscow. Although Russia's President Vladimir Putin to his credit warned against an anti-Chechen sentiment during the hostage crisis, Moscow's police nonetheless stepped up identity checks and arbitrarily detained hundreds of Chechens, fingerprinting and photographing them. Chechens were given drugs and ammunition by police officers, who then begged them for bribes to drop charges. Chechens were routinely refused registration for mandatory resident permits by police officials at registration offices, who often cited "instructions from above." Additionally, police forced Moscow landlords to evict Chechen tenants. Even though the majority of the children were able to attend classes, Chechen parents of school-age children regularly complained that Moscow schools threatened to close their doors to Chechen children without residency permits.

Not only does Russia have a policy regarding Chechens, but it also applies to Ingush and other Russian-autonomous regions. In fact, the slogans chanted by the Ingush in the recent protests explain very well what these minorities want: "Let Putin love us too". Recall that minority groups do not desire anything for which they are not legally entitled.

6. Discrimination

Discrimination strikes at the very heart of being human. Someone's rights are being violated just because of who they are or what they think. Discrimination is harmful and perpetuates inequality. It can be based on many different characteristics age, gender, weight, ethnicity, religion, or even politics. Individuals with these differentiated characteristics are often excluded from participation in society. These individuals, whose participation in religious, linguistic, educational, political, cultural, and social issues is made difficult, are increasingly isolated from society. Based on data from the World Justice Project, discrimination is pervasive and becoming worse globally. According to the World Justice Project's most recent report, discrimination has gotten worse in 70% of countries between 2021 and 2022. Here are some major factors that encourage discrimination, whether intentional or unconscious, are listed below.

Discrimination Around the World



6.1. Nationalism- Racism- Xenophobia

Racism and xenophobia are the most common terms for ethnicity-based discrimination in society. Moreover, suppose there is a lesson to be learned from the repetition of history. In that case, it is that racist and xenophobic discourses lie at the root and foremost of violence and injustice against minorities in a society. A society's tendency toward segregation is greatly influenced by racist and xenophobic discourses.

According to The Economist and BBC News, it is a fact that far-right parties are gradually increasing, especially in Europe, and that the far-right is gradually finding more and more favor among the public. One of the reasons behind this is that, with the impact of the refugee

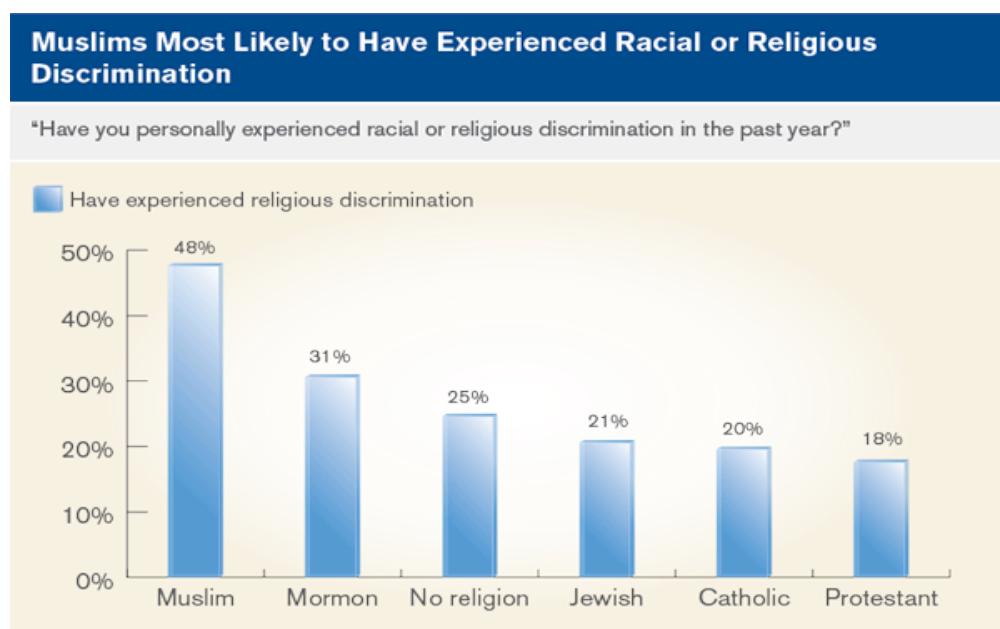
crisis, racism and xenophobia are increasing day after day. This thought is pushing the people toward nationalist politicians and far-right parties.

The far-right parties, xenophobia, and racism have a significant impact on the discrimination issue. People are utilizing nationalism as a front for racism and xenophobia without realizing it. Not only does responsibility belong to individuals, but it also belongs to politicians, particularly those from far-right political parties. When referring to the nationalism of the populace, politicians tend to use language that is racist. Thus, in countries with diverse ethnic backgrounds, nationalism can give rise to racist sentiments toward the populace's minorities.

6.2. Islamophobia

Religious discrimination, which is one of the cruelest faces of discrimination, is to be excluded by the people you speak the same language with, of the same ethnic origin, and maybe even of the same family, only because of your religious orientation. According to research, one of the biggest factors in tensions between Muslims and the Western world, and even the biggest cause according to people in the US-Canada, Sub-Saharan Africa, and MENA regions, is religious difference. Also, according to the same research, Islam is the most discriminated against religion worldwide.

The 11 September bombings in the USA and the 7/7 bombings in London were important factors that increased anti-Islamic sentiment in the West. In the aftermath of these attacks, Islam and Muslims as a whole, not extremist Muslims and terrorists, were portrayed in the media as demons and terrorists. This is precisely why Islamophobia is still on the rise today and is increasingly violating the lives and rights of Muslims. The actions of extremist groups and unconscious media coverage are increasing the perception of Islamophobia and making it more difficult for Muslims to participate in life.



6.3. Forced Assimilation- Genocide

The greatest fears of a minority group or a nation: assimilation and genocide. Assimilation is taking away the reason for living by making them forget their own identity, while genocide is taking away their right to live. States, mostly based on the idea of one nation, perceived the presence of ethnic or linguistic minorities as a danger to their territorial integrity. In fact, minorities could claim their independence or be rejoined with their motherland. The consequence was the weakening or disappearing of several ethnic minorities. In cases where a state places a great deal of importance on maintaining a uniform national identity, it may take drastic and harsh measures to eradicate minority cultures, even going so far as to view the physical extermination of the minority group as the only viable option (such as expulsion or even genocide). This is particularly true for minorities descended from historical enemies. The enforced use of a dominant language in legislation, education, literature, and worship also counts as forced assimilation. Unlike ethnic cleansing, the local population is not outright destroyed and may or may not be forced to leave a certain area. Instead, the assimilation of the population is made mandatory. This is also called mandatory assimilation by scholars who study genocide and nationalism.

6.4. Victims of discrimination: Rohingya Muslims

We have examined many discrimination-related subheadings. racism and xenophobia motivated by ethnic origin, politics, and propaganda against Islam because of religious beliefs, and the consequent Islamaphobia, forced assimilation, and genocide motivated by political anxieties. Rohingya Muslims are a minority group that has been subjected to all types of discrimination mentioned above.

The Rohingya crisis started when the government and Buddhist population of Myanmar denaturalized the Rohingya Muslims, an ethnic minority who had been living in the country for centuries, and claimed they were refugees from Bangladesh. During those years, Myanmar had recently encountered smartphones, social media, and technology. The Facebook company took advantage of the government of Myanmar's technological advancement by securing the required agreements and making sure that Facebook was accessible as a ready-made application when the people of Myanmar obtained smartphones. Discourses of religious hatred and Islamophobia took the place of the racist and xenophobic ones that had begun in this way, which incited the populace even further. People started to show a great interest in social media and Facebook, which was now a common area of interest for people of all ages. Realizing that social media had such an impact on the country, extremist Buddhists continued their anti-Islam propaganda from there. However, the impact of social media was more than expected, and even the Buddhists were surprised. Sharing started to increase gradually, and the public started to be provoked unjustly. When the events reached an unstoppable point, the blood of Muslims began to be shed. Although international organisations claimed that a genocide was committed in Myanmar with the cooperation of the

government and the people, the government did not accept this. Rohingya Muslims who were able to flee to Bangladesh have fled, but those who remained behind are facing a humanitarian crisis at the Bangladesh-Myanmar border.

They are victims of unprecedeted discrimination in their land where they have lived for centuries.

7. Facilitation of Participation for Minorities in Society

Participation rights are subject to many of the same general defenses for minority protection, if not stronger ones. A major justification is the inherent fairness of minority protection. Minority members have the same rights and freedoms as everyone else, and participation is a necessary part of those rights. Minorities have the right to be represented by individuals from similar social, cultural, and economic backgrounds and to have a say in how public policy is developed and carried out. A political system must give minorities a voice, enable them to express their unique concerns and seek solutions, and establish the framework for deliberative democracy in order to be considered truly democratic.

The goal of special measures is to effectively put minorities in the same position as members of the majority rather than giving them a privileged status. Inversely, special measures can aid in minorities' integration since they have better chances of integrating if they participate in national political and social systems. They become invested in the system, and they can participate in administration and policy-making. Minorities all too frequently feel excluded from mainstream national processes because they do not see a place for themselves in them or because they think they have no power over the results. At that point, some assert that they speak for them and that they are more aware of what is best for them than the minority group as a whole. This promotes stereotypes and discrimination against minorities. Participation also develops and utilizes the talents of minorities for the national good. States that encourage minorities' involvement and integration are typically not only more prosperous but also more stable.

The availability of human rights to members of majority communities themselves may depend on the enjoyment of rights by members of minorities. The whole concept of universal and human rights suffers when some individuals or groups are denied rights on the grounds of their religion, language, or colour. In some multi-ethnic states, for example, Malaysia and Fiji, it has been very difficult to develop a popular understanding or appreciation of human rights, because human rights are often seen as protecting minorities against the special status and authority of the majority. But if minorities are denied rights, there is the danger of general intolerance and authoritarianism.

The denial of rights to minorities also leads to their denial to all in other ways. Fair treatment of minorities is essential to social peace and stability. The persecution of minorities

leads to social conflict, which is frequently violent. This creates conditions that lead to a large-scale internal and external displacement of people, making it difficult for them to travel to certain regions of the nation or even within specific cities. The government is unable to ensure people's physical or psychological security. The state itself becomes a major violator of rights. Oppression of minorities has led to inter-state wars. It has been easy to find in a country's ill treatment of another state's 'kin people' an excuse for territorial aggression.

Special measures can also be justified as providing cultural diversity within, and thus enriching, the wider society. Such diversity challenges the dominant ideas and values of society. It promotes comparisons and debates, keeps society open to new ideas and protects it from narrow orthodoxies. Participation by minorities helps to put old policies in new contexts, often highlighting their weaknesses or ethnic bias, and drawing attention to the need for new policies and approaches. Public participation promotes inter-ethnic dialogues, and averts ethnic conflicts borne out of misunderstanding or ignorance. This recognition of diversity is particularly pertinent now, when few states are mono-ethnic. States and individuals are engaged in multiple relations with other political and cultural systems, and need the background and skills to negotiate numerous contexts where different cultures meet and interact.

Minority rights and participation in society have seen substantial advances over the past decade. A marginal topic during the Cold War, they have since entered mainstream debates and instruments of human rights. The establishment of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the OSCE, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the COE, and the Copenhagen Criteria for the admission of new members to the EU have each provided substantial advances in the promotion of minority rights.

Minority rights and participation in society, nevertheless, remain largely undefined, and international standards are vague and evasive, not the least of which is the definition of 'minorities' themselves. Although 'the highest European standards' remain often invoked by both minority leaders and governments in Southeastern Europe, the term is largely devoid of meaning. In addition to protecting minorities from discrimination, minority rights have focused on two key areas: linguistic rights and educational rights

These two areas have been supplemented by the concept of political participation as a part of minority rights. Including political participation in the larger concept of minority rights can be based on two arguments: First, that other rights and prevention of discrimination of minorities cannot be effectively ensured, unless the minority itself is actively partaking in the political decision-making processes which govern the protection of minority rights. Thus, without participation, other mechanisms of minority rights protection can be substantially weakened. Second, minorities run the risk of being excluded from the political system without special protective measures. Particularly in countries with mobilized ethnic nationalism, majorities (and minorities) have been unlikely to vote for parties or candidates of other nations or ethnic groups. The odds of political representatives from minority communities successfully partaking in the political system are thus limited. Furthermore, a

number of approaches to democracy run the risk of permanently excluding minorities. Most obviously, the British-style ‘First-Past-The-Post’ electoral system has the feature of excluding dispersed minorities from representation. Additionally, electoral districts can be drawn to favour the dominant nation. A number of other tools intentionally or inadvertently can preclude or minimize the minorities’ share of representation in political institutions. Thus, a number of scholars of divided societies and ethnic relations have concluded that the conventional institutions of democracies without minorities are insufficient to allow for a stable democratic system in diverse societies.

To conclude, just as general instruments for the protection of human rights and the rule of law are also deemed necessary in functioning democracies, minority rights cannot be short-circuited by political representation. Few would argue that a system of government could work with human rights protection and the rule of law, but without political representation of the citizens of the country; that is, without democracy. Similarly, minorities can only be included in their state through representation and the safeguard of both the rights of the group and the members of the group. Political representation without protection of minority rights is thus likely to result in instability and arbitrariness, like a state governed by elections, but without the legal safeguards preventing abuse by those elected.

Questions to be Adressed

- How can the United Nations encourage countries to expedite the legal and official recognition process of their religious, ethnic, and linguistic minorities and establish international standards for this?
- Under what measures can the United Nations ensure effective cultural protection for minority groups facing pressure and disarray?
- How can the United Nations enact regulations within police academies or internationally to prevent the disproportionate and discriminatory violence exhibited by police, particularly towards Afro-American protests?
- Before minorities organize and arm themselves to defend their rights, how can the UN mediate in the conversation between them and the governments?
- In the international context, how can countries take measures to respect the places of worship and culture of religious minorities in order to protect them?
- How can the United Nations investigate allegations of oppression against minority groups in autonomous regions when such claims often lack concrete evidence and remain mere allegations?
- Should politicians or public figures who make statements fueled by nationalist, extremist nationalist, or racist sentiments, leading to division among peoples and discrimination, face legal consequences?
- How can the United Nations combat Islamophobia and other discriminatory tendencies, and what steps can be taken to promote social inclusion and tolerance?
- How can the United Nations take a more effective role in preventing genocide and protecting its victims? How can it develop a method to strengthen the process of investigating genocide allegations and determining whether genocide has occurred?
- What policies and legal regulations should the United Nations endorse to enhance the political participation of minorities?
- What policies and steps can the United Nations propose to support and facilitate national-level language reforms aimed at enhancing minority educational participation?

Further Reading and References

1. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/2017/battle-china-spirit-christianity-religious-freedom>
2. <https://unmik.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/regulations/TIntCovEcSocCulRignts.pdf>
3. <https://unmik.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/regulations//TIntCovEcSocCulRignts.pdf>
4. [https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance#{%2279030665%22:\[5\]}](https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance#{%2279030665%22:[5]})
5. <https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries/china/us-responses-to-chinas-crimes-against-the-uyghurs>
6. <https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries/china/chinese-persecution-of-the-uyghurs>
7. <https://worldjusticeproject.org/news/discrimination-getting-worse-globally>
8. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-66056375>
9. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentiment-west.aspx>
10. <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/Genocide%20Convention-FactSheet-ENG.pdf>
11. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Declaration-of-the-Rights-of-Man-and-of-the-Citizen>
12. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2003/02/24/russia-ethnic-chechens-face-increased-discrimination>
13. https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Minorities/SR/LanguageRightsLinguisticMinorities_EN.pdf