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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Slovenia, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay: draft resolution

Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹ and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action² for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Recalling its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, by which it adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities annexed to that resolution, reaffirming the principles and commitments therein, and bearing in mind article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights³ and article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁴ as well as other relevant existing international and regional standards and national legislation,

Recognizing that, while progress has been made, the situation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities is critical in many parts of the world and many challenges remain to ensure the full enjoyment of their rights,

Recalling its subsequent resolutions on the effective promotion of the Declaration and all relevant resolutions of the Human Rights Council, including

¹ Resolution 217 A (III).

² A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

³ See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.



Council resolutions [52/5](#) of 3 April 2023,⁵ which extended the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, as well as [55/15](#) of 4 April 2024,⁶ in which the Council considered the recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues at its sixteenth session, held in December 2023 on the theme “Minorities and cohesive societies: equality, social inclusion and socioeconomic participation”,⁷

Recalling also its resolution [76/6](#) of 15 November 2021, which welcomed, as a basis for further consideration by Member States, the submission of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda”,⁸ including its appeal for action to strengthen the inclusion of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Reaffirming that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and dialogue between these minorities and the rest of society, as well as the constructive and inclusive development of practices and institutional arrangements to accommodate diversity within societies, contribute to political and social stability and the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts involving the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Stressing the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including women, youth and persons with disabilities, and their representatives, at relevant levels of policymaking and decision-making, including in formal and informal negotiation settings, such as peace and transition processes,

Reaffirming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁹ the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development¹⁰ and the Sevilla Commitment adopted at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development,¹¹ recalling that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets seek to realize the human rights of all, and stressing the need for Member States to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their respective national policies and development frameworks, as appropriate, to promote the effective implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, in order to ensure that no one is left behind,

Recognizing that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities targeted by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in particular women and girls and persons with disabilities, may experience multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination, which violate their human rights, and reaffirming the need for comprehensive and effective measures to address these challenges,

Noting with concern that disregard for the identity of, and discrimination against, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as their political and socioeconomic marginalization, hate speech and the denial of the enjoyment of their human rights often precede violence and should therefore serve as early warning signs of a risk of serious crimes and conflict,

Expressing concern at the frequency and severity of disputes and conflicts affecting persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities

⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53 (A/78/53)*, chap. V, sect. A.

⁶ Ibid., *Seventy-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53 (A/79/53)*, chap. IV, sect. A.

⁷ See [A/HRC/55/70](#).

⁸ [A/75/982](#).

⁹ Resolution [70/1](#).

¹⁰ Resolution [69/313](#), annex.

¹¹ Resolution [79/323](#), annex.

in many countries and their often tragic consequences, and that such persons, especially women and girls, often suffer disproportionately from the effects of conflicts resulting in the violation or abuse of their human rights, and are particularly vulnerable to forced displacement through, inter alia, population transfers, revocation of previously held identity documents, refugee flows and forced relocation,

Recognizing that developments in certain territories or regions linked to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may trigger acts of violence and discrimination specifically targeting persons belonging to the same minorities elsewhere,

Emphasizing the importance of constitutional and legal frameworks, the rule of law and equal access to justice for all without any discrimination based on language, ethnicity, origin, religion or belief as the basis for the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Emphasizing also the need for reinforced efforts to realize the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including by addressing economic and social conditions and marginalization, as well as to end any type of discrimination against them, including by addressing multiple, aggravated and intersecting forms of discrimination,

Taking note in this regard of the publication entitled *Protecting Minority Rights: A Practical Guide to Developing Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Legislation*,¹² and noting the publication of the Guidance Note on Intersectionality, Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities prepared by the United Nations network on racial discrimination and protection of minorities,¹³

Recognizing that a vast majority of stateless persons are persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and in this regard emphasizing the need for birth registration, civil registration and national identification documents to be provided without discrimination on any grounds, in particular race, ethnicity, religion and language, in line with the 2030 Agenda, especially the target aimed at providing a legal identity for all,

Emphasizing further the fundamental importance of human rights education, training and learning as well as of dialogue, including intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and interaction among all relevant stakeholders and members of society on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Recognizing the importance of realizing the right to education for all and, wherever possible, of providing persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities with quality educational and other opportunities to learn their own language or to have instruction in their own language,

Emphasizing the important role that national institutions can play in the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and acknowledging the role that the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other relevant organizations, and the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, play in this regard by, inter alia, promoting the implementation of the Declaration,

Expressing concern about the increase of disinformation and misinformation, which may lead to the spread of hate speech, particularly on social media platforms,

¹² Available at www.ohchr.org/en/minorities/minority-rights-equality-and-anti-discrimination-law.

¹³ Available at www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/minorities/30th-anniversary/2022-09-22/GuidanceNoteonIntersectionality.pdf.

and, *inter alia*, through the use of artificial intelligence (AI), which can be designed, implemented and used in ways that spread discrimination, including racism, misogyny, xenophobia, negative stereotyping and stigmatization, particularly affecting persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Expressing concern also that these developments can lead to or exacerbate human rights violations and abuses, including of the right to privacy, the right to freedom of assembly and the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, and can be used to incite violence, hatred, intolerance, discrimination and hostility against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and emphasizing the important contributions of journalists, civil society and academia in countering these trends,

1. *Reaffirms* the obligation of States to ensure that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may exercise fully and effectively all human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law, as proclaimed in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,¹⁴ and draws attention to the relevant provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,¹⁵ including the provisions on multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination;

2. *Encourages* States to adopt appropriate measures to attenuate or prevent conditions that cause or perpetuate discrimination against individuals belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities who suffer historical or persistent prejudice;

3. *Urges* States and the international community to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as set out in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, including through the encouragement of conditions for the promotion of their identity, the provision of quality education and the facilitation of their participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of society and in the economic progress and development of their country, without discrimination, and to apply a gender perspective while doing so;

4. *Encourages* States to take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may have adequate opportunities to learn their own language or to have instruction in their own language;

5. *Urges* States to take all appropriate measures, *inter alia*, constitutional, legislative, administrative and other measures, for the promotion and implementation of the Declaration, and appeals to States to cooperate bilaterally and multilaterally, in particular on the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, consistent with the Declaration, in order to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

6. *Encourages* States to reinvigorate the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and their inclusion on the basis of the Declaration, including in the work of the international community and at the regional and national levels, and to continuously advance the implementation of voluntary pledges made by States in the thirtieth anniversary year

¹⁴ Resolution 47/135, annex.

¹⁵ See A/CONF.189/12 and A/CONF.189/12/Corr.1, chap. I.

of the Declaration, and to share best practices with a view to making progress in this regard;

7. *Calls upon* States to undertake effective efforts to prevent and combat acts of violence specifically targeting persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

8. *Recommends* that States continue to reflect on and seek solutions to current and emerging challenges that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may face, including the rise in persecution on religious and ethnic grounds, their particular vulnerability when exposed to diverse crises, including humanitarian emergencies, the prevalence of statelessness, human rights violations in law enforcement and the justice sector and increasing levels of hate crimes and hate speech targeting persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

9. *Calls upon* States to undertake, as applicable, initiatives to ensure that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are aware of and able to exercise their rights, including, *inter alia*, the right of everyone to a nationality, as set out in article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and complemented by the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and in other international human rights law;

10. *Recommends* that States ensure that all measures taken with a view to implementing the Declaration are, to the fullest extent possible, developed, designed, implemented and reviewed with the full, equal, effective and meaningful participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

11. *Calls upon* States to take all appropriate measures to ensure the protection of children who belong to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, in accordance with the relevant obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

12. *Also calls upon* States to take all appropriate measures to ensure the protection and promote the empowerment of all women and girls who belong to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and are exposed to multiple forms of discrimination as well as sexual and gender-based violence;

13. *Invites* States to give special attention to the specific needs of youth, older persons and persons with disabilities who belong to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

14. *Recommends* that States and other relevant actors ensure to the fullest extent possible that the Declaration is translated into all minority languages and disseminated widely;

15. *Expresses its appreciation* for the successful completion, in December 2024, of the seventeenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues, on the theme “Minority representation and self-representation in public spaces and discourses”, which, as part of its outcome, produced recommendations to guide policy and practice at the local, national and international levels, contributing to the integration of minority issues into broader frameworks and efforts towards cohesive and equitable societies,¹⁶ and encourages States to recognize the importance of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in contributing to flourishing, inclusive and stable societies;

¹⁶ See A/HRC/58/69.

16. *Calls upon States*, while bearing in mind the theme of the seventeenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues, with a view to enhancing the implementation of the Declaration and ensuring the realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, to take appropriate measures by, inter alia:

- (a) Considering the ratification of, accession to and adherence to all relevant international instruments that protect and promote the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities with the aim of addressing and countering the spread of racism, xenophobia, misogyny, negative stereotyping and stigmatization;
- (b) Reviewing and, where necessary, considering the amendment of any legislation, including, as appropriate, constitutional provisions, and any policy or practice that has a discriminatory or disproportionately negative effect, both offline and in digital contexts, on persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;
- (c) Adopting and implementing comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation and other measures, where required, to protect and promote the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;
- (d) Strongly condemning and, where necessary, prohibiting by law any advocacy of national, ethnic, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, including violence against women, and taking effective measures, both online and offline, consistent with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, to address and combat such incidents;
- (e) Ensuring that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities have equal access without any form of discrimination to justice and remedies for human rights violations, abuses and/or crimes, including crimes committed on the basis of national, ethnic, religious or linguistic hatred;
- (f) Strengthening international cooperation, including with international and regional organizations, and cooperation with the private sector, including technology companies, national human rights institutions and civil society in order to share expertise, knowledge and effective practices in addressing and countering hate speech and discrimination against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, online and offline, while respecting and promoting human rights, including in the development and use of digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI);
- (g) Working with social media companies, as applicable, to protect persons belonging to minorities by taking active measures to counter hate speech and address its increasing spread, enable research into measures to reduce it and promote users' access to effective reporting channels, in a manner consistent with international human rights law;
- (h) Considering the adoption of legislation, where necessary, to prohibit advocacy of hatred directed at persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence offline, as well as online, including on social media platforms, to prevent the amplification of discriminatory narratives;
- (i) Considering the implementation of inclusive urban planning policies that integrate culturally significant spaces for persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and encouraging persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities to meaningfully participate in the design,

governance and decision-making processes related to public spaces and public facilities;

(j) Considering the incorporation of histories, languages, cultures and achievements of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in national curricula, with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and ensuring that their history and contribution to society as a whole are part of the education system, with a view to fostering respect, understanding and intercultural dialogue, while promoting an inclusive approach to societies;

(k) Recognizing the important role that art can have in fostering intercultural and interfaith dialogue and mutual understanding, and promoting cultural institutions and the artistic contributions of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including youth;

(l) Stressing the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including women, youth and persons with disabilities, at all relevant levels of decision-making and implementation of conflict prevention and resolution, mediation, post-conflict reconstruction, peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding issues that affect them;

17. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the effective promotion of the Declaration¹⁷ and the reports of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues;¹⁸

18. *Commends* the Special Rapporteur for the work and the important role played in raising the level of awareness of and in giving added visibility to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

19. *Calls upon* all States to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in the performance of the tasks and duties mandated to him, to provide him with all the necessary information requested and to seriously consider responding promptly and favourably to the requests of the Special Rapporteur to visit their countries in order to enable him to fulfil his duties effectively;

20. *Encourages* the specialized agencies, regional organizations, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations to develop regular dialogue and cooperation with the Special Rapporteur, as well as to continue to contribute to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

21. *Calls upon* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to promote, within his mandate, the implementation of the Declaration, and to engage in a dialogue with Governments for that purpose;

22. *Welcomes* the inter-agency cooperation among United Nations agencies, funds and programmes on minority issues, notes the activities of the United Nations network on racial discrimination and protection of minorities, and urges United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to further increase their coordination and cooperation by, *inter alia*, developing policies on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities, drawing also on relevant outcomes of the Forum on Minority Issues and taking into account the work of relevant regional organizations;

23. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to make available, at the request of Governments concerned, qualified expertise on minority issues, including in the

¹⁷ A/80/288.

¹⁸ A/79/169 and A/80/186.

context of efforts to address and counter hate speech while fully respecting the right to freedom of expression, and to assist in resolving existing or potential situations involving minorities;

24. *Invites* the human rights treaty bodies, as well as special procedures of the Human Rights Council, to continue to give attention, within their respective mandates, to situations and rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and in this regard to take into consideration relevant recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues;

25. *Invites* the United Nations mechanisms and bodies, the specialized agencies and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, to continue to contribute to the protection and the prevention of violations of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including by strengthening cooperation in respect of information-gathering and improving the information flow between themselves and with States;

26. *Encourages* regional intergovernmental bodies, within their respective regions, to promote greater attention to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities by, *inter alia*, actively raising awareness of and promoting the Declaration in their work, encouraging its implementation at the national level and considering the creation of thematic and/or special mechanisms on this issue;

27. *Encourages* national human rights institutions to pay due attention to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including by monitoring situations of potential threats for persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and by investigating and reporting, in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles)¹⁹ and their respective mandates, episodes of targeted violence and other serious violations of human rights against persons belonging to minorities, including, when necessary, to regional and international bodies;

28. *Encourages* civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to promote awareness of the Declaration and to review the extent to which it integrates the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and the Declaration into its work, as well as to inform persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities about their rights, raise awareness among the general public and advocate for efforts to respect, protect and promote the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and seek accountability for violations committed;

29. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to report annually to the General Assembly and include recommendations for effective strategies for the better implementation of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

30. *Takes note* of the Minorities Fellowship Programme of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and encourages an active role of the Special Rapporteur and past and present participants of the programme, with a view to promoting the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and to seeking specific solutions to minority issues;

31. *Invites* the Office of the High Commissioner, United Nations entities and Member States to support and collaborate in the organization of regional forums on

¹⁹ Resolution 48/134, annex.

minority issues, and encourages their active participation in these forums, in order to engage with representatives of national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and to complement and enrich the work and recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues;

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly annual reports at its eighty-first and eighty-second sessions, and to have these reports presented to the Human Rights Council at its relevant sessions, starting from its sixty-fourth session, on the implementation of the present resolution, including information on activities undertaken by Member States, the Office of the High Commissioner at headquarters and in the field, the relevant United Nations human rights bodies and mechanisms, relevant United Nations entities and other relevant stakeholders to enhance the implementation of the Declaration and to ensure the realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

33. *Decides* to continue consideration of the question at its eighty-second session under the item entitled “Promotion and protection of human rights”.
