



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Forum on Minority Issues

Tenth session

30 November and 1 December 2017

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

Provisional agenda and annotations

Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
2. Inclusive education to empower minority youth.
3. Participation of minority youth in public life.
4. Minority youth and the media in the digital age: acceptance and opportunity.
5. Minority youth: agents of change for peace and stability.
6. Concluding remarks.

Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

Venue

Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 6/15 and 19/23, the tenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues will be held on 30 November and 1 December 2017 in Geneva (Palais des Nations, room XX).

The Forum on Minority Issues will have before it the provisional agenda contained in the present document to consider for adoption. The programme of work for the session is contained in the annex.

Opening meeting

The President of the Human Rights Council will deliver an opening statement, which will be followed by statements by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Chair of the Forum on Minority Issues and the Special Rapporteur on minority issues.

Documentation

The documents for the session will be made available on the website of the Human Rights Council (www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Minority/Pages/Session10.aspx). Hard copies will also be available during the session.



Discussions

During the two-day session, participants will be invited to contribute to four panel discussions under the general topic “Minority youth: towards diverse and inclusive societies”. Each panel discussion will be introduced briefly by a number of experts and facilitated by a moderator, who will guide the discussion towards the formulation of specific recommendations. Participants will be encouraged to make statements or comments, to answer questions from the moderator and to suggest recommendations to be included in the outcome document that the Special Rapporteur will present to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-seventh session, in March 2018.

2. Inclusive education to empower minority youth

Participants will build on and update the recommendations prepared at the first session of the Forum on Minority Issues regarding access to quality and inclusive education (see A/HRC/10/11/Add.1), and discuss the challenges faced in adapting education systems to ethnically diverse societies.

They will further discuss the provisions of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, in particular those pertaining to the right of persons belonging to minorities to learn or to have instruction in their mother tongue. They may reflect on the longer-term benefits of higher education free from discrimination and of study environments that accommodate diversity. They will share good practices regarding access to education that is respectful of minority identities and the promotion of minority youth participation in student life through the formation of groups, clubs or associations so they can practise their religion, enjoy their culture or speak their language.

With reference to standards such as the Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe or the Guidelines on Intercultural Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, participants will be encouraged to reflect on specific measures and initiatives, including outreach programmes, targeted scholarships, quotas and other initiatives such as financial and other support, as a means of addressing exclusion, underrepresentation and/or dropout of minority youth — specifically young minority women — in higher education.

Finally, participants may wish to discuss the importance of human rights education from a young age for both majority and minority youth in order to further awareness and understanding of minority rights. Participants may wish to explore ways in which minority youth can be encouraged to engage, early on, in being advocates for human rights, within or on behalf of their communities.

3. Participation of minority youth in public life

Participants will reflect on the responsibility of Member States, with regard to the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, in relation to the right of young persons belonging to minorities to participate effectively in public life, including in the political, civil, social, cultural and economic spheres. Participants will examine how encouraging the participation of minority youth in public life can lead to more cohesion and to the normalization of diversity in society more broadly. Good integration policies can create a society in which everyone has a sense of belonging and of contributing, regardless of their linguistic, cultural or religious background, and which is respectful of these important aspects of their identity.

Participants will have the opportunity to consider the role of policies and programmes that are inclusive of the identities of minority youth. In particular, they will consider how raising awareness of and celebrating cultural, religious and linguistic diversity among young people may promote positive attitudes on the part of the majority. This may facilitate inclusion and the realization of the educational, creative and professional potential of minority youth in the wider society. Consideration will also be given to other State practices that have succeeded in developing the potential of minority youth to become

agents of positive change in the attitude of other groups towards minorities, while keeping their distinctive cultural, religious and linguistic features.

Participants may highlight how the specific needs and aspirations of young minority people must be carefully taken into account by national institutions when developing policies targeted at youth and minority youth. They may discuss issues pertaining to the development of youth policies and other sectoral policies affecting minority youth, such as the importance of collecting data that are disaggregated by a number of factors, including cultural or ethnic background, religion and primary language spoken, and the importance of minority youth participation at all stages of development of such policies.

Acknowledging that minority youth may be subject to double discrimination in decision-making processes, participants will examine the obstacles preventing minority youth from participating effectively in political, social, economic and cultural life. Participants may provide examples of successful initiatives that have boosted the participation of minority youth representatives in public activities, such as youth parliaments, municipal youth advisory bodies, the organization of minority youth into civil society organizations or the creation or funding of recreational opportunities that are specially designed for minority youth or aimed at fully integrating minority identities.

4. Minority youth and the media in the digital age: acceptance and opportunity

Participants will examine how to ensure that minority youth, and young women in particular, have equal opportunities to use the Internet and other forms of digital communication in order to exercise and defend their rights.

Participants will be encouraged to consider how digital space can be used by various national and international institutions to challenge the dominant narratives in the traditional mainstream media and give a new voice to minority youth in the media landscape.

Participants are invited to analyse how digital media are, or could be, used to efficiently disseminate information about minority rights and issues; to promote awareness and acceptance of diversity in society; and to solicit and analyse minority youth's concerns and views, while respecting their right to privacy. They may look at examples of media launched and/or led by minority youth, particularly in the digital/social space, which act as platforms for advocacy and activism (e.g. YouTube channels, websites exploring issues specific to the minority community).

5. Minority youth: agents of change for peace and stability

Against the background of Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) and with reference to the Amman Youth Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security, participants will discuss the need for meaningful minority youth involvement — including young minority women — at all levels of peacebuilding, conflict prevention and countering of violence and violent extremism.

Participants may consider the importance of inclusion and equality measures aimed at minority youth, which can help defuse situations of hostility or misunderstanding in societies and actively prevent intercommunal violence or armed conflict. They will consider the role of youth work and activism in supporting the development of sustainable, democratic and diverse societies. They may consider the creative and effective role played by minority youth in faith-based peacebuilding initiatives, using dialogue, building relationships, reconciliation and forgiveness, focusing on commonalities while respecting differences.

With reference to the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding, participants are invited to consider the value of young minority people's diversity and experiences in peacebuilding, and reflect on the benefits of minority youth ownership and leadership in this process. Participants will consider young minority men and women as valuable innovators and agents of change, whose contributions should be actively supported, solicited and included as an essential part of building peaceful communities and supporting democratic

governance and transition which respects and acknowledges the rich tapestry of a State's cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

Participants may wish to consider the potential advantages of measures such as: encouraging multicultural youth groups and activities; fostering inter-ethnic dialogue between majority and minority youth; demonstrating respect for cultural, religious and linguistic heritage in all interactions with youth; and supporting the crucial role played by minorities in a multi-ethnic, democratic and diversified civil society.

Participants may also wish to discuss how implementing minority rights can help to prevent conflicts and counter violent extremism, including among youth. Participants are invited to discuss how to motivate youth to become more active in their local communities and to promote minority rights as well as anti-discrimination and social cohesion policies.

6. Concluding remarks

Participants will draw on the outcomes of the two days of discussion to reflect on the specific needs of minority youth to enable them to fully enjoy their rights to use their language, practise their religion and enjoy their culture, without discrimination, and on how minority youth can act as agents of positive change for peaceful, stable and more tolerant societies. The participants will draw and refine a number of recommendations to States, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society, for the promotion and fulfilment of minority rights among and by minority youth as they relate to each item of the present agenda.

The Chair of the Forum on Minority Issues and the Special Rapporteur on minority issues will make concluding remarks, including proposals for follow-up steps to be taken with Forum participants.

Annex

Programme of work

<i>Date/time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Programme</i>
Thursday, 30 November 2017		
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	1. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work	<p>Opening of the Forum on Minority Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and opening remarks by the President of the Human Rights Council • Remarks by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights • Remarks by the Chair of the Forum on Minority Issues • Remarks by the Special Rapporteur on minority issues
3-6 p.m.	<p>2. Inclusive education to empower minority youth</p> <p>3. Participation of minority youth in public life</p>	
Friday, 1 December 2017		
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	4. Minority youth and the media in the digital age: acceptance and opportunity	
3-6 p.m.	<p>5. Minority youth: agents of change for peace and stability</p> <p>6. Concluding remarks</p>	