

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.

On behalf of Japanese Network towards Human Rights Legislation of Non-nationals and Ethnic Minorities, we would like to thank you for taking up the issue of the right to education of minorities at the inaugural session of the Forum.

The right to education of non-nationals must be addressed by this Forum. Non-nationals, particularly migrant workers and former colonial people, are living with a much worse status than nationals economically, socially and culturally. Education is an essential tool and a human right not only to protect their identity and dignity but also to improve their situation. If the right of non-national children is denied, they would stay in the lowest status of society for ever.

We also have to note that a lot of minority communities consist of both nationals and non-nationals. Many minority communities including non-nationals have established minority community schools. However, there are serious obstacles to non-nationals. For example, the Japanese government officially ignores the right to education of non-nationals. They can be accepted into Japanese public schools, meanwhile the government insists that it has no obligation to provide them with compulsory education. Therefore, there are numerous non-national children who do not go to any school. Moreover, since the government has not granted minority community schools legal status as regular ordinary schools, students of these schools are not guaranteed to enter or transfer to Japanese schools. The government has legally discriminated against these children.

We endorse the second section of the draft recommendations, which state that equality and non-discrimination are the primary core principles of education. There are several crucial instructions in international human rights law including General Recommendation XXX of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Declaration on the Rights of persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities, which support the right to education of non-nationals. In conclusion, we strongly urge this Forum to recommend the securing of the right to education for all non-nationals.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.