

Permanent Mission of Syria

Thank you madam chair,

I would like to thank you. I would like to thank you and her excellency the Special Expert on Minorities for arranging this important meeting.

Before actually moving into the exercising the right, I would to support the statement or the pledge that we made this morning on avoiding the use of the term “minority” and instead use the term “components”. And actually this is what we do in Syria, we use the term “components of the society”. Especially that we have a large number of them, we have so many components.

We are proud of all of them, including the Kurds. Kurds have been a part of our society for a very very long time. And they have the rights that every other citizen has. And like what the representative of the YASA group has claimed, they have been in many important positions including the prime minister, ministers, judiciary, legislative, and part of the government and non-government sections. They have been active components.

As to his actual statement as to what is going on in schools that teach Kurds, I would like to make out a very important point that we are a developing country. We have our own problems that are faced in all parts of Syria. The right to education is a very important right, we respect it as much as possible. Education is free for all in Syria, including the Kurds.

Having said that our development needs and our development priorities have made it not so easy to provide this right to education for free for all, including the Kurds. The notions that they have been 5 per cent of students carrying on, this is his own experience. I am sorry to say that this is not supported by formal statistics. And if he has had a bad experience as a teacher it does not mean that the people are sent to schools to be punished, as he says. On the other side, expelling students is not our policy in Syrian universities if a student is expelled this is merely due to the affect that he has violated university rules and regulations.

Thank you.