

Mr. Vernor Muñoz Villalobos - Special Rapporteur on the right to education (concluding remarks) in Spanish

Thank you. I think that these days of intense work we should feel satisfaction at all that we have learned, the many varied lessons. Certainly for me it has been very useful because the topic deals with the human rights, which are dealt with the many special procedures.

But moreover because I will be submitting a report to the council of Human Rights on the right to education of migrant and refugee population groups. And in the case of minority groups as this is a related topic and as a lot of refugee and migrants are also from minority populations. Therefore is of particular value to me. And of course, there is an open invitation for you to send input.

The issue of minorities, well there has been a lot of discussions if the term is correct or not, it is a term that appears in many human rights instruments. But it has to have an adjective attached, because belonging to a minority ethnic, cultural or religious does not necessarily mean that this is a group necessarily discriminated against. And there are many minorities who are in fact running the economy and the social life of any country and who would rather remain anonymous to protect themselves from possible attacks against them.

Now I think that we should add some thoughts of those of Mr Thornberry to perhaps present a broader and more complex panorama. First point I would like to make, and I am just going to raise 4 or 5, is that of legislation. I talk of legislation because if there is an issue that we should really be stressing is the obligation upon states to protect the human rights of minority population. SO its fundamental that states not only adopt national legal instrument, but ratify as soon as possible international human rights conventions and regional legal instruments, which enable them to better protect the human rights of minority populations in these instruments of course have to be regulated in such a way that they provide or take into account the depth and needs of peoples living in the different geographical regions of the world. But it is not just a matter of adopting instruments it is also a matter of interpreting the standards that are set out in those instrument. And in this sense translation is required of the concepts in international human rights documents into local languages.

We live in a world with 193 states, with more that 10000 ethnicities groups. And each of those ethnic groups has its own [wealth], they have their own cultural and social means of expression, and of course different languages. And this de-construction of human rights is necessary if there

are to be significant lessons on rights. And learning is only possible if it happens as part of on-going direct participation. Participation basically means – an independent possibility to acquire knowledge and not just to be a part of decisions taken by groups in power. That is why we should argue for autonomy that will enable us on the one hand to construct a learning process of human rights which on the one hand assign responsibilities to perpetrators and on the other hand enable re-conciliation of cultural interests with the standards set out in the human rights instruments.

And I will conclude by wishing you all success and happiness. And once again congratulating Gay McDougal and Chairperson of this forum who has most successfully conducted these two days. Thank you.