

Thank you Madam Chair, the Association of Human Rights in Kurdistan Iran would like to draw your attention to the discrimination facing the Kurdish people in Iran on work and social security. While Iranian Kurdistan is rich in terms of natural resources such as oil, agriculture and minerals, one of the richest regions of Iran this area is one of the most discriminated and impoverished of the country. The Islamic Republic of Iran carries out a policy of de-Kurdisation since it came to power. Young Kurds are obliged to leave Kurdistan with their families because there is no work. The authorities do not invest in developing enterprises or infrastructures, all the mineral and oil resources are extracted in Kurdistan but exploited in the other provinces. Furthermore the ecological discoveries are usually taken out of the area impeding its cultural and economical development.

Moreover "guzenej" is a practice used to marginalise Kurds by expressly denying them employment in the state sector as well as in parts of the private sector. Such impairs equality of opportunity and treatment for all the Kurds that seek jobs in the public sector and to a minor extent in the private one. Any state jobs whether a teacher, a policeman, a shopkeeper, or parliamentarian is selected accordingly. It should be emphasised that the state is by far the main employer in Iran. State universities are equally using discriminatory conditions to limit the admission of the Kurdish students. This obviously implies a negative impact on the participation in the economic life. The Iranian Kurdistan also suffers badly from eight years of Iran-Iraq war and has become one of the most mine filled in the Middle East.

Nevertheless the authorities have neglected it in demining programmes which seriously hampered development of the agriculture and industry. Another challenge facing the Kurds in Iran is the use of their own language in the economic life. Under article 15 of the Iranian constitution, the official language is Persian. The same article stipulates that the use of original and tribal languages is allowed in addition to Persian in the press and mass media as well as in schools. However the mention of original language is only a facade since the Kurdish language is not taught in schools. The Kurdish newspapers are regularly closed down and journalists arrested.

In conclusion, Madam Chair, the economical discriminations facing the Kurds in Iran call for urgent measures such as extensive demining programmes, effective use of the Kurdish language in the public life and reforming the laws restricting the participation of minorities in the economic life. It is clear that discrimination against the Kurds will not be improved without consideration for the international community, we therefore urge the United Nations and this forum to address this situation and take effective measures in protecting the human rights of Kurdish people and other minorities in Iran, thank you very much for your attention.