

Ahwazi Organisation for the Defence of Human Rights

Male, English language

Thank you Madam Chairperson,

My name is [Yakob Neisee] from the Ahwazi Organisation for the Defence of Human Rights and I am speaking to you on behalf of one of the most discriminated minorities of the world, the people of Ahwazi Iran. Distinguished participants of this Forum, in her notes on guaranteeing the rights of religious minorities the Independent Expert, Rita Iszak, refers to Article 27 of the ICCPR, which provides that persons belonging to minorities shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion or to use their own language. All of these right are systematically denied to the people of Ahwaz and their situation in the international community. Ahwaz has a substantial population of around 8 million Arabs, living in the South West of Iran. The region contains around 90 per cent of the Iranian Oil and Gas resources. And thus is of high strategic interest for the Iranian government, which pursues and aggressive policy of discrimination towards the native population, be it Sunni, [Mendanians] or Christians. None of these Ahwazi Arabs are allowed to name their children according to their culture and religion. I as well as all of the members of my family and the majority of our community therefore have two names, one official and one that is real. None Ahwazi, Sunni, Mendanians or Christians are further allowed to become officers in the army; no university or school are allowed to offer classes in Arabic; and be part of the ethnic minorities is often an exclusion criteria of job interviews. This situation also affects the criminal justice system. Sentences out of perpetration are handed down on members of the Ahwaz communities. Capital punishment for political prisoners is the custom to any opposition to such practices is considered as a war crime. Distinguished participants, draft resolution 51 on the prevention of violence and protection of security of religious minorities underlines that states should ensure those cases of intimidation, harassment, persecution and other serious human violations are immediately investigated and that appropriate measures should be made available to this minority groups in order to document cases of violence or intimidation, unfortunately at present the opposite is the norm. Thank you.