

6th session of the Forum on Minority Issues

IV. Promotion and protection of the identity of religious minorities

Professional Development and Research Center (PDRC)

Thank you, Madame Chair.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank officer of the high commission for human rights for selecting me for 2013 Minority fellowship program and also for the opportunity to attend the 6th Forum on Minority Issues. Today, I am going to talk about Muslims, one of the religious minorities in Nepal. Until the 1990s, Nepal was constitutionally declared a Hinduist state, the only one in the world. Nepal is now a secular country and Muslims constitute the third largest religious group. Muslims share (...) of the total national population and their settlements can be found all across the country. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the main challenges facing Muslims in Nepal. The government is indifferent in regard to recognise the distinct identity of Muslims in Nepal. Two, Muslims in Nepal are experiencing unequal treatment. Three, Muslims have poor access to education. Four, Muslim women are facing triple discrimination as being Nepali women, as being a Muslim and, of course, by being a Muslim woman. Based on these challenges, I would like to make the following recommendations for the promotion and protection of Muslim's human rights in Nepal: under the bases of article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights we call upon the state to recognise the distinct identity of Muslims in the upcoming constitutions. On the basis of the point 10 of the Draft Recommendation, article 1, paragraph 1, we call upon the state to guarantee the proportional representation of Muslims in all levels of state mechanisms. On the basis of the point 36 of the Draft Recommendation, we call upon the state to acknowledge and provide the sources for the uninterrupted and effective (...) system. On the basis of the point 30 of the Draft Recommendations, we call upon the state to take measures to safeguard the rights of Muslim women within the Muslim family law.

Thank you, Madame Chair.