

Dear Chairman

Introduction

Thank you Mr. Chairperson

I am Elona Vellu, a human rights activist and lawyer belonging to the Egyptian Community, which is included in Roma minority in Albania and I'm talking on behalf of my community. I will be speaking under the topic of Minorities and the exercise of police Powers.

Clarification of the issue

Most of the Roma and Egyptian community are deprived of education, have low incomes and suffer from marginalization and discrimination not only in society but from the police and the justice system.

Both communities have problems in equal treatment especially when dealing with the police and detention centers while awaiting their trials. They have been arrested, and kept in detention centers without being informed about their rights at the time of their arrest, or the reason of their arrest and extensively delayed in being charged formally for the alleged crime that they were arrested for.

Staying in detention beyond the legal time limit, they are often deprived of the opportunity for an interpreter of their language, or given the possibility to be informed and assisted by a free legal representative, which is guaranteed in the constitution and the penal code system of Albania.

All these abuses by the police are multiplied for them due to the lack of knowledge or awareness about their rights. This in turn creates an illegal process by the Police system and is in violation of the articles 9 and 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In the light of these Violations we thus Recommend:

1. That the State of Albania should respect and adhere to the Articles of the ICCPR, which the State has ratified.
2. As stated in the UN Declaration for Minorities, the State of Albania should take measures to prevent the use of illegal force by the police against Roma & Egyptian Minorities, especially towards women, with respect to arrests and arbitrary detention.

3. The State must take measures to recruit members of Roma & Egyptian Communities into the police force and other law enforcement agencies, so that this environment of discrimination may be reduced.

Thank You