

8th session of the Forum on Minority Issues

Fokus Women on Item III

Thank you, Mr president I am from Fokus Women from Sri Lanka. The issue aligns with number 24 of the draft recommendation. The organisation I work with, founded many minority women in Sri Lanka face multiple challenges in various in accessing judicial services in their own languages. This was found through a statistical study through 2014 and the language in the northern province of Sri Lanka. The issues are the minority women go to police station they do not find (...) at the desk.

The second one is the conversation with police are prone to miscommunication due to the language barrier. While in some instances women have been their own translator from minority communities thousand do not do this, but every single woman cannot do this.

Then the Ministry of Languages and Social Integration also admitted that the women are asked to write their complaint on a piece of paper, but those women in minority communities cannot present their issues on a piece of paper, and the complaints would be translated only in the night of the next day.

So first, this makes the remedy process very slow. Second, it further (...) of women in the justice system. Finally, above all, it raises the important question of the lack of language rights of minority communities in the country that do not speak the official language.

Article 26 and 27 of ICCPR (...) State Party stresses the protection of rights of minorities in the state to prohibit discrimination of any ground including language and ethnicity. The recommendation number 15 of the forum on minority issues in the 4th session guaranteeing the rights of minority women and girls, especially specifically it talks about women's access to justice and unfortunately, we have to bring the same issue up to four years.

Mr President, therefore, we urge the state of Sri Lanka to recruit (...) women police officers to each women and children in order to access the judicial services in their own language.

Thank you.