

UN Minority Forum 24-25 November 2015.

Statement by Norway

President,

Norway shares the Special Rapporteur's concern for those human rights violations committed in the administration of criminal justice against minorities, due to their minority status.

We should add that we are equally concerned by the obviously increased surveillance of members of a particular religious faith, which is taking place.

The Special Rapporteur mentions in her report the often-excessive use of force and ill treatment in detention against religious minorities. There is indeed reasons for great concern.

Human rights defendes play an important role in defending minorities and we would like to highlight the importance of protecting and promoting their work.

President,

The Special Representative has presented a number of important recommendations. We would like briefly to comment a few of them.

First, the risk of discrimination seems to increase when the police forces do not reflect the diversity within the population. Equality before the court is key.

Second, the Special Rapporteur has mentioned one extremely important point in her recommendations, which we would like to support. Political leaders should speak out publicly against discrimination and refrain from making statements indiscriminately linking a religion, national language, race or ethnicity to criminal behavior or terrorism.

We likewise agree that political parties should refrain from spreading inflammatory and racist rhetoric. We would, *however*, warn against 'effective action against such discourse', which the Special Rapporteur seems to suggest in her recommendations.

The contribution of the authorities could be to bring a perspective of respect for all human beings into the public discourse rather than 'take effective action', which gives connotations to censorship.

Third, we fully agree that relevant training of law enforcement and judicial officials in minority rights, other human rights as well as cultural competence are of great importance and support the recommendation of involving minority groups in the production of these manuals and code of conducts.

Here, and finally, we would like to add a word of warning: minority women may be subject to double discrimination – both because she is a woman *and* part of a minority. This is a serious concern we all need to be particularly aware of.

Thank you, President.