

Association des Nations de l'Hexagone

24th November 2016

9th Session of the Forum on Minority Issues

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,

The Association of French Nations, the message which I am representing the various minorities administered and not recognized by the French State, notably the Savoisiens, the Corsicans and the Bretons.

The Association of French Nations affirms its support and solidarity with all national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, especially those who are currently experiencing tragedies and atrocities due to conflicts or disasters. We wish to express our deepest concern about the tragic situation of the Yezidis and support the Special Rapporteur's request for an in-depth investigation into the crimes they have been subjected to.

The Association of French Nations stresses the importance of protecting minorities in the event of a humanitarian crisis. Indeed, all minorities carry a religious, cultural, linguistic and historical heritage that participates in the diversity of humanity. This diversity must be the foundation of an international multicultural society and is essential to create and establish security and peace among peoples. If a minority is affected by a humanitarian crisis, it is a part of our common heritage that risks disappearing before being passed on to future generations.

It is important that all UN member states respect the right of minorities in the territory they administer. This includes the adoption of a clear legislative and legal framework, a definition and recognition of the notion of minorities and the ratification of the various international human rights treaties on minority rights.

As the future is unpredictable, the protection and respect of minorities must be taken into account at all times, even if there is no sign of humanitarian crisis.

Article 1 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities emphasizes the responsibility of states for adopting measures to protect and promote the rights and identities of minorities.

The Association of French Nations recommends that France, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, recognizes and respects in its legislation the minorities and their local peculiarities. This presupposes overcoming the purely centralized logic of the French state by redistributing skills and by respecting the territories and cultures that history has left us.

The Association of the Nations of France recommends the establishment of a mechanism of international law exclusively for the vigilance of the rights of minorities.

Finally, the Association of French Nations reaffirms its desire to favour and to promote solidarity, mutual aid and work among the minorities of the world in order to enable those experiencing serious humanitarian difficulties to benefit from the experiences and support of other minorities.

Thank you.