

**International Educational Development (INC) on item IV**

**9<sup>th</sup> session of the Forum on Minority Issues - ohchr**

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Thank you Mr President. My name is [Ava Haman]. I would like to draw your attention to the situation of Kurdish women facing risks of major humanitarian crisis due to the widespread phenomena of suicide for living under multiple levels of gender, ethnic, economic and political oppression. Iran's ethnic groups, in particular the Kurds, live in constant state driven discrimination and persecution. While empowered Kurdish women are the ones fighting the barbaric Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, the ones trapped in the Islamic Republic of Iran are victims of nationalistic chauvinism of the State combined with male chauvinism. Today, the Kurdish majority province of Kermanshah has some of the highest rates of female self-immolation in the world. Suffering the outrageous misogynistic lies of Iran, Kurdish women are further handicapped by politically driven economic underdevelopment of the region. And are denied basic human rights under laws such as polygamy and child marriage. Sadly suicide burning became a common way of protest and tends to be as the only solution to end an excruciating life. Suicide by burning makes less than one per cent of all suicide in the developed world. In Iran, up to 71 per cent of suicide are conducted via self-immolation most of which are committed by women as young as 8 years of age to 28 in the Kurdish region. Most of them are little educated, married and poor. Unemployment and underemployment in the Kurdish region triggers vulnerability and stress about future. It also creates a sense of loss and loneliness, especially of reduced social support and the lack of health insurance coupled with Kurds' lack of trust in authorities. The chain reaction can lead to problems such as poor problem solving skills and inability to consider the consequences of an attempted self-immolation, which includes disfigurement and disability. If the international community, especially the United Nations, does not act in time, stopping the spread of frustration and disappointment among ostracized women who are pushed to the edge, suicide will be further normalised. Extending its vicious circle and furthering the epidemic leaving children without their mothers and the communities deeply scarred. It is therefore, the international community's responsibility to intervene Iran's ethnic oppression combined with laws that consider women [supplement]. Thank you very much.