

Male, Spanish

Thank you very much miss Rita Iszak, Speciall Rapporteur on Minority Issues. Indeed, as it was said earlier by the High Commissioner, you are nearly at the end of your mandate and this has come up on us [unaware]. Ladies and gentlemen, excellences, I think it will be difficult but not impossible to deny that mankind has always had to face up to numerous conflicts. Conflicts are expressed in many ways. The main challenges facing us in life, I must say after virtually 26 years of being in the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination that racism and racial discrimination has not disappeared and they are very far from disappearing from the face of the earth. Its manifestations are [mirrored] in nature, its persistence and scope are worrying. They differ depending on the cultures and places where they occur. I believe, it has been emphasized by those who spoke before me, we are facing the type of conflict where we are not sure whether there are any [precedencies] for it. Migration control and integration related national and international issues are putting the principles of humanitarian assistance and development. They are putting the spotlight on human rights in this context particularly having an adverse effect on the rights of minorities. There is no consensus yet. I am not saying his, but UNHCR has. It is pointed out that there are no lasting sustainable solutions have been found for long-term for refugees. And only humanitarian re-settlement can alleviate the suffering of these people. Despite this fact the levels of humanitarian assistance and of re-settlement are virtually the same as those that were applicable in 2009. This is what the UNHCR has concluded. There are also restrictive policies in place that have been introduced by states and in fact when we observe certain protests in some countries relating [walls] that are supposed to be build, one can only conclude that we are living through an era where the growth of walls that [wires] the closure of borders is becoming painful and difficult process. Border is not only a place where someone's entry is hindered; it is also a horizon which one can use to look further afield. And right now this horizon is being closed off. Let us bare in mind the fact that inter alia among other factors as it has been said by those who spoke before me, sectarian violence has and spiralled upwards and reached unread of levels between 2006 and 2007. Territorial conquests of recent history have been accompanied by generalised war crimes and this includes homicides, murders, abductions, massive destructions, which have forced hundreds and thousands of people and above all religious minorities, ethnic and national minorities to leave their homes. We are speaking about millions of individuals who have been displaced because of conflicts. There are many different scenarios and many painful hot spots and all of these imply that it is absolutely central to protect minorities. If we view this from a perspective, which sometime back existed we would say that we need to work on protecting these minorities but given the current humanitarian crisis, the risks are even worse and disproportionate. I would like to stress in this Forum today that here it is not only a question of protecting and/or recognising the identity of minorities which is already a major issue, but we need to protect them from exclusion, from racism and the fact that they are treated as non-persons. But also we are at the point and time where what we need to do it to preserve to safe-guard their lives. I have a personal perception

that it is the existence of evil is proven by the fact that in life. Evil indeed is the deeper and harder vision of what we mean when we talk about attacks on lives. Therefore approaches based on recognition of the so-called universality of the individuals should not be converted into an empty husk. We must ensure that peoples' lives are protected in each and every instance, and this covers each individual belonging to a minority. This is why I think this Forum has been established and that there are so many people who are struggling to preserve minorities. I believe in order to bring about a significant mood of change it will be necessary to overcome traditional and political fragmented approaches and rather we must promote coordination within governments among international and local bodies, non-governmental organisations and we will require a much more holistic mind-set embodying all of the different sectors; improving the links between the humanitarian systems and development processes. In conclusion I would like to say that it will be vital to overcome the lack of political will. Which is often the factor of today's real situation to find resources to do away with crisis and also to lay aside discourse on security in the face of terrorism, which has polluted healthy thinking on the way in which we deal with our borders. This has led to a situation, which is incompatible with the protection of persons and in our context basically the protection of minorities. I think that we are being appealed to act in this way and we must not forget this in the current juncture.