

Mr. Chairman,

First, we would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for convening this meeting and for her efforts to promote and protect the rights of the minorities in the course of her mandate. We also thank all the panelists for their insightful presentations and contributions to this forum.

We attach high importance to the prevention of humanitarian crisis inter alia through protecting and promoting the rights of the minorities. Employing early warning mechanisms is essential, inter alia via combating racial discrimination, intolerance and hatred.

The Special Rapporteur rightly mentions in her report that minorities may face particular challenges in the search for durable solutions. Addressing the issue of repatriation, Madam Rita Izsak mentions that minorities may face obstacles if they fled due to the violence perpetrated against them because of their minority status and if the root causes of such violence have not been resolved.

The global displacement challenges, ongoing conflicts, including in Syria, also significantly affect Armenia.

As a host country, Armenia provides refuge to more than 20000 persons displaced due to the conflict in Syria who have sought protection in Armenia. They are being provided with access to civil, economic, social and cultural rights similar to those enjoyed by the citizens, and with the possibilities of facilitated naturalisation.

We would like to highlight the important role of the international and regional organizations, as well as the civil society in addressing the human rights violations against the minorities. Another obstacle to ensuring durable solution for the minorities affected by humanitarian crisis rising from conflicts is the impunity for past crimes. Unless the past human rights violations and atrocity crimes committed against the minorities are properly acknowledged and addressed, the search for the durable solutions and reconciliation and the role of the international community can be essential in this regard.

The international community should further recognize the vulnerability of National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities in crisis situations, develop more targeted strategies and invest more to respond to them.