

## Norwegian Statement to the UN Minority Forum, 24-25 November, 2016

*Chair*

350 words

We would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for bringing in a minority perspective in the discussion of humanitarian crisis.

In her recommendations to this year's forum, the Special Rapporteur has brought insight to the discussion and is mentioning a number of key elements.

As the Special Rapporteur has suggested, it is indeed important to ensure registration of all those affected or displaced by crisis. However, we must, keep in mind the reluctance of affected minorities to identify themselves as minority, whether, ethnic, religious or otherwise, in fear of further discrimination or violence, being one. This must be tackled.

The Special Rapporteur's has suggested that the displaced population should be free to specify any characteristic relative to their identity, and equally free to choose whether or not they are to be identify as belonging to a minority group. This is of great importance.

*Chair,*

In December, here in Geneva, the Norwegian Church Aid in cooperation with the World Council of Churches will launch a report on how minorities are affected by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. The report aims at giving humanitarian actors advice as to the needs of minorities. The report concludes that humanitarian responses need to take the diversity of religious minority into account in order to meet critical needs of people affected by the conflicts and give short- as well as well as long-term approaches.

*Chair,*

Finally, three brief observations from the Norwegian delegation:

*First,* Human disasters may be very different. Natural disasters may bring true hardship over a minority community, living in region which is difficult to access, while, an internal armed conflict may bring minorities directly into the armed conflict. That is why of many reasons, the Special Rapporteur's call for disaggregated data seems legitimate.

*Second,* Norway would also like to bring to your attention the challenge of multiple discrimination. Women are often discriminated and fall victims to sexual violence. Special attention should be given to this challenge.

*Third,* more knowledge of the situation for minorities in humanitarian crisis, may help us all in developing risk assessment and early warning mechanisms.

Thank you!