

Oral Statement - UN Forum on Minority Issues

Thank you Madame Chair,

The NGO Platform on the Right to Education welcomes the organization of this Forum. We consider it urgent to offer mechanisms to guarantee the realization of the right to education to stateless people. SDG4 concerning education focuses on inclusiveness and equality as tools to combat educational disparities.

Today, we would like to highlight two dimensions of the promotion of the right to education for stateless people: lifelong learning as an essential part of the right to education and education as a cultural right.

As the former Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education pointed out, "right to fundamental education is not limited by age or gender, it extends to children, young people, adults, including older persons".

Statelessness disproportionately affects vulnerable groups such as women, children and migrants, who do not receive appropriate education, either for the lack of identification documents or for not having a stable position. State members ought to find a remedy for such situations and lifelong learning programs should be made available for those stateless adults without fundamental education. The denial of lifelong learning reiterates existing inequalities. As stated in the Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, the promotion of education for stateless individuals should happen at all levels, not only the primary one.

Secondly, education is also a cultural right. Educational programs for stateless people should focus on the importance of education in the development of personal identity. Alfred Fernandez, who has been the coordinator of the Platform since its foundation, used to say that denying such right means depriving someone of his humanity.

In his last report, the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues highlighted that education allows for a better integration of minorities into society and protects their identity. It would be beneficial to take into consideration minorities' cultures, languages and traditions when drafting school curricula to boost inclusiveness and respect for diversity among younger generations.

We advocate for the eradication of practices that arbitrarily deny people a nationality on the basis of discriminatory parameters such as ethnicity, religion or language and we endorse the implementation of specific stateless determination procedures (SDPs).

We align with the call of the this Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues to engage all spheres of society for the correct implementation of the rights of minorities, with due regard to those of stateless people. The cooperation of national and international human rights institutions, private actors and civil society is essential for the achievement of this goal.

Thank you

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