

Piotr Kwapisiewicz / 2019 OHCHR Minority Fellow

Intervention to item number 1: "Human rights and minority language education."

Thank you, Chairperson

I am an OHCHR minority fellow, from the Jewish community in Poland, and I am a member of the Jewish Association Czulent.

Education is a pillar of an inclusive society. Minority education is not a privilege, but a right. It is a matter of human dignity. Chairperson, Minority education in central-east Europe is implemented occasionally and mostly by civic groups.

In central and east Europe, xenophobia, antisemitism, and islamophobia dominate public discourse, thus the main objective of all public policies should be based on educational minority rights. The proposed approach will respond to the goals of education as contained in Article 26 subsection 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Education-based on human rights is a powerful and effective tool for empowering and including minorities. Children belonging to minority groups face discrimination based bullying in a non-inclusive atmosphere.

Taking note of my submissions today,

1. I humbly urge central European states to invite the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues to start a constructive consultation on minority rights, adding a minority's perspective to public policies on education. This will lead to integration within societies and promote social inclusion and cohesion.
2. Secondly, we recommend the Visegrad member states to develop comprehensive action to combat xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and islamophobia in public discourse.

3. Our last recommendation to central European states is to include minority languages in official education programs and frameworks. This will allow for the building of a society in which the heritage of minorities is perceived as an important element of our multi-cultural society.

Thank you Chairperson,

It was a great honor to take part in this discussion.