

Statement Number 2: Public policy objectives for education in, and the teaching of, minority languages-

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I am a former stateless person. My name is Mueda Nawanat. I belong to Karen ethnic minority from Thailand.

Did you know that the 70 minority groups in Thailand make up 10 percent of its population? Despite living in the country for hundreds of years, a lot of us belonging to minority groups are not accepted as Thai Citizens.

My Karen community is slowly losing its language, and therefore its identity.

There are many examples where schools are not allowing children from ethnic minority backgrounds, to speak their own language, let alone promote it!

Article 70 of the Thai Constitution mentions that the state should encourage and protect the livelihood, tradition and culture of minorities. Moreover, Thailand also has Cabinet Resolution of 3 August. 2010 "Restoration of the Karen Traditional Livelihood"

I urge the Government of Thailand to:

1. **Firstly**, Follow its own policies and laws as mentioned in the Thai constitution and cabinet resolution of 3 August. 2010 which clearly mentions Promoting the minority language and local culture and providing a budget for the same.
2. **Secondly**, Public policy should aim at providing more resources for protecting my Karen language and therefore the identity my community.
3. **Lastly**, Thailand should encourage and protect the mother tongue of all the minorities in Thailand specially the Karen people as a human rights.

If a former stateless person like me can become a lawyer and fight for her people and their rights, imagine the wonders that await if my people get the education they deserve and can practice the language they own.