

Oral Statement of Association Solidarité Internationale pour la Paix
12th session of the Forum on minority issues in Geneva,
29 November 2019

Item 4: Effective practices for education in, and the teaching of, minority languages

Ladys and Gentlemen
Madam Chair,

My name is Viyan Sido, I am doctor from Germany, and I am originally Kurd from Syria. I am honored to speak here today and would like to use this opportunity to amplify my view and the dire situation so many refugees or minorities, especially from Syria, are in. I hope that through my words and my experience I can offer an insight that might spark action and awareness amongst you.

I had the luck of being born and raised in Germany. My parents were students when they came from Syria to Germany for a better education for themselves and their children. From what my Kurdish parents had given up and left behind, I had a sheltered and safe childhood in Germany. I had the chance to go to school, get the education to go to medical school and become a doctor and do what I am passionate about. I got all the chances a child can wish for but now I am not willing to turn the other way.

I have had the chance to volunteer several times in medical clinics specifically giving medical aid in and outside refugee camps to their residents on the greek island. I have stitched self-inflicted cuts, I have dressed knife wounds, I have listened to stories of torture and loss and much much more that is hard to forget.

In addition, I think it is important that the international community direct more attention to people or minorities who seek protection and a safe future. An incredibly important factor is education both for local receiving communities as well as refugees to ensure mutual respect, awareness and collaboration that can be beneficial on both ends. Access to education is a privilege in many cases but should be a high priority and therefore more accessible especially to children. Not only on a social level do we need to turn our attention to displaced people but also on a policy level.

People need to be reintegrated, reconciled and listened to and the best way to do that is ensure their rights, safety and educational support in as many ways as possible.

In my final words, I would like to turn my attention to you, the audience. The issue that I have presented has been going on for a long while and will consistently be ongoing when looking at current political dynamics. Giving medical aid, social support, financial support or just creating awareness and dialogue between people can make a difference.

Thank you very much.