

## Language Education And The Empowerment Of Minority Women And Girls

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Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

My name is Mahmood Abdul Matheen and I am a Global Fellow at OHCHR and I am a Sri Lankan Muslim. I would like to begin by congratulating our newly elected president His Excellency Mr. Gotabaya Rajapaksa. As a proud but concerned citizen from the muslim Minority community I take this given opportunity to raise certain issues which could help improve the situation of my country.

Among the many issues we face as Sri Lankans one of the key issues pertaining to education is that of segregation of schools based on religion. This practice has only pushed the different communities in Sri Lanka away from one another.

Privatization of schools & the declining quality of govt. education have added to this problem.

Sri Lanka has one of the highest literacy rates in south Asia yet, census figures reveal that only 12% from the Muslim community enter university and that is 8% in total population.

I would urge the newly elected government to kindly look into the following:

- That it ensures that there are equal opportunities towards access to education for all citizens irrespective of religion, culture or language
- Non segregation of schools while ensuring protection and promotion of minority languages,
- Teaching should become a profession in Sri Lanka with a monitoring body, internship, code of ethics which will enhance the education system.
- Professional teaching methodology & salary increment for teachers specially women and girls
- Ensuring that there is no room for the language of hate speech in class rooms
- That students and all others are able to exercise religion & their culture freely without forced assimilation while pursuing their education
- Religion never to be used for political benefits & international politics should not be a barrier for the human rights that's why we raise this internationally.

**Commenté [ms1]:** How has this added to the problem stated above? Can you try and draw a link?

**Commenté [ms2]:** Sentence not clear. Clarify please?

**Commenté [ms3]:** Since the topic you have chosen is human rights and minority language education, it is important to focus on how minority languages are being neglected in Sri Lanka or perhaps the importance of minority languages in non formal education, which ever is relevant in your case.

**Commenté [ms4]:** Mention which languages you are referring to

**Commenté [ms5]:** Is it not a profession already?

**Commenté [ms6]:** You may want to skip this as it may be too general? Just my suggestion

Sri Lanka being a state party to all international human rights treaties, the constitution contain a section on the protection of fundamental rights which includes a number of human rights guaranteeing equality before law & equal protection of the law, non-discrimination as well as freedom of thought conscience & religion.

**Commenté [ms7]:** You need to draw a link to education , minority language and HR. in the constitution and international law.

We Muslims will support the government remove all restrictions those that are the barriers for minorities to fulfill the obligations for the development of the country & feel no fear minorities as a threat.

**Commenté [ms8]:** This sentence needs clarity please.

Thank you