

When tackling issues of discrimination faced by minorities it is essential they are involved in the solution and decision making rather than treated only as the victims. At the Sikh Human Rights Group we believe a pluralist approach is the only solution that will fully support minorities globally. We request more efforts are made to ensure civil societies are involved in all decisions that will directly or indirectly impact minorities.

In the Special Rapporteur's report, A/77/246 it is clear the human rights of minorities are at upmost importance and yet we are not treating it like an emergency, if we were civil societies working directly with the minorities would be making the decisions rather than the countries who are often guilty for some of the worst treatment of minorities.

We are continuing to seek peace while looking at the world through the gaze of one civilisation and therefore are enforcing this mindset that minority people should be asking for rights, this is by default reiterating this idea that one community is above another. We need language to be pluralistic in nature, as the Special Rapporteur on minority issues pointed out in the concept notes prepared for the four regional forums held this year, the Declaration must be better understood, acknowledged and implemented and using pluralist language is a way of achieving this.

As stated, the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities adopted in 30 years ago in 1992, remains the only global instrument for the protection of minority rights. This Declaration as successful as it is does not go far enough to protect minorities who are facing more threats to their humanity than ever before.

We at SHRG, with the support of many other NGOs globally, believe the need to adopt a Declaration on Diversity is needed now more than ever. As the Special Rapporteur on minority issues pointed out, minorities are more than three quarters of the world's stateless and that their numbers are only increasing due to the impacts of climate change, war and food insecurity.

A Declaration on Diversity allows us to challenge the universalistic narrative we all live by, and encourages us to start to look at things with a more pluralistic mindset. We need the conceptual language of conventions to be pluralistic in nature and to reflect the wisdom of different civilisations. It is then that the Declaration will be better understood, embraced and observed.