

Advance Unedited Version

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Human Rights Council

Forum on Minority Issues

Sixteenth session

30 November–1 December 2023

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

Provisional agenda and annotations*

Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
2. Challenges to Inclusion & Equality: barriers in social and economic participation of minorities.
3. Socio-economic Empowerment.
4. Legal and Structural Approaches to More Inclusive Societies.
5. Positive Examples, Good Practices and Approaches, and Space or More.
6. Concluding remarks.

Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

Dates and venue

Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 6/15 and 19/23, the sixteenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues will be held on 30 November and 1 December 2023. Meetings will be held in Room XX of the Palais des Nations at Geneva.

Documents for the session will be made available on the web page of the Forum.¹

Opening of the session

The President of the Human Rights Council will deliver an opening statement, which will be followed by statements from a Senior Representative from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and the two Co-Chairs of the Forum.

* The present report was submitted after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent developments.

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/events/forums/2023/sixteenth-session-forum-minority-issues>.

Panel discussions

During the two-day session, participants will be invited to contribute to four panel discussions organized under the theme “Minorities and Cohesive Societies: Equality, Social Inclusion, and Socio-economic Participation”. Each session will be introduced by three panellists.

Recommendations emanating from the panel discussions will be included in the outcome document that the Special Rapporteur will present to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-fifth session.

2. Challenges to Inclusion & Equality: barriers in social and economic participation of minorities

Under this item, the Forum will address the systemic and structural challenges and discrimination minority groups may face, including the unique obstacles for minority women and girls; look at disadvantages such as language or other requirements or lack of educational opportunities or resources in regions where minorities are concentrated and explore policies and practices that result or exacerbate minority exclusion or disadvantages.

3. Socio-economic Empowerment

Under this item, the Forum will look at ways to amplify economic participation of people belonging to minority groups and emphasizing equal opportunities in both society, employment, and entrepreneurship, with special attention to the economic support of minority migrants and refugees. In addition, it will aim to identify strategies to engage and empower minority youth by tapping into educational and employment prospects, and examples of inclusive policies, including in the use of minority languages, in terms of access to services and increased employment opportunities.

4. Legal and Structural Approaches to More Inclusive Societies

Under this item, the Forum will explore legislation, policies, and the provision of public goods and services which are respective of the rights of minorities to equality without discrimination to address healthcare, educational, and economic inequalities, including through addressing proportionate infrastructure or development investments, examine how legislation can increase opportunities that honour and represent minority identity, and discuss the importance of ensuring equal access without discrimination to technology and fostering digital literacy within minority communities.

5. Positive Examples, Good Practices and Approaches, and Space or More

Under this item, the Forum will start with discussing legal and institutional frameworks and policies that managed to effectively safeguard minority rights and promoted their inclusion in the society. Furthermore, given that the scope of discussions of the Forum cannot be possibly exhaustive, the Forum will also welcome participants to share additional information on issues of high importance on the inclusion of minorities in cohesive societies for further consideration.

6. Concluding remarks

The Co-Chairs of the Forum on Minority Issues and the Special Rapporteur on minority issues will make concluding remarks, drawing on the outcomes of the two days of discussion and including proposals for follow-up steps to be taken by all Forum participants.

Annex

Programme of work of the sixteenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues

<i>Date/time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Programme</i>
Thursday, 30 November 2023		
10 a.m.–1 p.m.	Adoption of the agenda and programme of work	<p>Opening of the Forum on Minority Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and opening remarks by the President of the Human Rights Council • Remarks by a Senior Representative from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights • Remarks by the Special Rapporteur on minority issues • Remarks by the Co-Chairs of the Forum on Minority Issues
	1. Challenges to Inclusion & Equality: barriers in social and economic participation of minorities	Panel discussion
3–6 p.m.	2. Socio-economic Empowerment	Panel discussion
Friday, 1 December 2023		
10 a.m.–1 p.m.	3. Legal and Structural Approaches to More Inclusive Societies	Panel discussion
3–6 p.m.	4. Positive Examples, Good Practices and Approaches, and Space or More	Open discussion
	Concluding remarks	



Programme of Work

16th session of the UN Forum on Minority Issues

“Minorities and Cohesive Societies: Equality, Social Inclusion, and Socio-economic Participation”

(30 November – 1 December, 2023 - Geneva, Room XX)

THURSDAY, 30 NOVEMBER

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM (local time in Geneva)

Opening Meeting

1. Statement by the President of the Human Rights Council, H.E. Václav Bálek
2. Statement by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ms. Ilze Brands Kehris (*pre-recorded video*)
3. Statement by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Mr Kairat Abdrakhmanov (*pre-recorded video*)
4. Statement by the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, Mr. Nicolas Levrat
5. Statements by the Co-Chairs of the Forum, Ms. Elena Lazar and Ms Petra Roter

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM (local time in Geneva)

Item 1: Challenges to inclusion and equality: barriers to the social and economic participation of persons belonging to minority groups

Under this item, the Forum will address the systemic and structural challenges and discrimination that minority groups may face, including the unique obstacles for women and girls belonging to minority groups, look at factors placing them at a disadvantage, such as language or other

requirements or lack of educational opportunities or resources in regions where minority groups are concentrated, and explore policies and practices that result in or exacerbate minority exclusion or place them at a disadvantage.

1. Mr. Farkhat Ibragimov – OHCHR Minority Fellowship Alumnus, Member of the Public Uyghur Association ITTIPAK of the Kyrgyz Republic
2. Mr. Mehmet Polatel - Coordinator, Minority Rights Academia, Hrant Dink Foundation
3. Ms. Laxme Das - Advocacy Officer, International Dalit Solidarity Network

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Interactive dialogue

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Lunch break and side-events

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM (local time in Geneva)

Item 2: Socio-economic Empowerment

Under this item, the Forum will look at ways to amplify the economic participation of persons belonging to minority groups and emphasize equal opportunities in society, employment and entrepreneurship, with special attention given to the economic support of migrants and refugees belonging to minority groups. It will also aim to identify strategies to engage and empower minority young people by tapping into educational and employment prospects. In addition, participants will be encouraged to share examples of inclusive policies, including in the use of minority languages, in terms of promoting access to services and increased employment opportunities.

1. Ms Claire Thomas - Co-Executive Director, Minority Rights Group
2. Dr. Melakou Tegegn – Director, Fanos Ethiopia
3. Ms. Jennifer Jackson-Preece - Associate Professor, London School of Economics

3:30 PM – 6:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Interactive dialogue

FRIDAY, 1 DECEMBER

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM (local time in Geneva)

Item 3: Legal and Structural Approaches to More Inclusive Societies

Under this item, the Forum will explore legislation, policies and the provision of public goods and services that respect the rights of persons belonging to minority groups to equality without discrimination. It will address access to health care and educational and economic inequalities, including through proportionate investment in infrastructure or development, examine how legislation can increase opportunities that honour and represent minority identities and discuss the importance of ensuring equal access without discrimination to technology and fostering digital literacy within minority communities.

1. Dr. Corinne Lennox, Senior Lecturer in Human Rights, School of Advanced Study, University of London
2. Mr. Farooq Aftab - Legal Adviser, Human Rights Committee
3. Mr. Slava (Veaceslav) Balan, PhD Candidate and Part-time Professor at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law

10:30 AM – 1:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Interactive dialogue

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Lunch break and side-events

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM (local time in Geneva)

Item 4: Protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to minority groups towards cohesive societies

The Forum will consider positive examples, good practices and approaches, as well as challenges, relating to the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to minority groups, with a view to realizing more cohesive societies.

a) **Positive examples, good practices and approaches**

The Forum will discuss legal and institutional frameworks and policies that effectively safeguard minority rights and promote the inclusion of persons belonging to minority groups in society.

b) **Challenges relating to the inclusion of persons belonging to minority groups**

Given that the scope of discussions of the Forum cannot possibly be exhaustive, under this subitem, the Forum welcomes participants to share additional information on issues of importance, and challenges faced, with regard to the inclusion of persons belonging to minority groups in cohesive societies.

1. Ms. Nouha Grine - Secretary of Tamount Association for Amazigh Rights
2. Ms. Lecia Brooks, Southern Poverty Law Center, Senior Advisor to the President
3. Mr. Hani Anouti, Affiliated Professor in Middle Eastern Politics at Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals

3:30 PM – 5:45 PM (local time in Geneva)

Interactive dialogue

5:45 PM – 6 PM (local time in Geneva)

Concluding remarks

Concluding remarks by **Mr. Nicolas Levrat**, Special Rapporteur on minority issues

Concluding remarks by **Ms. Elena Lazar and Ms. Petra Roter**, Co-Chairpersons of the Forum on Minority Issues