

Name of organisation: Azerbaijani Human Rights Centre

Agenda item 1: Challenges to Inclusion & Equality: barriers in social and economic participation of minorities

Representative: ARAZ YURDSEVEN

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To achieve social inclusion as a fundamental right, dignity, safety, and security for a better life, equality is essential. No one regardless of race, age, gender, disability, religious or cultural beliefs, and sexual orientation, is left out or excluded. The removal of all barriers, discrimination, and intolerance is crucial for us to live as a valued and respected nation with a promising life expectancy.

Over 35 million South Azerbaijani, alongside other non-Persian nations, have faced severe discrimination and violations across various aspects of life, from environmental and cultural to social and political.

Lake Urmia, a globally unique lake, is being intentionally dried out due to hostile projects such as excessive dam constructions by the Iranian regime as an ecocide; displacing south Azerbaijanis, desertification of land and no measures are taken to restore it. Simultaneously, the regime allocates billions of dollars from the treasury, meant for all non-Persian nations, to build artificial lakes in Persian regions transferring water miles away from the Arabian Gulf.

Despite Persians enjoying education in their mother language, non-Persian nations, including South Azerbaijanis, face severe violations and bans on education in their mother language.

Plundering of South Azerbaijan's mineral resources and in turn infrastructure investments favouring Persian regions. This financial discrimination orchestrated by Iranian regime resulted in increased unemployment, corruption, and crime. Iranian regime flaring proxy wars in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Palestine, aims to spread Iran-Shia expansionist policy and prolong its existence.

Our primary legal argument, as South Azerbaijanis, urges the United Nations to demand precise statistics on the South Azerbaijani population in Iran. Internationally Azerbaijan recognized as a separate nation beyond the Aras River, South Azerbaijanis should also enjoy the same entitlements.

We believe self-determination as foundation of human rights is the only international right that allows the national will of our nation to determine its destiny. Achieving self-determination will end the unlawful imprisonment of human rights activists, executions, violations of women's rights, and torture committed by the Iranian regime.

Azerbaijani Human Rights Centre
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