

Statement for 16th Forum on Minority Issues
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Esteemed delegates, and distinguished guests, dear Ms. Chair,

My name is Mihail I am from the Republic of Moldova, I represent Youth Platform for Interethnic Solidarity and National Youth Council of Moldova. Also, currently I am the fellow within OHCHR Minorities Fellowship Program 2023.

I am honored to greet you at the 16th World Forum on Minority Issues, a global platform committed to championing the rights and concerns of minority groups across the world and embodies the very essence of our shared commitment to inclusivity, diversity, and social harmony. Today, I would like to share with you some thoughts on the critical importance of our work and the path we must continue to traverse in the journey towards a more equitable and harmonious world.

From previous generations, our generation has inherited a multitude of problems, particularly related to the violation of the rights of ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities, as well as underrepresented groups. Fortunately, the preceding generation has also left us tools for action—international and regional mechanisms for the protection and promotion of minority rights.

However, I want to draw special attention to the fact that certain underrepresented groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community, refugees, and people with disabilities, often are left behind when it comes to the protection of minority rights. Therefore, measures to protect minority rights must be intersectional. Especially now when some states declare LGBTQ+ people as "extremist movement". I have a question, who is the next?

I come with several recommendations:

1. Implement good international practices for minorities rights such as Forum on Minority Issues on the local level - to build bridges between minorities, state officials, diplomatic representatives etc...
2. Empower minorities, especially youth to be active in their community on the local level and then on the national level through educational activities, scholarship programmes etc. Also, to launch paid internships for minorities in the state institutions.
3. And last and the most important - I once again emphasize the importance of creating a UN Voluntary Fund for Minorities so that we can be freer to act. And I think that countries for which minority rights are not just a beautiful declaration but a value will take a step towards minorities. And will consider it as a call to action.

We must stand for each other — Roma and Jews from Europe for Uighurs and Dungan from Asia, Ukrainians and Gagauz from Moldova for Rohingya from Myanmar and Muslims from India, the Buddhist minority from Bangladesh for the black people and queers from the US and so on.

Thank you!