

Thank you, Madame Chair.

Hungary aligns itself with the EU statement from yesterday. In my national capacity, I extend the warm welcome to the new Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Professor Levrat. Hungary is looking forward to the continued engagement with your mandate, Mr. Special Rapporteur.

Madame Chair, Hungary is committed to protecting and promoting the rights of national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities. We stress the importance of strengthening the socio-economic participation of national minority communities, both in regional and country levels, as well as ensuring their equality and social inclusion. This can only be achieved in a truly inclusive manner if the necessary legislative changes and their implementation are done in close consultation with the minorities and their representatives. We also draw attention to the recent important publication of the OSCE High Commission on National Minorities on the effective participation of national minorities in social and economic lives. Madame Chair, Hungary follows closely the legislative processes related to the educational and linguistic rights of Hungarian minorities living in neighbouring countries. In this respect the situation of the Transcarpathian Hungarian minority are unfortunately continues to be of serious concern. Right to education and linguistic rights prove to be cornerstones in the legal and structural approaches to more inclusive societies. This includes the right to use one's own language in legal, administrative, and judicial acts, and education and media. State should ensure that in accessing education, public goods and services, members of national minority communities are able to do so in their own language and in a safe environment. The Hungarian constitution provides for the protection of national minority communities living in Hungary. It describes them as constituent parts of the State and part of the political community. They shall have the right to receive education in their mother tongue, and to foster their culture. We believe that this is the right approach and we urge all countries to do the same. I thank you.