

Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

Madame Chair. I [inaudible] from Somaliland have the honor to deliver this statement as the President of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization. UNPO is an international membership-based organization dedicated to amplifying the voices of unrepresented peoples and protecting their right to self-determination. The global community is failing to integrate minorities into societies. The cause of systemic discrimination is simple: a misunderstanding of the right to self-determination, which is not a threat to cohesive societies, but rather the pre-condition to their fruition. Mutual trust and dialogue must begin with communities being imbued with the inherent right to define what happens to them. Minorities are ostracized from birth. Many are not afforded identification, preventing access to education, which is neither facilitated in mother tongue nor caters to vocational requirements. Minorities are excluded from consultation in development projects, resulting in their drastic inequalities and their severe environmental damage. Accordingly, we strongly propose the following recommendations:

- the prioritization of minority languages in education and their protection in the workplace;
- an increase in spaces for inclusive dialogue to ensure sustainable and equitable development;
- the incorporation of the right to self-determination into the rights of minorities.

To all of the minorities in the room, we must do everything in our power to forge partnerships with each other. In spite of the challenges that minorities face, our strength will undoubtedly lie in our unity.