

The Friends of Ron L. Hubbard Foundation

Madame Chair, Special Rapporteur, States, Panelists, and Friends,

I am a member of the religious minority of Scientology in Italy. My voice is the voice of an academic researcher on minorities. In Italy, I am directing national observatory on minority issues, and this year, I became one of the nineteen international fellows of the minorities fellowship program of the United States. From the history of minority protection, Francesco Capotorti told a simple truth: minorities are not numbers, they are communities of solidarity that enrich society. Madame Chair, let me ground this with the main issue from Italy. In Italy, there are around 1.7 million Muslims, who still lack clear, formal arrangements with the state and experience uneven protection. With respect, I call on the Special Rapporteur on minority issues to consider in his dialogue with states, including Italy, the recommendation that the states establish or patronize country minority forums or other permanent consultation mechanisms. Such bodies could help ensure the effective participation of persons belonging to minorities in decisions that affect them and publicly recognize their contributions in the spirit of the 1992 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities. I close with the words of Ron L. Hubbard, the founder of the religion of Scientology. Human rights must be made a fact, not an idealistic dream. Thank you for your attention.