

PM of Armenia

Madame Chair, Armenia welcomes the 18th session of the Forum on Minority Issues and thanks the speakers for their contributions. We agree that diverse, resilient, and peaceful societies are those where the rights of national minorities are upheld, promoted, and fulfilled. Armenia has long recognized national minorities as key partners in promoting inclusive and rights-based development, in line with commitments under international human rights. We have prioritized the protection and promotion of minority rights in our regulatory framework, including the constitution, laws and policies ensuring access of minorities to their livelihoods, preserving their language, traditions, education, and faith. In 2021, Armenia established National Minorities Day in its official list of holidays and since 2023, the Public Council on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities operating under the Office of the Armenian Human Rights Defender has furthered contributed to the empowerment of the rights of national minorities in Armenia. The right to access to education is a fundamental human right and key enabler of all other rights, including for persons belonging to national minorities. In this regard, targeted measures have been taken to integrate refugee children into the school system in Armenia, and ongoing education reforms prioritize minority-populated regions, including the planned renovations or reconstruction of 300 schools and 500 kindergartens by 2026. It should also be highlighted that the government provides dedicated budgetary support for educational programs, textbook production, teacher training, and for non-governmental organizations representing ethnic communities, including their periodicals. In 2023, 941 textbooks were published in national minority languages. We would like to reaffirm the importance of the protection of national minorities from threats to the right to life, economic, cultural, and social life, in line with commitments under international human rights law. Armenia is also strongly convinced that sound democratic governance with inclusive and human rights-based approaches at the heart is instrumental for preventing discrimination, hate crimes, and violence against minorities, contributing to peace, stability, and sustainable development within societies as well as at global and regional levels. I thank you.