

Minority Rights Group

Today, I want to highlight the contribution of minority communities to cultural and creative spaces. Dalits, one of the most historically oppressed minorities, have significantly contributed to the South Asia's cultural landscape. Shailendra remains Bollywood's greatest and South Asia's most loved songwriter. Pakistani Hindu Dalit, Cholestani musicians have transformed the folk music rooted in local identity. In Europe, Roma, for centuries contributed to overall culture with folk, flamenco, and jazz traditions. In Egypt, minorities, including Copts, Nubians, and Baha'is, continue to shape cultural heritage despite systemic exclusion. Minorities face discrimination and microaggressions on a daily basis. Marginalized groups within minorities, including women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ persons, the barriers are even more severe. Madam Chair, MRG recommends, first, the UN should urge states to adopt human rights-based measures that protect minorities from discrimination and ensure equal access to education, cultural opportunities, resources, and safe spaces to express their identities. Second, the UN should continue to work with civil society to dismantle cultural gatekeeping, and support minority artists. It is a privilege for MRG to work with OHCHR to celebrate minority creativity through the 4th International Contest for Minority Artists. We sincerely hope that this tradition shall continue and become a lasting legacy to uplift minority voices globally, in solidarity and with gratitude. Thank you, Madam Chair.