

Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)

Thank you, dear Chair. FUEN is Europe's largest and oldest umbrella organization for autochthonous national minorities, with 122 member organizations. It is in our DNA to present full-pledged contributions by the national and linguistic minorities, to different dimensions of our societies. By a broad spectrum of the FUEN's projects on minorities education, political participation, women on minorities, Forum of European Minority Regions and others, we help minorities preserve and promote their rights, identities, languages. FUEN launched the Minority Safe-pack European Citizens Initiative, the most important minority rights initiative in the last 30 years, calling for stronger EU measures to safeguard minority rights. The MSPI was finally rejected by the European Court of Justice. The court decision is a clear signal that, at least on the European level, the prospect for improving the minority protections (...) is low. For minorities to be seen and acknowledged as full contributors is paramount to rely on the solid legal institutional and dialogue mechanism. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Minorities remains the most important global instrument for minority rights. However, more than 30 years after its adoption, FUEN believes minority protection must be made fit for the 21st century. Therefore, FUEN supports the formalization of the coordination on minority issues between the UN, EU, and the Council of Europe, a permanent UN forum on minority issues, a regular dialogue between the UN Special Rapporteur and civil society, higher attention and clear response to challenges faced by minority women and youth of minorities. Thank you.