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Thank you, Mr. Chair. Excellencies, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen. I am an OHCHR minority fellow. I belong to the Uyghur ethnic minority in Kyrgyzstan. I am going to speak about multilingual education as a key to participate in public life. Kyrgyzstan has ratified almost all international human rights conventions. Several articles in the Kyrgyz constitution ensure rights for minorities to learn their languages, to forlorn discrimination and the right to education to everyone. Various development partners provide assistance to the Kyrgyz government in the education sector, for instance. Education is one of the three focal areas of the EU support to Kyrgyzstan. However, Mr. Chair, despite all these positive developments, education for certain ethnic minorities in their native languages is problematic.

For instance, Kyrgyzstan lacks formal education in Uyghur. As a result, the command of the Uyghur language among youth is declining. All these are coupled with the lack of respective specialists, textbooks and funding. This is also the case when it comes to learning the state Kyrgyz language. Minority youth sometimes tends to pay little or no attention to Kyrgyz and their native languages. Therefore, Mr. Chair, in line with the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Declaration of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, we would like to recommend the following to the government and non-governmental organizations.

First, Encourage and urge minority youth to learn Kyrgyz and their native languages. Second, seek financial assistance from the government and development partners to set up schools for ethnic minorities to learn their native languages. Third, facilitate access of minority youth to inclusive multilingual education that ultimately will lead to their effective participation in public life.

In conclusion, I would like to express my profound gratitude to the OHCHR for this excellent opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.