

Ogaden Youth & Student Union (OYSU)

Thank you, Chairman. I am from the Ogaden Youth and Student Union and I'll briefly be talking about the importance of participation in everyday public life. Firstly, it is important to be able to practice one's religion, accessing jobs, public services, taking part in politics, travelling freely. However, this is a challenge for many Somalis in the Ogaden region in Ethiopia. But minorities belonging to opposition parties or those holding views that not sympathetic to the government face particular obstacles, they may feel that they have to hide their identity when they leave their homes or travel. When they go to public bodies to access services, they fear their identity will be revealed and services will be denied to them. This is the case for Members of the Somali diaspora youth from the Ogaden region who travel in constant fear of being targeted when traveling in states neighboring Ethiopia.

Minority of female youth are particularly vulnerable to abuse and are subject to violence and discrimination. Where getting a job or having access to public services often depends on whether...

Minorities are not free to worship and practice their culture. They live with fear of being discriminated, harassed in their daily lives. I would like to propose that laws and policies which discriminate against minority youth in the region need to be redesigned and programs which target to address health, poverty and education gaps among minority groups in the region need to be addressed. Furthermore, it is particularly important that minority youth are meaningfully consulted on decisions that affect them directly.

In the Ogaden region, there is no fair minority representation at a national, regional and local level unless you are carefully selected by the state to represent a group only to ...