



Human Rights Council**Forty-third session**

24 February–13 March and 15–23 June 2020

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 19 June 2020****43/8. Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and
linguistic minorities: mandate of the Special Rapporteur on minority
issues***The Human Rights Council,*

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, adopted by consensus by the General Assembly by its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992,

Taking into consideration article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other relevant existing international standards and national legislation,

Recalling all previous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Recalling also its resolution 5/1 on institution-building of the Human Rights Council and resolution 5/2 on the Code of Conduct for Special Procedures Mandate Holders of the Council of 18 June 2007, and stressing that the mandate holder shall discharge his/her duties in accordance with those resolutions and the annexes thereto,

Recalling further the paragraphs in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action relating to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, of which the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development is an integral part, recalling that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets seek to realize the human rights of all, and stressing the need for Member States to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their respective national policies and development frameworks, as



appropriate, to promote the effective implementation of, follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda in order to ensure that no one is left behind,

Recalling the International Year of Indigenous Languages held in 2019, which drew attention to the critical loss of indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize and promote indigenous languages, including as an educational medium, and to take further urgent steps to that end at the national and international levels,

Emphasizing the need to strengthen efforts to meet the goal of the full realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including by addressing their economic and social conditions and marginalization, and to end any type of discrimination against them,

Recognizing that education in and the teaching of minority languages contribute to the preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity as well as to social inclusion, equality for all, social cohesion and the unity of the State for which knowledge of the official languages is a factor,

Emphasizing the importance of recognizing and addressing multiple, aggravated and intersecting forms of discrimination against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and the compounded negative impact on the enjoyment of their rights,

Emphasizing also the fundamental importance of human rights education, training and learning, dialogue, including intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and interaction among all relevant stakeholders and members of society relating to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities as an integral part of the development of society as a whole, including through the sharing of best practices relating to, inter alia, the promotion of mutual understanding of minority issues, the management of diversity through the recognition of plural identities and the promotion of inclusive, just, tolerant and stable societies and of social cohesion therein,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues,¹ his report on the recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues at its twelfth session² and his report submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session;³

2. *Notes* the completion, in November 2019, of the twelfth session of the Forum on Minority Issues, addressing education, language and the human rights of minorities, which, through the widespread participation of stakeholders, provided an important platform for promoting dialogue on this topic, and encourages States to take into consideration the relevant recommendations of the Forum;

3. *Welcomes* the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;⁴

4. *Commends* the Special Rapporteur on minority issues for his work and for the important role that he has played in raising the level of awareness of and in giving added visibility to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and for his guiding role in the preparation and work of the Forum on Minority Issues, which contributes to efforts to improve cooperation among all United Nations mechanisms relating to the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

5. *Calls upon* States to undertake initiatives to ensure that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are aware of and able to exercise their rights as set out in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and in other international human rights obligations and commitments, and recommends that all measures taken with a view to implementing the Declaration be, to the fullest extent possible, developed, designed, implemented and reviewed with the full, effective and equal participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

¹ A/HRC/43/47.

² A/HRC/43/62.

³ A/74/160.

⁴ A/HRC/43/28.

6. *Urges* States, while bearing in mind the theme of the twelfth session of the Forum on Minority Issues, and with a view to enhancing the implementation of the Declaration and to ensuring the realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including minority youth, to take appropriate measures by, inter alia:

(a) Taking legislative, policy or practical measures to ensure that persons belonging to minorities have equal access to education of equal quality, delivered in an inclusive environment that fosters greater achievement for all;

(b) Considering ratifying and acceding and adhering to relevant international and regional human rights instruments that protect and promote the rights of persons belonging to linguistic minorities, including those pertaining to the right to education;

(c) Providing, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities with adequate opportunities to learn their own language or to have instruction in their own language, while ensuring that minorities also have access to instruction in official languages;

(d) Considering minority language education in the implementation of Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, aimed at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all;

(e) Promoting educational environments that respect linguistic and cultural diversity and freedom from discrimination, stigmatization, hatred and hate speech towards persons belonging to minorities, including through public education and information campaigns and by providing training for educators;

(f) Refraining from the forced assimilation of persons belonging to minorities through, inter alia, the prohibition of education in or the teaching of the mother tongue of minorities;

(g) Creating a safe and enabling environment for civil society representatives working on the human rights of persons belonging to minorities in language matters and monitoring the implementation of States' obligations towards ensuring access to, education in and the teaching of minority languages;

(h) Promoting access of persons belonging to minorities to administrative, legal and health services by considering offering them also in minority languages;

(i) Ensuring that education is provided in sign language for the deaf community where this is practicable;

(j) Developing and financing programmes for the development and training of minority language teachers, and promoting such programmes among minority communities;

(k) Allocating the resources necessary to promote access to education in and the teaching of minority languages;

(l) Ensuring that educational curricula do not include materials that stereotype minorities, including women and girls belonging to minorities, on the basis of their ethnicity or their gender;

(m) Taking all measures necessary to ensure access to minority language education and teaching for women and girls of minority communities, where applicable, considering the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, marginalization and exclusion to which they are often subjected because of their gender and minority status;

7. *Invites* international and regional organizations to continue to pay attention to the situations and rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and in this regard to take into consideration relevant recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues;

8. *Welcomes* the fact that the twelfth Forum on Minority Issues was fully interpreted in sign language, and stresses the importance that discussions at the Forum remain fully accessible to persons with disabilities;

9. *Invites* the Office of the High Commissioner, United Nations entities and Member States to support and collaborate in the organization of regional forums on minority

issues in order to complement and enrich the work and recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues;

10. *Welcomes* the inter-agency cooperation among United Nations agencies, funds and programmes on minority issues, led by the Office of the High Commissioner, and urges them to further increase their coordination and cooperation by, inter alia, developing policies on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, drawing also on relevant outcomes of the Forum on Minority Issues and taking into account the work of relevant regional organizations;

11. *Notes in particular* in this regard the initiatives and activities of the United Nations network on racial discrimination and the protection of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, coordinated by the Office of the High Commissioner and aimed at enhancing dialogue and cooperation between relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and invites the network to continue to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and to consult and engage with persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and civil society actors;

12. *Requests* the High Commissioner to continue to present an annual report to the Human Rights Council containing information on relevant developments of United Nations human rights bodies and mechanisms, and on the activities undertaken by the Office of the High Commissioner at headquarters and in the field that contribute to the promotion of and respect for the provisions of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to continue to provide all the human, technical and financial assistance necessary for the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and for the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner in the area of rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

14. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues for a period of three years under the same terms as provided for by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 25/5;

15. *Calls upon* all States to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in the performance of the tasks and duties mandated to him or her, to provide him or her with all the necessary information requested and to seriously consider responding promptly and favourably to the request of the Special Rapporteur to visit their countries in order to enable him or her to fulfil his or her duties effectively;

16. *Encourages* specialized agencies, regional organizations, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations to develop and maintain regular dialogue and cooperation with the mandate holder, and to continue to contribute to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human, technical and financial assistance necessary for the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;

18. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this issue in accordance with its programme of work.

44th meeting
19 June 2020

[Adopted without a vote.]
