

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
Forty-first session

Open-ended Working Group to consider  
the drafting of a declaration on the  
right of persons belonging to  
national, ethnic, religious and  
linguistic minorities

Agenda item 20

RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL, ETHNIC,  
RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES

Proposals submitted by the Bahá'í International Community,  
a non-governmental organization in consultative status  
(category II)

1. Additional preambular paragraph:

"Recognizing that many minority groups have suffered and continue to suffer discrimination on the grounds of their national, ethnic, religious or other characteristics and that many also possess a distinctive culture or common way of life which may often be suppressed, ..."

2. Article 1:

"1. For the purposes of this declaration, a minority shall be considered to be a group within a State whose members possess national, ethnic, religious, linguistic or other characteristics which are distinctive and clearly differ from those of the majority of the population.

2. All persons belonging to minorities have the right to full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination on the basis of their national, ethnic, religious, linguistic or other characteristics.

3. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to develop and maintain their unique culture, language and other characteristics, and to have and to practise the religion or belief of their choice. The exercise of this right is subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law solely for the purpose of securing the rights and freedoms of others and meeting the legitimate requirements of morality, health, public safety and the general welfare.

4. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate in, and contribute to, the political, social, cultural, economic and spiritual life of the larger communities to which they belong."