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**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 30 March 2026

61/15. Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities: mandate of 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, as well as 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,

Mindful of article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

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 Procedure Mandate Holders of the Council of 18 June 2007, and stressing that mandate holders shall discharge their 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 and other relevant international standards,

Reaffirming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, of which the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Sevilla Commitment at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development are integral parts, recalling that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets seek to realize the human rights of all, and stressing the need for States to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their respective national policies and development frameworks and to monitor progress through quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data, 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, including persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 76/6 of 15 November 2021, in which the Assembly welcomed, as a basis for further consideration by Member States, the submission of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda”,¹ which included an appeal for new approaches to strengthen the participation in public affairs of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Emphasizing the need to strengthen efforts to realize 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,

Emphasizing also 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,

Taking note of the publication entitled *Protecting Minority Rights: A Practical Guide to Developing Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Legislation* by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,² and recognizing the increasing attention given to anti-discrimination measures during the universal periodic review,

Stressing that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to political and social stability and cohesion,

Noting with concern that disregard for the identity of, and discrimination against, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as their political and socioeconomic marginalization, hate speech and the denial of the enjoyment of their human rights often precede violence and should therefore serve as early warning signs of a risk of serious crimes and conflict,

Expressing concern about the increase of disinformation and misinformation, which may lead to the spread of hate speech, particularly its potential amplification and mass reproduction on social media platforms, and, inter alia, through the use of artificial intelligence (AI), which can be designed, developed, trained, implemented and used in ways that may influence systems and processes and spread discrimination, including racism, misogyny, xenophobia, negative stereotyping and stigmatization, particularly affecting persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Recalling the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, as endorsed by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 17/4 of 16 June 2011, and encouraging States, which are the primary duty bearers, and business enterprises, including social media companies, to implement the Guiding Principles in order to foster respect for human rights, online and offline, including in the context of addressing hate speech,

Expressing concern at emerging challenges that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may face, including the rise in persecution on national or ethnic, religious and linguistic grounds, their particular vulnerability when exposed to diverse crises, including humanitarian emergencies, armed conflicts and situations of occupation, the prevalence of statelessness, reported human rights violations in law enforcement and the justice sector and increasing levels of hate crimes and hate speech, online and offline, targeting them,

Expressing concern also at the frequency and severity of disputes and conflicts involving persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and that such persons often suffer disproportionately from their effects, resulting in the violation of their human rights and are particularly vulnerable to forced displacement through, inter alia,

¹ A/75/982.

² United Nations publication, 2023.

population transfers, the revocation of previously held identity documents, refugee flows and forced relocation,

Recalling that States should take measures to create favourable conditions to enable persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities to express their characteristics and to develop their culture, language, religion, traditions and customs, and in this regard underscoring the importance of government services, including education, in their own languages, including spoken and sign languages, where applicable,

Recognizing that a vast majority of stateless persons are persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, emphasizing in this regard the need for birth registration, civil registration and national identification documents to be provided without discrimination on any grounds, including race, ethnicity, religion or language, in line with the 2030 Agenda, especially target 16.9 thereof, aimed at providing a legal identity for all, noting in that respect the Global Alliance to End Statelessness of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

Stressing the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including women, youth and persons with disabilities, and their representatives at all levels of policymaking and decision-making and in conflict prevention and resolution, mediation, post-conflict reconstruction, peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, and emphasizing the need to address persisting barriers to the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000,

Emphasizing 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 and stable societies and of social cohesion therein,

Emphasizing also the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, including through national action plans, legislation and policies,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues,³ his report on the recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues at its eighteenth session⁴ and the report submitted to the General Assembly at its eightieth session;⁵

2. *Notes* the completion, in November 2025, of the eighteenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues, on the theme “The contribution of minorities to diverse, resilient, and peaceful societies”, which, through the widespread participation of stakeholders, provided an important platform for promoting dialogue on that topic, and encourages States to take into consideration the relevant recommendations of the Forum;

3. *Welcomes* the work and takes note of 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;⁶

4. *Welcomes* the work of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and his role in raising awareness of and in giving added visibility to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and 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 national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and encourages the Special

³ A/HRC/61/41.

⁴ A/HRC/61/65.

⁵ A/80/186.

⁶ A/HRC/61/33.

Rapporteur to continue strengthening his efforts in guiding the work of the Forum for a constructive and mutually respectful dialogue;

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 commitments as well as obligations, 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;

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

(a) Considering ratifying and acceding and adhering to relevant international and regional human rights instruments that protect and promote the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

(b) Promoting the inclusion and meaningful participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities as a means of recognizing and valuing diversity in building peaceful, resilient and inclusive societies, and promoting social cohesion through public discourse, education and cultural initiatives;

(c) Redoubling efforts to prevent and end statelessness among persons belonging to ethnic or national, religious and linguistic minorities, free from discrimination, including through the promotion of the right to nationality;

(d) Ensuring the protection and promotion of the rights of children who belong to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including their right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language and preserve their identity;

(e) Encouraging conditions for the promotion of the identity of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities by investing in educational programmes for all and education in minority languages, including support for minority-led cultural initiatives;

(f) Developing inclusive education systems, including for vocational training, to counter misinformation and marginalization by ensuring equal access for everyone to opportunities to acquire skills for meaningful participation, without discrimination, in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of society and in the economic progress and development of their country, applying a gender perspective while doing so and promoting social cohesion;

(g) Encouraging social cohesion through the development of inclusive policies to address root causes such as poverty, inequality and discrimination, and the enhancement of infrastructure to ensure that basic services are accessible to all without discrimination;

(h) Adopting legislation, policies and programmes to address discrimination against and the exclusion of women and girls belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, support their empowerment, facilitate gender equality and strengthen communities, as well as by promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and relevant resolutions of United Nations bodies;

(i) Recognizing the importance of and fostering the economic inclusion of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities for social stability and for the full realization of the rights to education, to work, to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, to an adequate standard of living and to participation in public life, without discrimination, while respecting their cultural diversity;

(j) Ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including women, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities, at all levels of decision-making and implementation of conflict prevention and resolution, mediation, post-conflict reconstruction, peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding and transitional justice processes;

(k) Creating a safe and enabling environment for civil society representatives, lawyers, journalists and media workers, humanitarian workers and human rights defenders working on the human rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including in armed conflict;

(l) Advancing the adoption and implementation of comprehensive anti-discrimination laws and developing and implementing effective anti-discrimination measures and policies in order to effectively eliminate all forms of discrimination against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and strengthen advocacy against discrimination;

(m) Strongly condemning any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, and adopting and implementing measures to criminalize incitement to imminent violence based on nationality, race, religion or belief, both online and offline, while respecting all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(n) Enabling open and constructive intercultural and interfaith dialogue for the recognition and promotion of and respect for diversity, including as a critical tool for fostering mutual understanding, building trust and promoting peace, sustainable development, peaceful coexistence, conflict prevention and reconciliation processes in post-conflict societies;

(o) Ensuring that those responsible for human rights violations and abuses against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are held accountable, that root causes are investigated and addressed and that victims have access to adequate remedies and assistance;

7. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner, within existing mandates and available resources, to continue to provide, upon the request of States, expertise and technical support for the implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities to relevant stakeholders, with the aim of ensuring the full enjoyment of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

8. *Invites* international and regional organizations to increase efforts within their respective mandates to promote and help to protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, to ensure that perspectives of persons belonging to national or to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are systematically integrated across regional and country level programming and in this regard to take into consideration relevant recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues;

9. *Welcomes* the fact that the eighteenth Forum on Minority Issues was fully interpreted in sign language, and stresses the importance of discussions at the Forum remaining fully inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities;

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 protection of minorities, co-led in 2025 and 2026 by the Office of the High Commissioner and the United Nations Population Fund 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, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and other relevant special procedures and treaty bodies, and to consult and engage with persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and civil society;

12. *Notes also* the Minorities Fellowship Programme of the Office of the High Commissioner, and encourages the Special Rapporteur and alumni of the multilingual programme to strengthen their cooperation with a view to seeking specific solutions to minority issues;

13. *Encourages* States, relevant United Nations entities, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to promote and support the participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in relevant meetings and processes of United Nations human rights mechanisms, to advance work to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and to strengthen the protection of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in programming across the United Nations system;

14. *Decides* to extend the mandate of 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 of 27 March 2014;

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 United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 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.

*52nd meeting
30 March 2026*

[Adopted without a vote.]
