Programme of Work

18th session of the UN Forum on Minority Issues

"The contribution of minorities to diverse, resilient, and peaceful societies"

(27-28 November 2025 - Geneva, Assembly Hall)

THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM (local time in Geneva)

Opening Meeting

1. Statement by the Vice-President of the Human Rights Council, **H.E. Ambassador Razvan Rusu**
2. Statement by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, **Mr. Volker Türk**
3. Statement by the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, **Mr. Nicolas Levrat**
4. Statement by the Chairperson of the 18th session of the Forum on Minority Issues, **H.E. Ambassador Caroline Ziadeh**

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM (local time in Geneva)

Item 1: Building trust and social cohesion: addressing barriers to peaceful coexistence

Under this agenda item, the Forum will examine the structural drivers of mistrust, exclusion and conflict between minority and dominant populations, as well as among minority groups themselves. The discussion will address the root causes of exclusion, discrimination, and intergroup tensions, including entrenched inequalities, social stigma, and the persistent invisibility of minority groups, as obstacles to harmony and peaceful coexistence. Panellists will highlight State and community initiatives that have successfully diffused tensions and fostered trust, such as community-based strategies, mediation programmes, intercultural, inter-caste and interfaith dialogue initiatives and multilingual education policies. They will also reflect on the role of education, the media, and artistic or cultural expression in countering stigmatization and creating inclusive social norms.

1. **Mr. Christophe Kamp**, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities
2. **Ms. Diane Ala'i**, Independent human rights and international affairs expert, Former Representative to the United Nations for the Baha'i International Community
3. **Mr. Rup Sunar**, Chairperson of Dignity Initiative, Former OHCHR Senior Minority Fellow

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Interactive dialogue

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Lunch break

3:00 PM – 6:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Interactive dialogue (continued)

FRIDAY 28 November

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM (local time in Geneva)

Item 2: Recognizing the full contribution of minorities to the economic, social, cultural, political and institutional fabric of society

Under this agenda item, the Forum will explore how minorities contribute to all aspects of society, often in ways that remain undervalued or overlooked. The discussion will be focused on ensuring that the contributions of minorities are fairly recognized and integrated into national narratives and policymaking. Participants will present examples of how minority communities strengthen civic engagement and institutions, enrich cultural life and advance innovation and development. Examples include how minority-owned businesses drive local economies, how minority artists and intellectuals broaden national cultures and how minority activists shape political reforms and human rights protections. Attention will also be paid to multi-stakeholder and multilevel approaches that bring together Governments, civil society, academia and the business sector, as well as religious leaders and other actors, to create inclusive policies and ensure that minorities are seen as equal contributors to shared prosperity.

1. **Ms. Litha Musyimi-Ogana**, Member of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Chairperson of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities and Minorities in Africa
2. **Mr. Surya Deva**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development
3. **Ms. Angelica Ricaurte Villalobos**, Latin America Advisor at Minority Rights Group

10:30 AM – 1:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Interactive dialogue

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Lunch break

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM (local time in Geneva)

Item 3: Amplifying minority voices in peacebuilding, accountability and transitional justice processes

Under this agenda item, the Forum will focus on the unique role that minorities play in societies in post-conflict or transition situations, and the importance of ensuring their participation in building sustainable peace. This is a crucial issue, as peacebuilding processes that exclude minorities risk reinforcing structural inequalities and perpetuating instability. Participants will reflect on how minority communities, drawing on their lived experiences of marginalization or conflict, contribute to reconciliation, dialogue, and the pursuit of justice. They may highlight minority-led initiatives in conflict resolution, grassroots reconciliation projects, or examples of inclusive truth and reconciliation commissions. The panel will also consider necessary legal and institutional reforms to guarantee minority representation and protection in transitional justice mechanisms, demonstrating how inclusive processes can build societies that are more stable, resilient, and just.

1. **Ms. Fatuma Abdillahi Ali**, Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, Certified Professional Mediator, Former OHCHR Senior Minority Fellow
2. **Ms. Farah Mihlar**, Senior Lecturer in Human Rights at Oxford Brookes University
3. **Mr. Tenzin Dorjee**, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Political Science at Columbia University

3:30 PM – 5:30 PM (local time in Geneva)

Interactive dialogue

5:30 PM – 6:00 PM (local time in Geneva)

Concluding remarks

1. Concluding remarks by **Mr. Nicolas Levrat**, Special Rapporteur on minority issues
2. Concluding remarks by **H.E. Ambassador Caroline Ziadeh,** Chairperson of the 18th session of the Forum on Minority Issues