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Minority Issues in the Context of the United Nations Reform Process



Report to the 80th Session of the General Assembly

A/80/186

Recommendations

- Explicit inclusion of minorities in post-2030 agenda
- World Summit on minority issues ahead of post-2030 Agenda
- Increased funding for minority-focused initiatives
- A framework treaty on minority rights
- Better integration of minority protection and rights in reformed UN
- Improved focus on minority issues in programmatic work of UN Country Teams
- Dedicated focal points on minority issues in UN entities
- Development of an index on minority recognition, protection and inclusion

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Findings



1. Lack of Visibility due to Fragmentation

- There is a **lack of visibility and explicit recognition** of minorities in activities and strategic documents of the UN (e.g., SDGs, Pact for the Future).
- Despite numerous activities across the UN system, the **targeting of specific categories** (ethnic, religious, linguistic) rather than minorities as a whole undermines impact and reduces coherence of minority-focused actions.

2. Institutional Gaps

- Minority issues are often **merged with broader themes** like racism or vulnerable groups, diluting the distinct needs of persons belonging to minorities.

3. Promising Practices Identified

- Some UN entities have **integrated minority concerns** into their programming.
- Examples include multilingual education, health equity, and linguistic minorities' equal access to legal information.

4. Balancing Political Sensitivities and Minority Inclusion

- Governments often **resist explicit references to minorities** in UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.
- Despite the **sensitivity surrounding minority issues**, recognizing and openly addressing them is essential for building stable, resilient, and democratic societies.

5. Optimizing Minority Platforms

- The **Forum on Minority Issues** and the **UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities** are valuable but underfunded and underused.
- Participation by UN entities in these platforms is **declining**, missing opportunities for engagement and visibility. **This trend needs to be reversed.**



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