



Speaker: Mr Michael Phillips

Thank you ~~Madam~~ Chair,
madam

The World Uyghur Congress (WUC) greatly welcomes and fully supports many of the Draft Recommendations put forward for this Session, all of which characterise the continued interest in, and development of, the Declaration 20 years after its inception.

Whilst the importance of progressing towards the goals set out therein goes without saying, the reality on the ground faced by minorities is that progress in certain States remains slow and in some cases inactive or even contrary towards these aims. Minorities continue to be subjected to discriminatory practices in access to education, employment, wealth creation, natural resources, income, development, and both participation and representation at all levels of government.

The WUC notes positively that a number of the Draft Recommendations reflect this, and should be easily achievable in the short term with minimum costs. For example, reforming or repealing *de jure* or *de facto* discriminatory laws and regulations would go a long way to improving social harmony and cohesion between the state and their respective minorities. Whilst achievable, discriminatory laws and regulations which prevent the realisation of some of the Draft Recommendations that depend on this.

^{In addition}
[For example, the predominantly-Muslim Uyghurs in the People's Republic of China continue to be marginalised from the political process due to Communist Party membership criteria requiring members to be atheist.] Indeed, assertions of religious affiliations and a Uyghur identity are often met with arrests, detentions and imprisonments on poorly defined laws of "endangering state secrets" which are too often applied against Uyghurs in a discriminatory fashion, ~~in addition to~~ ^{legislation and regulations in the} hindering human rights activism. Never has a ~~recommendation~~ ^{recommendation} been made to reflect the discriminatory application of anti-terrorism laws and recommendations ~~regu~~ ^{context of minorities} in the context of minorities.

With further inclusion in the decision-making processes, ethnic tension witnessed in July 2009 in Urumqi would cease to be so prevalent. Representative participation in the political process would afford minorities the opportunity to push for initiatives that would improve their opportunities in education and employment, in addition to being able to implement measures that would cultivate their linguistic, cultural and religious rights which are under threat due to discriminatory policies, laws and regulations.

Translating and disseminating the Declaration and other international human rights texts, as routinely recommended by, *inter alia*, UN Committees, is especially important as it

allows minorities to disseminate amongst themselves and inform each other on the rights that they possess. It is therefore vital that these translations be made easily accessible in order to foster the self-executing, awareness-raising characteristics that translations facilitate.

Many minorities are not provided this opportunity. For example, the PRC has failed to make the translation of the Convention on the Child accessible in the Uyghur language as recommended in 2005 at the national, regional or local government websites, if the translation exists at all. Non-adherence to Draft Recommendation 37 which urges States to, "collaborate with the different international and regional human rights mechanisms" is therefore particularly concerning in such cases, especially for such realistically achievable measures.

In view of the aforementioned issues, minorities and society as a whole would greatly benefit from the attainment of these achievable recommendations from which the other Recommendations will be able to gain momentum. Stressing the achievability of such recommendations, the WUC encourages the international community to step up efforts embrace these recommendations and to ratify vital international human rights treaties, such as the ICCPR.

Thank you.

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