



EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL FORUM 2-3 MAY 2022

REVIEW RETHINK REFORM

30th
ANNIVERSARY,
UN DECLARATION
ON THE RIGHTS
OF MINORITIES
1992-2022

Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
European and International
Affairs



Rapporteur spécial des Nations Unies pour les questions relatives aux minorités
Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues



Call for Participation

At a time when minorities face increased challenges worldwide, the Europe-Central Asia Regional Forum will mark the 30th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities¹ by undertaking a critical assessment of its problem-solving capacity through a gap analysis focusing on the normative framework, institutions and mechanisms facilitating implementation, and the effectiveness of minority participation in norm-making and norm-adherence. The aim is to formulate concrete recommendations for the improvement of the regional and global minority protection regimes.

In 1992, the UNDM was adopted in response to the reconfiguration of the international order following the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. ‘The fate of minorities’ was at stake, echoing the same calls made by the UN in 1948, when the General Assembly adopted a resolution on this important issue of global concern². The 30th Anniversary of the UNDM represents a key opportunity for all concerned to take stock of the state of minority rights protection, to identify gaps in the minority protection regime, and to assess how such gaps fuel threats to minorities and the protection of their rights, and to make recommendations on the ways forward. It is time to ‘Review, Rethink, Reform’ the global recognition, protection and promotion of the rights of minorities for a secure life in a diverse and just world.

The full concept note for the 2022 Regional Forums is available [here](#).

Objectives

The Europe-Central Asia Regional Forum will provide regional insights, which will feed into the thematic work of the Special Rapporteur for his report to the 52nd session of the UN Human Rights Council in March 2023. Furthermore, discussions will inform the work

¹¹ Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, General Assembly resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992.

² In 1948, the General Assembly declared in a resolution that the United Nations could not remain indifferent to the “fate of minorities”. See resolution 217 (III) C, (10 December 1948).

and recommendations of the 15th session of the Forum on Minority Issues, which will take place in Geneva in December 2022.

Specific objectives include:

- Identify how the existing global and regional minority protection regimes (norms, institutions and mechanisms) can be improved to be more effective at preventing and addressing domestic minority rights violations and at the promotion of minority rights;
- Assess the ways regional forums can bridge the gaps between domestic, regional and global protection regimes;
- Design action plans and platforms for local, regional and global civil society cooperation for the effective implementation of minority rights;
- Based on the presentations and discussions held at the regional forums, develop specific recommendations to address the gaps identified in relation to the improvement and effectiveness of the global and regional minority protection regimes.

Date and Venue

Date: 2-3 May 2022

Hybrid format – the meeting will be held physically at the [Diplomatic Academy, Vienna](#) and virtually using the Interactio platform.

Participation

The Europe-Central Asia Regional Forum shall be open to the participation of states; intergovernmental organizations including United Nations agencies and mechanisms; national human rights institutions and other relevant national bodies; academics and experts on minority issues; representatives of minorities as well as civil society organizations specializing in minority issues.

Participation is open to individuals involved in minority issues in the **Europe-Central Asia region** (see list of eligible countries [here](#)), and with a clear **focus and expertise on minority rights**.

All participants are encouraged to submit any proposed recommendations in advance of the Europe-Central Asia Regional Forum to marcus.oda@tomlantosinstitute.hu by Friday 29th April 2022. All written recommendations submitted in writing are collated and considered as part of the final set of recommendations developed during the regional

forum.

All individual participants must register online [here](#). Registration will close **11pm CEST, Monday 25th April 2022**.

For those wishing to participate physically, all travel related-expenses, visas, accommodation and insurances are the responsibility of the participants.

There is limited funding for a very small number of *individual* participants, covering their travel and accommodation costs. The funds are prioritised for members of minorities to enable greater and diverse participation considering gender and geographic distribution. Priority will be given to minorities outside of the European Union in the first instance. If you require funding, please download the Funding Application Form available [here](#) and submit it to regionalforum@tomlantosinstitute.hu. All requests for funding must be received by Tuesday 12th April 2022.

For online participants, details for joining the meeting will be sent following confirmation of registration, a few days before the event.

Areas of Discussion

In light of the main objectives of the regional forums, the discussions will address the following overarching themes. These will be informed by the framework of international human rights law and standards:

1. Normative framework: existing norms and interpretations
2. Implementation: Institutions, Mechanisms, Policies, and Programmes
3. Minority participation as a procedural and substantive right and practice
4. Moving Forward: Reforming the Protection and Implementation of the Minority Rights Framework

Outputs

Based on the discussions and the contributions of the participants, the main output produced from the Europe-Central Asia Regional Forum will be a document with practical recommendations reflective of regional contexts and challenges.

For any queries, please refer to the FAQ page on the registration website available [here](#) or contact regionalforum@tomlantosinstitute.hu.

Simultaneous interpretation is anticipated in English, French, Russian and Romani