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Obstacles to Effective Political Participation Faced by Minorities

In order to discover the obstacles facing minorities to effective political participation, we need to understand the historic background of the communities with diverse combinations, who mostly are hostages of their historic culture, values, religious or sectarian principles, which make the majorities feel that they are the owners of the land and home, that is why they must control the power and wealth, and other minorities are unrespected guests, then it is normal to expect discrimination, ignoring, intimidation and excluding policies toward the minorities leading to ethnic cleansing.

To achieve such discrimination policies, the majority or those in power, legitimize all steps through legislations under the excuse of public interests..

In my country Iraq, the political process is progressing slowly, although outsiders are very against, scared from Freedom and Democracy values, National elections will take place at the end of Jan. 2010, but that doesn't mean there is no discrimination & monopolizing policies, more than 300,000 people from our Assyrian Chaldean community fled seeking immigration in last 6 years among more than 4 Mil. Iraqi immigrants or displaced persons.

Unfortunately, such discrimination policies are still on, although most of the political parties claim and call for democratic regimes, but the democracy in their dictionary means the way for peaceful power transition, not democratic society with all its values and meanings.

That's why the minorities are excluded, ignored and persecuted under the umbrella of DEMOCRACY and Freedom, many times the lands

of minorities confiscated by government institutions under the excuse of public interests, but given to the powerful party members for personal interests, and their free will not respected even when electing some village Elderman, No chance or any opportunities for minorities to be public staff, high posts or employed in security institutions such as Army and local Police..in addition to the terrorism actions by extremists covered by religious principles, which all Iraq suffers from but the minorities targeting was much more than others; All this leads to No jobs, No trust & respect for the minorities at last leads for ethnic cleansing, same as what is happening today for our people in the homeland.

The regimes are taking advantage of sovereignty principle, which is used as protection preventing international community or UN organizations from interfering to stop any violations to Human rights practiced against minorities on Ethnic, Cultural, Religious or Sectarian bases, although those governments had already signed the UN human rights declaration and Charter of 1948 as well

**MAIN OBSTACLES THAT DEPRIVE MINORITIES FROM EFFECTIVE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION ARE :**

- The racist and religious extremist Culture of the majority
- Corrupted governments, seeking power and wealth, unfair with the minorities
- Lack of clear national legislation to grant the full rights of minorities.
- Lack of effective mechanisms and binding chart-law that oblige all the UN member states to practice the human rights chart of 1948
- Lack of tolerance and diversity culture specially in non democratic countries

- Lack of education programs that teaches tolerance culture and social justice
- Poverty & Bad economic situation

SOME OF THE MAIN suggestions for solutions to protect and for effective political participation:

- Adopting a clear UN conditional resolution with a clear mechanism to apply the human right declaration, 1948 chart,
- Establishing a clear mécanisme to bring equality between minorities and majority . Positive descrimination for a limited period of time can be applied to accelerate practically such process.
- Making a universal scholar program to teach and enhance, profoundly the tolerance human rights and diversity culture .
- Granting quoota (reserved seats )for minorities in all the elected councils in all levels to enable them to elect their real representatives. Monitoring the elections to assure transparency and fair resluts and particiaption in all levels of govermental insitutions.