

**Intervention by
Indonesian Delegation
7th Session Forum on Minority Issues
Geneva, 25 – 26 November 2014**

Thank your Mr. Chair,

My delegation would like to offer some observations after the two-day deliberation in this Forum.

First of all, let me re-iterate that Indonesia is the place where democracy and diversity are facts of life spreading through some 17 thousands islands with 240 million of populations. Against this background, the concept of minority has its own challenge and problem to be applied in Indonesia since the majority in one place can be minority in other place and vice versa. It is further complicated by the multiple and self-identification of an individual, mainly due to ethnicity, children from inter-ethnic marriage parents and place of residence.

Nevertheless like many other plural society with various ethnics, religions and cultural backgrounds, Indonesia cannot escape from potential frictions and conflicts. The government fully realizes this condition and continues its efforts to manage it through democratic means and manner in line with prevailing laws and regulations.

Mr. Chair,

From our experience of managing diversity and conflict in the society, at least five lessons, in my delegation's view, can be drawn:

First, there must be a strong will and involvement of all relevant stakeholders, be them political and community leaders, civil society, independent institutions (such as NHRI), as well as the community itself.

Second, local context and wisdom should be main point of reference. Bottom-up approach should always be promoted. Solution which is imposed from outside seldom, if never, works.

Third, clear and consistent implementation mechanisms should be devised.

Fourth, administrative and financial support should be secured.

Fifth, comprehensive approach should be taken, not only human rights, but also economic, political, security, and development.

Mr. Chair.

The Indonesian Constitution mandates and guarantees the protection of all people living in Indonesia from any form of discrimination. We implemented this through various measures in law and practice. For example, we have enacted Law No. 28 of 2008 on the Elimination of Racial and Ethnic Discrimination. We also keep promoting interfaith dialogue in various levels. We have also decentralized most of government business to provincial and district administration, except foreign policy, defence, monetary, religious and judicial system.

In fact, in certain places, special autonomy applies, as in the provinces of Aceh and Papua as well as West Papua. Those provinces possess greater autonomy in dealing with political, economic and social issues. Local Assemblies are established to promote and protect local people interests, customs, traditions and values. It should be noted that all provincial and sub-provincial administrations are led by native people. It also should be noted that this autonomy is accompanied by ever increasing budget allocation which is larger to all other provinces in Indonesia. The government had also established mechanisms and appointed envoy to further promote development and dialogue.

Nevertheless, challenges remain to be overcome. Issues of bylaws and limited institutional and human resources capacity that impact to governance are the examples. In this regard, we continue efforts to ensure and review the bylaws to be in line with our human rights law obligations, and to continue capacity building programmes for all state apparatus at national and local levels.

Mr.Chair,

In furthering our efforts, it should be underlined that the important role of civil society. It is hard to deny the existence of vibrant civil society, that occupies ample space and plays a meaningful role, in today's Indonesia. We also continue benefiting from the role of independent human rights institutions, such as the National Commission on Human Rights, the National Commission on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the National Commission for the Protection of Children, and the Ombudsman. It is assured that all human rights defenders, be them non-governmental activists, members of NHRI, academics, members of parliament or even government officials, are all equally protected under Indonesian law.

Mr. Chair,

To conclude, let me re-iterate that Indonesia is proud to be a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nation. The people there have lived in peace side by side throughout the years. Every individual rights are protected and guaranteed by the Constitution and Laws. We will continue our endeavor and efforts to progress human rights' promotion and protection for all in law and practice in the country.

I thank you.