

Government of the Republic of Hungary (Ms. Nikolett Babes)  
Item 4 2

The Working Group on minorities is a unique forum in UN for facilitating dialogue between minority NGO-s, governments and international organizations, all striving for the realization of the rights of minorities. The Working Group on minorities is a forum where different minorities can raise their voice, so that they can be heard at international level.

Now time has come to think on the way ahead on how should we proceed. We could hear from the Independent Expert yesterday that her activity will be limited mainly because of financial reasons. This regrettable fact enhances the importance of the Working Group as a means to assist her work. The Independent Expert and the Working Group do not exclude each other, to the contrary, in our view these two institutions are complementary.

The main goal of the Government of Hungary is that the Working Group continues its work in co-operation with the Independent Expert on Minority Issues. The Working Group must remain as it has always been, the platform for communication between minorities, NGO-s and governments.

We also agree with the suggestion put forward by Mr. Tom Hammond that the working group should also concentrate on good practices, positive examples and concrete suggestions to resolve problems involving minorities.

We should also consider how to encourage close co-operation between the Working Group and the Independent Expert, as well as other special procedures and treaty bodies.

We fully agree with the recommendation made by Mr. Hadden in his report namely that the meeting of the Working Group should be part of the Subcommission s agenda, it should encourage attendance of all parties concerned and maintain open access to all NGO-s. What is more, the Working Group should perhaps also consider the diversification of NGO-s so that a wider range of minority issues could be voiced and discussed at this forum.