



## Call for Participation

At a time when minorities face increased challenges worldwide, the Africa-Middle East Regional Forum, organised with the support and cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco, will mark the 30th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities<sup>1</sup> 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 concern<sup>2</sup>. 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 Africa-Middle East 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 and

<sup>1</sup> Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, General Assembly resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992.

<sup>2</sup> 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).

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.
- Provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to exchange good practices in promoting the rights of minorities in the region

## **Date and Venue**

Date: 6-7 September 2022

Online Meeting

## **Participation**

The Africa-Middle East 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 **Africa-Middle East region** (see list of eligible countries [here](#)), and with a clear **focus and expertise on minority rights**.

All individual participants must register online [here](#). Registration will close at **11pm CEST, Wednesday 31 August 2022**.

Participants are encouraged to submit any proposed recommendations in advance of the Africa-Middle East Regional Forum to [regionalforum@tomlantosinstitute.hu](mailto:regionalforum@tomlantosinstitute.hu) by Friday 2 September 2022. All written recommendations submitted in writing are collated and considered as part of the final set of recommendations developed during the regional forum.

The Africa-Middle East Regional Forum will be a virtual event. Further 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 Africa-Middle East Regional Forum will be a document with practical recommendations reflective of regional contexts and challenges.

*Simultaneous interpretation is anticipated in Amazigh, Arabic, English, French and Arabic Sign Language*