**Input for 'Human Rights 75 Initiative'**

**Input of the UNPOy to the 'Human Rights 75 Initiative'**

**Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization Youth (UNPOy)**

**What are the challenges the world is facing now, how they will affect the future of human rights, and what future do you want for human rights?**

As young people, we are primarily advocating for the universal extension of the UDHR, with a specific focus on the principle of self-determination, embodied in Article I of the Charter of the United Nations. According to this right, we, the youth, should be protected in imagining, pursuing, and freely engaging in the determination of our political status and the pursuit of our economic, social, and cultural development.

However, this right is forgotten more and more each day. With the denial of the right of self-determination, we are also deprived of the ability to engage in regional, national, and international dialogue, concerning the future of our communities. In some cases, our mere existence is under threat, as perceived through the Uyghur community.

It is vital that our generation is the last to be left outside of the full implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other United Nations treaties and declarations, as enshrined in the preamble of the UDHR.

The denial of the right of self-determination has inherently practical consequences for us:

* Youth from States with limited recognition are excluded from the mechanisms of international cooperation, leaving them more vulnerable and less mobile than those elsewhere. For example, they are unable to study abroad and are excluded from participation in debates on global issues.
* At the national level, a failure to equally promote self-determination across all strands of society leads to the exclusion, marginalization and increasing vulnerability of the youth. Our cultural, environmental, and political rights are ignored, resulting in an inherently uncertain future.
* In countries affected by frozen conflicts zones, young people are some of the primary victims. Instead of being able to imagine a peaceful future, and participate as actors working towards a sustainable future, they are trapped by the unresolved international conflict.

**Right to Self-identification, Identity and Cultural Rights**

The structural denial of self-determination and self-identification not only infringes on the rights of young people but perpetuates the systemic erasure of culture and heritage. The challenges faced by young people in preserving their cultural rights is exemplified by threats posed to indigenous and minority languages; an integral aspect of culture and collective identities. Many of us want to preserve, learn, and foster our declining indigenous languages. However, we lack the adequate means to do so.

UNPO youth recommendations:

* Educate and increase cultural engagement of Minority Youth: Upholding the right to education is paramount. We recommend that education systems recognise and celebrate the linguistic and cultural diversity of indigenous and minority communities. Empowering our communities with knowledge about human rights through harnessing modern technology will help mould a culture of respect.
* Full Implementation of UN declarations and conventions such us the UNDRIP: States must ratify the treaties and conventions protecting indigenous and minorities. Moreover, they must actively ensure its implementation and further develop legislation related to minority rights. Recognition and protection of our minorities’ indigenous identities must be non-negotiable. We implore the States, UN Experts, and international actors to recognize indigenous peoples, minorities, and youth over the world, including those living in non-recognised states, to guarantee them full access to their rights as stated in the UDHR.

**Environment and climate change**

The UNPO Youth are extremely vulnerable to environmental degradation. Many of us suffer repetitive violations to the environments we inhabit, including natural resource exploitation, pollution, and the degradation of habitats and biodiversity. Accordingly, our communities are ultimately deprived of their right to self-determination.

Climate change is a considerable threat to everyone. Not only does it introduce new environmental damages, it compounds existing ones. This is evident for the UNPO Youth members. Facing active discrimination, we have no means to advocate for climate prevention or mitigation strategies, nationally or internationally.

*UNPO youth recommendations:*

* The UNPO Youth is appealing to the international community to expand the scope of their youth engagement towards marginalised communities. The inclusion of ALL young people in discussions about climate and the environment is a prerequisite to a sustainable and equal future. A future formed without the consultation of the marginalised Youth will be one of uncertainty, the abandonment of ancestral land, and a hostile international environment for climate refugees often facing ecocide. Because of that, the UNPOy recommends the establishment of provisions that ensure the inclusion of all Youth communities in climate change forums.

**Political Participation of Youth**

The low rate of participation among the minority youth is depressing. This exclusion not only deprives these communities of representation, but it weakens the collective power of human rights activism. However, the UNPO Youth face restricted access to the growing movement of national and international bodies that are advocating for youth participation. This is ultimately driven by the marginalisation and discrimination they face within their States, which results in an inability to initiate a dialogue with international communities.

Accordingly, the UNPO Youth is reaching out to the international community to help reinforce the right of every child to achieve self-determination. On an international stage, we are advocating for

the value of diverse perspectives. Not only do UNPO Youth members wish to share their unique and innovative perspectives with others, but they wish to lend a hand in the construction of an equitable future for all. Within regional and national youth integration in governance structures, UNPO Youth unanimously advocates for the proliferation of bottom-up policies, driven by a mutual respect for all knowledge systems.

*UNPO youth recommendations:*

* Right to Self-Determination: The UN should enhance the implementation of the Charter on self-determination, safeguard youth and future generations' rights to land and culture, and uphold the ICCPR and the ICESCR.
* Global Collaboration: By transcending geographical boundaries, we commit to collaborating with youth from all corners of the world, forging solidarity and amplifying our collective impact.
* Empowerment of Indigenous and Minority Youth through integration in governance structure of the state: Foster spaces for youth from marginalised communities to engage actively in decision-making processes.
* Global Reporting Standards: The Human Rights Council should establish transparent reporting mechanisms to hold states accountable for human rights implementation, reprise non-compliance, and demonstrate commitment to minority youth safety.