

Minority Issues Forum
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Morning Session

Statement by Brooks B. ROBINSON – BlackEconomics.org (NGO)

To Madame Chairperson Mohacsi and to Madame Independent Expert Gay McDougall, I am Dr. Brooks Robinson speaking on behalf of the non-governmental organization BlackEconomics.org of the United States. We would like to make four important points:

- First, we should invoke the memory of the late Malcolm X (el-Hajji Malik el-Shabazz), who, in 1964, was one of the first to call for Black Americans to carry their Human Rights concerns to the United Nations. In large measure, he is an important reason why we are all here today.
- Second, while the Forum organizers have gone to great pains to address discrimination, they continue to use a term, “Minority,” which, in and of itself, carries many discriminatory connotations. Isn’t it possible for the Forum to identify another term, other than “Minority,” to describe the racial, linguistic, religious, and gender subgroups that are being discussed within the Forum?
- Third, members of the Forum should be circumspect in their calls for unilateral and unconstrained expenditures by government to meet the educational needs of so-called “Minority” groups. Governments operate using resources that are collected primarily through taxes to meet the needs of their citizens. In many cases, available revenues and expenditures constitute a zero-sum game. That is, Forum members’ requests for the provision of “Minority” educational services could essentially involve taking food out of the mouths and stomachs of children of the world in order that governments can place education in their brains. We should be careful that this is not the remedy that we prescribe?
- Finally, Forum members must recognize that the discrimination that we discuss is, in large measure, the result of the promulgation and perpetuation of stereotypes in the media. Consequently, it is important that we explore how best to eliminate adverse stereotypes about so-called “Minorities” from the media as we seek to eliminate discrimination from our societies. In this way we will attack a root cause of discrimination, not just a symptom.

We request that these sentiments be reflected in the Forum’s Recommendations.

Thank you Madame Chairperson.