

## **PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL, ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES**

The main point of reference for the international community regarding the rights of minorities is the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, adopted by the General Assembly in 1992. It includes a list of rights to which persons belonging to minorities are entitled, including the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion and to use their own language. It also contains measures which States could implement to create an environment conducive to the enjoyment of such rights, for example, through encouraging public knowledge of the history, traditions, language and culture of minorities existing within their territories and enabling persons belonging to minorities to participate fully in the economic progress and development of their country. States are also asked to implement national policies and programmes with due regard for minority interests. The cornerstones of the Declaration are the principles of non-discrimination, effective participation and protection and promotion of identity.

The Declaration was inspired by Article 27<sup>1</sup> of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which is the most widely accepted legally

in recruiting for public employment, including the police force, States ensure the participation and representation of all groups including minorities. States are also