

# Bahá'í International Community

Brussels Office

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## **Statement for Session 8: Tolerance and non-discrimination I (continued), including rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and preventing aggressive nationalism, racism and chauvinism**

Thank you, Mr. Moderator. My name is Nura Detweiler from the Brussels Office of the Bahá'í International Community. One of the most important and urgent conversations we have in Europe today is the one about what it means for diverse people to live together. One of the main concerns arising here is how to combat discrimination, racism, xenophobia and other forms of prejudice. As important as these endeavours to remove barriers that prevent people from pursuing their aspirations and participate in society are, they constitute primarily a starting point for creating inclusive and diverse societies. However, thought must be invested into creating those conditions which will allow populations to not merely live side by side, but for people of all backgrounds to gain those capacities that allow them to work shoulder to shoulder towards the transformation of their communities.

The most effective way of achieving this goal is to invest in educational processes that reinforce the belief in the oneness of humankind and build capacity in people to better contribute to the betterment of society. The knowledge that is generated through such processes can then replace prejudices and give way to collectively working together for achieving the goal of the betterment of society. Youth especially have great potential to act as protagonists of constructive change, given their heightened energy, their idealism and their special capacity to mobilise others. Therefore, we would like to encourage member States to ensure a framework for school education that provides for building capacity in youth to jointly transform their communities. Additionally, we encourage civil society to think about how to foster spaces and capacities in wider society, which are targeted towards building unified communities that celebrate diversity.