

# Annual Minority Rights Lecture

**Date: 14 December 2022**

Venue: Conference Hall, Eurac Research

**Speaker: Fernand de Varennes,  
UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues**



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18:00 - 18:15	Welcome and opening remarks by <b>Arno Kompatscher</b> , President of the Autonomous Province of South Tyrol
18:15 - 19:00	Annual Minority Rights Lecture by <b>Fernand de Varennes</b> , UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues
19:00 - 19:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>
<i>Chair:</i> <b>Roberta Medda-Windischer</b> , Group Leader, Institute for Minority Rights <i>Afterwards:</i> <b>Buffet</b>	

The event will be held in English. No simultaneous translation will be provided.

### Is it time for legal protection of the human rights of minorities? – A critique of current gaps and failures

30 years ago, United Nations Member States came together and adopted by consensus the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. The Declaration remains the key instrument to address the rights of persons belonging to minorities at a universal level. While progress has been made, the situation of persons belonging to minorities is critical in many parts of the world and many challenges remain to ensure the full enjoyment of their rights. In any case, the current increase in autocratic and authoritarian tendencies in some countries in Europe and the world is not a good sign for minorities.

The 30th anniversary of the Declaration provides an opportunity to take stock. In his lecture, Fernand de Varennes, UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues, examines the status quo and maps out a way forward. The normative framework concerning the protection of minorities under international law provides a powerful tool to objectively analyze and propose solutions. Despite this, the body of standards and jurisprudence is not referred to or utilized enough in situations involving minorities that may eventually escalate into violent conflict. However, there is also a need to reform and harmonise the treaty bodies in terms of their effectiveness and transparency. A prerequisite for guaranteeing minority rights in the future remains the strengthening of civil society and activists.

The Annual Minority Rights Lecture is a lecture series of the Institute for Minority Rights in collaboration with the Center for Autonomy Experience.

#### Info & contact:

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