

Submissions to the Subcommittee on Children's Rights

**Meeting on 25 March 2017
Submissions from individuals**

Iqra Qunwal

Good afternoon everyone. I am Iqra Qunwal from Delia Memorial School (Broadway), currently a secondary 4 student. I am originally from Pakistan but I have been living in Hong Kong for a while. Today, I'm here to discuss the high rising concern about problems ethnic minorities like me or other children facing here In Hong Kong.

The first issue I want to talk about is related to school uniforms

Being from Pakistan and proudly being a Muslim. Our religion Islam have obligatory practices which requires us to cover our body in a proper manner whereas other religions encourage and have their have dressing codes. Regarding the local school in Hong Kong, they have conduct of uniforms such as skirts which are short to certain extent.

As today I am representing the ethnic minorities and the Pakistani and Muslim community in Hong Kong. Being a Muslim I have been through this in primary school, where I was forced to wear shorts and was not allowed to wear a hijab (Scarf) due to the school uniform regulation. However, now in Broadway, our religion and practices are respected and appreciated by our school teachers and also the students.

I think the Education Bureau should provide guidelines to all schools and make sure that they allow religious dressings, since there are ethnic minorities who want to study hard, but this issue may deteriorate their morale. And also Hong Kong is a global village where various types of cultures and religions co-exist.

The other problem we ethnics face in Hong Kong is that we rarely get an opportunity to mingle with locals as in DSS schools Ethnic minorities are the majority. Living in a place like Hong Kong we have to learn how to communicate with locals in their native language (Cantonese), as we might be working with or for them in the future.

As, DSS school mainly have Ethnic minorities. I think local school and DSS schools should organize some joint school activities, as this can help the locals and ethnic minority students to bond and learn about each other's culture and understandings.

And also clear misunderstandings or any stereotypes which they have for each other initially.

It's time for us to unite together for a better tomorrow for the ethnic minorities and the locals living in Hong Kong .That's all I wanted to discuss about. I hope everyone present here would have found my presentation meaningful and worth listening.

Thank you