

Good day, this is Kayna, an ethnic minority that considers Hong Kong as home. I would like to bring your attention to the flaws that RDO, Racial Discrimination Ordinance has in relation to nationality, citizenship and residency status since it is not included as a characteristics that constitutes to discrimination.

In 2009, CERD has made particular recommendations to the Hong Kong Government to include 'immigration status and nationality' as a prohibited condition of an act of discrimination. However, as of now there still has no amendments made. We firmly hope that this modification will be made as soon as possible since there has been numerous ethnic minorities facing proxy discrimination in certain situations but no action could be done due to the lack of consistency of the RDO for protection. This situation is not compliant with the international human rights obligations and therefore should be rectified.

There are a lot of ethnic minorities expressing frustrations when they apply for bank accounts, why? Because there has been instances that they are asked their nationality and are then required to provide extra documentation such as passports although the requirements only needs to be Hong Kong identity card, some are given longer waiting periods than other service consumers and there are also case that they are denied to access to the service citing other issues as an excuse. These cases are not rare, since my own family experience this, my cousin who is a pakistani Hong Kong resident wanted to open a bank account in a 'specific bank', but after questioning him a lot of questions like what we do in job interviews, they did not approve his application while other local applicants did not need to go through such process. We would like to rectify the situation by giving recommendations.

Amending the RDO to include nationality would be the first step. This is so as to not have helpless situation where people of different nationalities residing in an international city like Hong Kong face discrimination but no complain could be lodged.

Another recommendation is that the government should devise a campaign which aims to promote equality in both the private and public sector which is also against racism. We believe that discrimination should also be tackled from its root, so residents should be free from discriminatory mindset against people of different nationality. Though there are such measures, it should be placed in higher priority to promote equality and racial inclusion.

We do hope that Hong Kong could be a place where racial and social harmony exists, however we need a solid legislation on the rights of minorities and we need to eliminate racial prejudice to make a change.

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