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Statement by

**H.E. Ambassador Katalin Annamária Bogyay,
Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations**

**On the occasion of the Interactive Dialogue with
Mr Fernand de Varennes, UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues**

**Third Committee of the General Assembly Agenda Item 74:
Promotion and protection of human rights**

23 October 2018

Mr Chair,

Hungary aligns itself with the statement by the European Union.

We welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, highly appreciates his presentation today and fully supports his mandate. We share the concern highlighted in the report that statelessness is indeed a minority issue.

The Hungarian Government remains firmly committed to the effective promotion and protection of the rights of national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, within Hungary and internationally as well. We believe that (*the protection of the rights of national minorities is essential for international peace and security*), and it is vital to provide collective rights to minorities, and to protect their community identity.

Hungary is deeply concerned about the persecution of religious minorities, with special regard to Christians suffering discrimination in many parts of the world. (*The international community should follow closely the alarming situation of these minorities, and ensure the long-term protection of their rights.*) The Hungarian Government supports persecuted and displaced religious communities directly and locally, to enable their safe return and reintegration in their homeland.

Mr Chair,

The right to mother-tongue education for minorities is a fundamental right recognized in international human rights instruments.

Hungary is seriously concerned about the ongoing implementation of the Law on Education in Ukraine. Article 7 of that law, which raised concerns internationally in the past year, is aimed at narrowing already acquired minority rights, which, in our view, is unacceptable. Our clear expectations are in line with the recommendations of the Venice Commission in this regard, which, despite previous commitments from Ukraine, have not yet been implemented.

Furthermore, we are very worried about the recently adopted law on state language policy in Ukraine, which eliminates existing recognition of regional languages. This is a definite step backwards on the previously acquired minority rights, depriving the Hungarian minority of its ability to maintain its common cultural identity.

Finally, we have to call attention to the now regular incidents committed against the Hungarian minority and Hungarian diplomatic personnel, as well as the harassment of public servants and journalists belonging to the Hungarian minority by the Ukrainian authorities at the border of Hungary and Ukraine, which also generate serious concerns.

Mr. Rapporteur, we believe the UN and the international community should take immediate steps to protect minority rights and minority languages.

Could you elaborate on the activities of your mandate aiming at addressing these concerns?