

Minority rights defenders need increased international support and protection

Minority Rights Group International

10 December 2010

Minority and indigenous human rights activists face exceptional levels of risk because they are targeted for their identity as well as for their work, Minority Rights Group International (MRG) says on International Human Rights Day. These threats range from killings, physical attacks, arrest and detention to everyday harassment and hate campaigns.

The theme of International Human Rights Day 2010 is 'Human Rights Defenders Acting to End Discrimination'. MRG says increased and targeted international attention and action is needed to ensure protection of these activists, who work in dangerous situations.

'Minority and indigenous activists are on the frontline of the fight against discrimination and often face multiple levels of threat. They are not always recognised as human rights defenders. When they are, the specific threats they face are not necessarily known,' says Carl Soderbergh, MRG's Director of Policy and Communications (...)

(...) Some of these minority rights defenders may also be working in situations of conflict, where they not only face armed violence but could also be targeted by state agents or militants because the community they represent or work for is drawn into the conflict.

Women minority and indigenous rights defenders are under added threat. They risk attacks and discrimination from both the majority society as well as from within their community, in addition to gendered cultural practices.

Many of the communities MRG works with across the world are marginalised, excluded and neglected by the state, which not only makes human rights work more dangerous but also leads to less protection for these activists (...)

Read [full statement](#)