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**Promoting pluralism and human rights around the world
irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion or political opinion.**



Minority Rights Protection: People Belonging to Minority Migrant Communities

Elina Stamou, SHRG, May 2002

*"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments
of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. "*

Martin Luther King (1929 - 1968)

Executive Summary

In a world of widespread violations of human rights, discrimination and marginalisation of people belonging to minorities, increased interstate tensions and conflicts the need to acknowledge and act upon the link between protection of minority rights, cultural diversity and conflict prevention becomes crucial. This is particularly important in the light of the increasing migration flows of the last few years and the changing demographic composition of states that calls for a reconsideration and improvement of the current minority protection regime.

As this paper argues, protection of the rights of people belonging to minorities can only be effectively implemented when approached as a way to conflict prevention through the promotion of cultural diversity that requires the protection of the rights of all minorities, including those of migrant minority groups. Embracing cultural diversity means effective minority rights protection without any distinctions amongst minority groups. To this end this paper demonstrates the need for effective minority protection underlined by the core principles of international human rights law; the maximisation of freedom of all and the realisation of dignity for everyone, including persons belonging to minorities without distinctions on grounds such as ethnicity, religion, language, culture or nationality. Within this framework, the nationality/citizenship criterion for minority protection as well as the prerequisite of having long-established relationship with the state, are closely examined against the letter and spirit of international human rights law and the reality of the minority phenomenon that does not appear to allow for distinctions between 'old' and 'new' minorities, citizens and non-citizens.

For a full version of the paper please contact shrg@shrg.org.