

MEDIA ADVISORY

UN Human Rights Chief to speak out on caste-based rape and violence

June 12th, 2014 -- On Tuesday 17th June the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, will give the opening statement at a side-event on caste-based violence against women, at the UN Human Rights Council. The event comes following a series of brutal rape cases against Dalit women and the [rape and hanging of two teenage cousins in India](#).

The side-event entitled “**Caste-based Violence against Women: The role of the UN in combatting caste-based violence and discrimination**,” takes place on **17/6 from 13:00-15:00 in room XXIII** at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. The side-event is sponsored by Human Rights Watch, International Movement against all forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), Minority Rights Group, Franciscan International, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development and organised in association with International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN). Live tweeting from the event will be on twitter.com/idsnupdates and a live webcast may also be arranged.

Dalit women leaders, the UN Women Policy Director, the OHCHR Chief of the Human Rights, Economic and Social Issues Section and the UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues, and a Human Rights Watch Fellow will also be speaking at the event. [The full programme is available here >>](#).

The event will address sexual and other forms of violence against Dalit women and explore with United Nations stakeholders how to take comprehensive and urgent action on this issue. Dalit women human rights defenders will speak of the reality on the ground in South Asia and a preview of a documentary on the Dalit women’s fight for justice in India will be screened at the opening of the event.

Information on caste-based violence against women:

Please [download the leaflet *Dalit women fight!*](#) For information, quotes and cases including recent gang-rape cases and cases on the failure of systems of justice in connection with violence against Dalit women in South-Asia. The gang-rape of two teenage cousins in Uttar Pradesh in India has been [widely reported](#), unfortunately this is not a unique case and Dalit women suffer rape and violence with impunity for the perpetrators and at an alarmingly high level. Urgent action to end this reality is imperative and Dalit women fighting against caste-based rape and violence on the ground are asking for a global level response.

Interviews: Dalit women leaders [Asha Kowtal](#), [Manjula Pradeep](#) (India) and [Durga Sob](#) (Nepal) and the Director of the International Dalit Solidarity Network, will be available for interviews in Geneva from the 11th – 18th of June. Please contact [mb@idsn.org/](mailto:mb@idsn.org) +45 60433433 to arrange.

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