

## **IDSN recommendations on agenda items of relevance to be considered at the 29th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) (15 June-3 July 2015)**

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### ITEM 3 - PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS

#### **Report of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice (April 2015)**

In the annual HRC report, [A/HRC/29/40](#), the Working Group addresses eliminating discrimination against women in cultural and family life, with a focus on the family as a cultural space. The Working Group notes that the expression “diverse families” encompasses, for example, non-traditional families resulting from inter-caste marriages. And, that in all these different forms of family, women tend to be subject to legal sanctions and to experience different social and economic situations. It underlines that minority women living in caste systems are more likely to be found in these forms of family and are especially vulnerable to early and/or forced marriage, while men may have multiple households or second families with their de facto spouses or partners.

The different forms of family and their recognition by the State are influenced by a multitude of normative factors, such as caste. Although several international forums recognize family diversity, including “in different cultural, political and social systems”, many of the aforementioned non-traditional forms of family are not recognized by all States. Given that State recognition is often a condition for families to receive services and benefits, such as accommodation and protection provided by the State and/or non-State actors, lack of recognition leads to the marginalization of these families.

#### **IDSN recommendations and questions related to the report of the Working Group**

- IDSN calls on states to raise the issue of gender- and caste-based discrimination in the Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group, scheduled for 18 June (15.00-18.00).

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*IDSN is pleased to extend the following invitation to your delegation:*

**HRC29 Side-event: “CASTE- AND GENDER-BASED FORCED AND BONDED LABOUR: The role of the UN in combatting the intersection of caste and gender in the area of forced and bonded labour. June 18, 2014, 17.00-18.30. Room XXV.**

Sponsored by Human Rights Watch (HRW), the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), Minority Rights Group (MRG), Anti-Slavery International, Franciscans International (FI) and organised in association with the International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN).

This side event will explore and discuss caste-based forced and bonded labour practices, in particular faced by women and girls from caste affected communities through “a window to the reality on the ground” presented by speakers from South Asia, UN agencies and experts for a common exploration.

- The event will provide participants with insight into how the UN, ILO and civil society have approached the issues
- Speakers will address recommendations from the UN human rights mechanisms
- The debate will provide an opportunity to identify and discuss perspectives for strengthened UN action

Please see the [Invitation flyer](#) for the event. More information will be available on [idsn.org/side-event](http://idsn.org/side-event) & [idsn.org/key-issues/caste-based-slavery](http://idsn.org/key-issues/caste-based-slavery).

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Please note that some HRC29 reports have yet to be published, but could prove relevant. If so, we will disseminate the relevant extracts. Please find the [List of HRC29 reports](#).

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Please see other relevant references and resources below:

Extracts on caste in reports of the 29<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council

- See extracts on caste in HRC29 reports [here](#)

The IDSN Compilation of references to caste based discrimination in UN human rights bodies (June 2015):

- [IDSN compilation of UN reference to caste discrimination](#) (Ninth edition)