

IDSN recommendations on agenda items of relevance to be considered at the 28th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) (2-27 March 2015)

ITEM 2. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND REPORTS OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (December 2014)

In the HRC report, [A/HRC/28/27](#), for the 28th session, the newly appointed High Commissioner, Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein highlights that the OHCHR is determined to combat exclusion, marginalisation and abuse of people on the basis of their caste status, among others. As such, through the year, both the former and new High Commissioners have stressed in public statements the importance of advancing non-discrimination and protection of minorities and in particular Dalits.

- Please find a link to a [compilation of the High Commissioner's as well as the UN Secretary General's references to caste in statements and reports in 2014](#)

The High Commissioner also underlined that the CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, adopted in November 2013, requests that States address the needs of women belonging to minorities. Specific groups of women and girls are at particular risk of violence during and after conflict such as women of diverse caste identities who are often attacked as symbolic representatives of their community.

IDSN recommendations and questions related to the report of the High Commissioner

- IDSN calls on states to raise the issue of caste-based discrimination in the Interactive Dialogue with the High Commissioner, scheduled for 5 and 6 March.
- IDSN recommends States take note of the attention paid by the former and present High Commissioner to the importance of advancing non-discrimination and protection of Dalits.
- In line with CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30, IDSN calls on states to address the needs of Dalit women during and after conflict.

ITEM 3 - PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS

Report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Heiner Bielefeldt (December 2014)

In his annual HRC report, [A/HRC/28/66](#), the Special Rapporteur addresses the inadequacy of isolating "religion" as a factor in conflict descriptions. Mr. Bielefeldt underlines that non-religious factors such as caste hierarchies deserve to be taken seriously and that any specific incident of violence in the name of religion warrants a careful, contextualized analysis of all such relevant factors.

IDSN recommendations and questions related to the report of the Special Rapporteur

- IDSN calls on states to raise the issue of caste-based discrimination in the Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur, scheduled for 10 and 11 March.

Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Rita Izsák (January 2015)

In her annual report, [A/HRC/28/64](#), Ms. Izsák highlights her participation in the June 2014 side event on “Caste-based violence against women and girls” organised by IDSN in Geneva where she discussed the role of Special Procedures in combating caste-based discrimination and violence.

IDSN recommendations and questions related to the report of the Special Rapporteur

- IDSN calls on states to raise the issue of caste-based discrimination and violence in the Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur, scheduled for 18 March (09.00-12.00).

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Maud de Boer-Buquicchio (December 2014)

In her annual report, [A/HRC/28/56](#), the Special Rapporteur notes her consultation with IDSN in September 2014.

IDSN recommendations and questions related to the report of the Special Rapporteur

- IDSN calls on states to raise the issue of caste-based discrimination and violence in the Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur, scheduled for 18 March (09.00-12.00).

ITEM 5 – HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES AND MECHANISMS

Recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues at its seventh session: Preventing and addressing violence and atrocity crimes targeted against minorities (25 and 26 November 2014) (January 2015)

In the seventh set of recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues, [A/HRC/28/77](#), focused on preventing and addressing violence and atrocity crimes targeted against minorities, held in November 2014, it was specifically recommended for States to address violence against Dalits.

For the event, [IDSN submitted suggestions for recommendations and language on preventing and addressing violence against Dalits](#) to be included in the outcome document. Ms. Thilagam Ramalingam, Program Director of EVIDENCE; an organization advocating for the rights of marginalised in Tamil Nadu, [spoke at the Forum on violence against Dalit women](#). Also, in the [IDSN team](#) was Pirbhu Lal from the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network who [spoke at the forum on violence against Dalits and religious minorities in Pakistan](#).

It was specifically recommended for States;

- To address the situation of those who face stigmatization and dehumanisation on the basis of their caste as it results in exploitation, abuse and exposure to violence. State should pay particular attention to and urgently address the situation of persons belonging to such minority groups as they may face the most severe and entrenched forms of discrimination and exclusion.

- To collect data disaggregated by caste, including in national census processes. Such data, analysed in combination with socioeconomic indicators, provide a better understanding of the size and status of minorities and a factual basis for developing a common understanding of the causes of inequalities and exposure to violence, as well as targeted objectives in the context of inclusive initiatives intended to prevent violence. Such data should be based primarily on self-identification, and civil society and minority groups should be involved throughout the process from design to collection and analysis, in order to improve accuracy and consistency of data collection and evaluation processes.

IDSN recommendations and questions related to the report of the Seventh Forum on Minority Issues

- IDSN calls on states to raise the issue of caste-based discrimination and violence in the Interactive Dialogue on the report with the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, scheduled for 18 March (09.00-12.00).
- In line with the Minority Forum Recommendations, IDSN calls on States to address the situation of those who face stigmatization and dehumanisation on the basis of their caste as it results in exploitation, abuse and exposure to violence. Also, IDSN calls on States to collect data disaggregated by caste.

Please note that some HRC28 reports have yet to be published, but could prove relevant. If so, we will disseminate the relevant extracts. Please find the [list of HRC28 reports](#) (with links)

Please see other relevant references and resources below:

Extracts on caste in reports of the 28th session of the Human Rights Council

- See extracts on caste in HRC28 reports [here](#)

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

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