

## References to Caste-Based Discrimination in reports and statements presented at the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, March 2015

<p>Statement of the European Union in the General debate on Agenda Item 8 Follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA)</p> <p>March 23 2015</p>	<p>The VDPA also affirmed the universality of human rights. Not disregarding the importance of history, culture and religion it nevertheless states very clearly, that it is – I quote – <i>the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms</i>. Against this background, the European Union laments repeated efforts by some to undermine the principle of universality with cultural relativism. Values or cultural specificities, or any other concept, cannot relieve States from their obligation to protect all human rights of all persons in their jurisdiction. In this context, it is also important to highlight what should be self-evident; that human rights protection is not afforded to groups, beliefs or ideologies but to human beings – whatever their race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, <b>caste</b> or migration status. The European Union will continue its efforts to promote and protect the universality of human rights in the Human Rights Council and elsewhere.</p>
<p>Statement of the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, Ms. Rita Izsak, presenting the Recommendations from the Seventh Session of the Forum on Minority Issues</p> <p>March 18 2015</p>	<p>Improving the prevention of violence and atrocity crime</p> <p>Particular attention should be paid to urgently address the situation of persons belonging to minority groups who may face the most severe and entrenched forms of discrimination and exclusion, stigmatization and dehumanization on the basis of their ethnic or religious identity, work and descent or <b>caste</b>, resulting in wide-ranging exploitation, abuse and exposure to violence</p>
<p>Statement of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Heiner Bielefeldt</p> <p>March 10 2015</p>	<p>Non-religious factors, which deserve to be taken seriously, include difficult historic legacies of a country, a climate of political authoritarianism, social inequalities or <b>caste hierarchies</b>, ethnic fragmentation, rapid demographic changes, patriarchal values and the impact of a “macho” culture, migration processes, a widening gulf between urban and rural areas, the break-down of meaningful public discourse and lack of inter-group communication, endemic corruption and political cronyism, widespread disenchantment with politics, general loss of trust in public institutions, failing States and other issues. Any specific incident of violence committed in the name of religion warrants a careful, contextualized analysis of all relevant factors, including the broader political environment in which such acts take place. It thereby will become clear that religion is nowhere an isolated root-cause of violent conflicts or attacks.</p>
<p>Nepal Minister of Foreign Affairs Mahendra Bahadur Pandey <a href="#">statement</a> in the High Level Segment</p>	<p>We have established various human rights institutions in the country. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), a constitutional body, enjoys full autonomy and independence in its actions in line with the Paris Principles. Similarly, the Government has also supported the evolution and</p>

<p>March 3 2015</p>	<p>institutionalization of other national human rights institutions, such as the National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities, National Women’s Commission and National <b>Dalit</b> Commission. The Government is further committed to strengthening the capacity of all national human rights institutions.</p> <p>We have given top priority to human rights issues. Human rights principles are enshrined as the cornerstone of our Interim Constitution, with clear provisions of respecting, promoting and protecting the rights of all Nepali citizens equitably. Our legislations and policies prohibit all kinds of discrimination including those based on gender, ethnicity, class, <b>caste</b> and religion.</p> <p>Measures are adopted for protection of the rights and empowerment of disadvantaged and economically weaker segments of the population, including through the provisions of reservation and positive discrimination. In particular, our efforts in guaranteeing the rights of all people including women, <i>madhesis</i>, ethnic communities, <b>dalits</b>, people with disabilities and other minorities are progressive.</p>
<p>HC Statement – Presentation of report on OHCHR activities March 3 2015</p>	<p>Economic and social rights build strong societies. They are not an optional luxury for times of peace; they are rights in the full meaning of the word, and a tool for building peace and powering true development. Societies that are participatory can benefit from the skills of all - including girls, women, and minorities and castes that previously suffered discrimination. And when adequate services are provided, such as decent health, education and housing, there is massive economic benefit to all, and a dividend in stable peace.</p>
<p><a href="#">Opening Statement</a> of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein March 2 2015</p>	<p>“Mr. President,</p> <p>The overwhelming majority of victims of human rights abuses around the world share two characteristics: Deprivation, and discrimination - whether it is based on race or ethnicity, gender, beliefs, sexual orientation, caste or class. From hunger to massacres, sexual violence and slavery, human rights violations are rooted in these hidden, and sometimes not so hidden, factors.</p> <p>They are not spontaneously generated. Most violations of human rights result from policy choices, which limit freedom and participation, and create obstacles to the fair sharing of resources and opportunities.”</p>
<p>Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities</p> <p><a href="#">A/HRC/28/27</a></p>	<p><b>II. Work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at its headquarters and in the field</b></p> <p>OHCHR strives to ensure that the principles of the Declaration and other relevant human rights standards are used more effectively to support the participation of minorities in decision-making and to strengthen human rights protection at the national level. OHCHR is determined to combat exclusion, marginalization and abuse of people on the basis of their</p>

<p>December 2014</p>	<p>perceived race, their indigenous, ethnic or religious background, their colour, gender, <b>caste status</b>, disability, age, health status, or sexual orientation. As such, throughout the year, the High Commissioners have stressed in public statements the importance of advancing non-discrimination and protection of minorities.</p> <p><b>IV. Human rights treaty bodies</b></p> <p>Human rights treaty bodies have addressed minority issues throughout the reporting period, as illustrated by the following examples.</p> <p><b>B. General comments and general recommendations</b></p> <p>The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women adopted, in November 2013, its general recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, some provisions of which requested that States address the needs of women belonging to minorities. It was noted in the general recommendation that during and after conflict, specific groups of women and girls were at particular risk of violence, especially sexual violence, for example women of diverse <b>caste</b>, ethnic, national or religious identities, or of other minorities, who were often attacked as symbolic representatives of their community.</p>
<p>Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Maud de Boer-Buquicchio</p> <p><a href="#">A/HRC/28/56</a></p> <p>December 2014</p>	<p><b>II.Activities</b></p> <p><b>B.Other activities</b></p> <p>Since her appointment, the Special Rapporteur has conducted four working visits to Geneva and two working visits to New York, where she held initial consultations with many stakeholders relevant to her mandate, including...and various non-governmental organizations (International Catholic Child Bureau, Caritas Internationalis, Casa Alianza Suisse, Child Rights Connect, Child Rights Information Network, Defence for Children International, ECPAT, <b>International Dalit Solidarity Network</b>, Oak Foundation, Plan International, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes Federation Internationale, Under the Same Sun Fund and World Vision International)</p>
<p>Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Rita Izsák</p> <p><a href="#">A/HRC/28/64</a></p> <p>January 2015</p>	<p><b>II.Activities of the Special Rapporteur</b></p> <p><b>C.Additional activities</b></p> <p><b>Events, conferences and outreach</b></p> <p>On 17 June 2014, she participated in the side event on “<b>Caste-based violence against women and girls</b>”, organized by the <b>International Dalit Solidarity Network</b>, in Geneva. She discussed the role of special procedures in combating <b>caste-based discrimination and violence</b>.</p>
<p>Report of the Special</p>	<p><b>II.Preventing violence committed in the name of religion</b></p>

<p>Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Heiner Bielefeldt</p> <p><a href="#">A/HRC/28/66</a></p> <p>December 2014</p>	<p><b>B.Overcoming simplistic interpretations</b></p> <p><b>Inadequacy of isolating “religion” as a factor in conflict descriptions</b></p> <p>Non-religious factors that deserve to be taken seriously may include intricate historic legacies of a country, a climate of political authoritarianism, military interventions, extreme poverty, social, cultural, economic and political discrimination, exclusion and marginalization, inequalities, <b>caste hierarchies</b>, ethnic fragmentation, rapid demographic changes, patriarchal values and a “macho” culture, migration processes, a widening gulf between urban and rural areas, the breakdown of meaningful public discourse, lack of intergroup communication, endemic corruption and political cronyism, widespread disenchantment with politics, general loss of trust in weak or inexistent public institutions, and a culture of impunity and denial for past serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. Any specific incident of violence in the name of religion warrants a careful, contextualized analysis of all relevant factors, including the broader political environment. It will thereby become clear that religion is almost never an isolated root cause of violent conflicts or attacks.</p>
<p>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)</p> <p><a href="#">A/HRC/28/77</a></p> <p>January 2015</p>	<p><b>III.Recommendations</b></p> <p><b>A. Recommendations to prevent violence and atrocity crimes</b></p> <p><b>1. Recommendations to States</b></p> <p>17. States should pay particular attention to and urgently address the situation of persons belonging to minority groups who may face the most severe and entrenched forms of discrimination and exclusion. Such discrimination and exclusion may include stigmatization and dehumanization on the basis of their <b>work and descent or caste</b>, notions of pollution and other forms of stigmatization resulting in wide-ranging exploitation, abuse and exposure to violence.</p> <p>24. States should collect data disaggregated by, inter alia, gender, age, ethnicity, <b>caste</b>, religion, mother tongue and geographical location, 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.</p>
<p>Special Procedures Communications Report</p> <p><a href="#">A/HRC/28/85</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Joint Allegation Letter</a> (01/07/2014) to India from WG on Discrimination against women; SR on Minority issues; SR on Summary executions; SR on Torture; SR on Violence against women; SR on Water and Sanitation:</p> <p>Alleged abduction, gang-rape, and murder of two teenage girls and failure</p>

<p>February 2015</p>	<p>of the authorities to effectively respond after their abductions were reported. According to the information received, on the night of 27 May 2014, Ms. X and Ms. Y, both minors, were abducted as they walked to a field to relieve themselves because they had no access to sanitation at home. After being made aware of this incident, the girls' fathers reportedly went to the police station in the village to report their daughters as missing. However, the local police officers insulted them and refused to help, reportedly because the two young women belonged to a lower <b>caste</b>. The girls were later found dead, hanging from a tree in a mango orchard. It is reported that they had been gang-raped before they were killed.</p>
<p>Report on the twenty-first annual meeting of special rapporteurs/representatives, independent experts and working groups of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, including updated information on the special procedures</p> <p><a href="#">A/HRC/28/41</a></p> <p>January 2015</p>	<p><b>Civil society and non-governmental organizations</b></p> <p>92. The civil society representatives expressed gratitude for the commitment of mandate holders to cases of reprisal and the protection of human rights defenders. <b>They requested mandate holders to examine discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, caste and descent;</b> the right to privacy; the impact of extractive industries on the rights of indigenous peoples; and the sustainable development goals. They also expressed the view that the Coordination Committee should play a role in the selection and appointment of new mandate holders.</p>
<p>Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Technical assistance to support inclusive and participatory development and poverty reduction at the national level</p> <p><a href="#">A/HRC/28/42</a></p> <p>January 2015</p>	<p><b>III. National experiences of support for inclusive and participatory development and poverty eradication.</b></p> <p><b>B. Empowerment for free, informed and meaningful participation in public decision-making</b></p> <p>Nepal: addressing the equality imperative</p> <p>52. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the issue, the country analysis looked at specific groups of people, whose vulnerability was described on the basis of the experience and expertise of United Nations development actors. As a result, the following 19 groups were incorporated in the UNDAF design: <b>Dalits</b>; The emphasis of the profiles was an analysis of the underlying causes of each group's vulnerability. An aggregate analysis was developed aimed at identifying, thematizing and categorizing the groups' characteristics and, perhaps most importantly, finding commonalities in the underlying causes of their vulnerabilities.</p>

