

IDSN's application for UN consultative status is again blocked by India

The International Solidarity Network (IDSN) has since 2007 sought to be accredited as an NGO with the United Nations in order to be better able to monitor and influence the work in the UN on caste discrimination. The application was first considered at the Regular Session of the Committee on NGOs in January 2008. Since then, the application has been deferred at all following regular and resumed sessions of the Committee on NGOs, i.e. for 8 years. IDSN's application is the longest pending by the Committee.

During this period IDSN has received 69 written questions, to which IDSN has always provided full, transparent and timely responses. During the process, no objections have been made to IDSN's application on technical or procedural grounds. All 69 written questions have been posed by one member of the Committee, namely India, resulting in continuous deferral of the application by the Committee.

At the May 2015 Meeting of the NGO Committee, India continued to cause a deferral of IDSN's application for UN consultative (ECOSOC) status by asking yet another set of [repetitive questions](#). IDSN was in fact asked four questions, bringing the total number of questions to 69, and yet again causing the deferral of the application.

On 28 May, IDSN Executive Director, Rikke Nöhrind presented the case at an ISHR event on "Strengthening NGO participation and the right to freedom of association at the UN: Current challenges and opportunities for reform" held at the Australian mission in New York.

In March 2015, the US was urged to actively support IDSN's application for UN consultative status by IDSN and fourteen other human rights organisations. A [joint letter](#) was sent to US Secretary of State, Mr. John Kerry, urging the US to take leadership in supporting IDSN's application for UN consultative status

In April 2015, the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) released a new handbook on NGO access to the UN and UN Committee on NGOs where the case of IDSN and the issue of caste was featured prominently and [highlighted several places](#). The handbook, [A Practical Guide to the UN Committee on NGOs](#), is an honest account of the way in which the NGO committee functions and malfunctions, with helpful tips and useful insight. At a well-attended launch, hosted by the Permanent Mission of Australia to the UN in Geneva on 22 April, IDSN presented [the case of unjust deferral of IDSN's application for ECOSOC status](#) through the perpetual questioning from India for over 7 years, noting that the denial of consultative status is as a case of reprisal, blocking the work of IDSN at the UN. At the launch, Vice-President of the Human Rights Council noted the importance of the active participation of NGOs in the Human Rights Council and recognised the concerns voiced about the large number of deferrals and perceived lack of transparency in decisions on consultative status of NGOs. Please see [IDSN news article on the handbook](#), April 2015.

IDSN has submitted the case of reprisals to various UN mechanisms over the years, most recently to the UN Secretary-General Report on Reprisals and as letters of allegation to the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association and UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.

On October 28 2014, in his presentation to the General Assembly, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association criticised India for arbitrarily blocking IDSN from obtaining UN consultative status calling it ["clearly unacceptable, wrong and unfair."](#)

More information:

[Read the fact sheet on IDSN's application for ECOSOC status](#)

[Read the detailed note on IDSN's ECOSOC application process with a chronological overview and all questions included](#)

[India called out at UN General Assembly for blocking IDSN's UN consultative status](#) (IDSN News article, October 2014)

[Report of the UN Special Rapporteur highlights unwarranted deferral of IDSN's UN ECOSOC accreditation](#) (IDSN News article, October 2014)

Download the [ISHR Practical Guide to the UN Committee on NGOs](#), April 2015

[IDSN News: US urged to actively support IDSN's application for UN consultative status](#), March 2015