

## Past seven Minority Forum sessions (statements, presentations and Final MF recommendations on caste)

From the [OHCHR webpage on the Forum on Minority Issues](#) and IDSN

*The OHCHR website may not capture all statements on caste. Some statements (in written form) on caste may not have been sent to the Minority Forum secretariat and would therefore not be captured.*

### [Eight session of the Forum on Minority Issues on “Minorities in the Criminal Justice System” \(2015\)](#)

- Statements:
  - President of the Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO) Durga Sob participated as a panelist for the event. In her statement she underlined the importance of proper implementation of existing laws to eliminate caste discrimination and untouchability practices, and encouraged decision makers to support civil society and awareness raising campaigns to improve access to justice for people affected by caste based discrimination.
  - [Statement on minorities and the exercise of police powers](#) by Ramesh Nathan from the National Dalit Movement for Justice
  - Statement on [“addressing the root causes of discrimination in the administration of justice”](#) delivered by Manjula Pradeep from Navsarjan Trust.
- References to caste in [MF recommendations](#) under recommendations on Investigation into crimes committed against minorities – minorities as victims
  - 48. States should specifically ensure the availability of remedies for minority women victims of gender-based violence, who may face multiple stigma and intersecting forms of discrimination with regard to their minority origin (including caste), their gender and the nature of the crime suffered. Gender sensitization is crucial in enabling government and law enforcement officers to understand minority women’s challenges within their communities, including forms of abuse often classed as cultural practices, including forced and early marriages or female genital mutilation, so they can assist in establishing appropriate platforms to report and prevent such violations.

### [Seventh session of the Forum on Minority Issues on “Preventing and addressing violence and atrocity crimes targeted against minorities” 2014](#)

- Statements by:
  - [Statement on Caste based gender violence – Dalit women’s security and access to justice](#) by Ms Thilagam Ramalingam (EVIDENCE / IDSN) (assigned speaker in the Panel)
  - [Statement on Violence against Dalits and religious minorities in Pakistan](#) by Mr. Pirbhu Lal Satyani of the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN) / IDSN
  - [Statement on Violence against Dalits in Nepal](#) by Mr. Dan Bahadur Biswokarma of the Dalit Welfare Organization and participant in the OHCHR 2014 Minorities Fellowship Programme
  - [Statement on Violence against Dalit women](#) by Mr. Taisuke Komatsu, UN Advocacy Coordinator at the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR)
  - [Statement on Violence against the Al-Akhdam in Yemen](#) by Mr. Sami Al-Naggar, representative of the All Youth Network for Community Development

- References to caste in [MF Recommendations](#) under Recommendations to prevent violence and atrocity crimes – Recommendations to States
  - *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 work and descent or caste, notions of pollution and other forms of stigmatization resulting in wide-ranging exploitation, abuse and exposure to violence.*
  - *24. States should collect data disaggregated by, inter alia, gender, age, ethnicity, caste, 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.*

[Sixth session of the Forum on Minority Issues on "Beyond freedom of religion or belief: Guaranteeing the rights of religious minorities" 2013](#)

- Statements by Bhakta Bishwakarma (NDSWO) and Savio Mahimaidass (IDSN)
- No ref to **caste** in MF Recommendations

[Fifth session of the Forum on Minority Issues on "Implementing the United Nations Declaration on Minority Rights: Identifying positive practices and opportunities" 2012](#)

- Presentation by Punam Sijapati "Challenges faced by Dalit women in Nepal" (assigned speaker)
- Statement by National Dalit Movement for Justice
- No ref to **caste** in MF Recommendations

[Fourth Session of the Forum on Minority Issues on "Guaranteeing the rights of minority women" 2011](#)

- Statements by NDSWO and Ranju Bishwakarma (FEDO) and Thilagam Ramalingam (EVIDENCE)
- Descent-based ref in MF Recommendations on Effective participation in economic, social and cultural life
  - **C. Effective participation in economic, social and cultural life** 81. *In some societies, minority women experience even more complex burdens of poverty, ethnic, religious or **descent**-based prejudice and gender-based restrictions that can frequently result in increased challenges relating to the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing.*

[Third session of the Forum on minority issues on "Minorities and effective participation in economic life" 2010](#)

- Presentation by NCDHR Paul Divakar (assigned speaker)
- Statements by Nepal NDSWO and the National Dalit Forum
- Some references to **caste** in MF Recommendations in a general consideration on economic exclusion "Some face long-standing and entrenched challenges, such as discrimination on the basis of work and descent, including **caste** and analogous forms of bias, which require specific attention"

- **II. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS 5.** *Economic exclusion is a cause, a manifestation and a consequence of discrimination against persons belonging to minorities. Many minorities have historically been excluded from full and effective participation in economic life, both in the developed and in the developing world. Minorities are often discriminated against when they seek employment, on the basis of their colour, ethnicity, race, religion, language or name, even when there is legislation that bans discrimination in both public and private sectors. Some face long-standing and entrenched challenges, such as discrimination on the basis of work and descent, including **caste** and analogous forms of bias, which require specific attention. Women shoulder even more complex burdens of poverty, ethnic prejudice and gender-based restrictions.*

[Second session of the Forum on “Minorities and Effective Political Participation” 2009](#)

- Presentation by NCDHR Jayshree Mangubhai (assigned speaker)
- Statements by FEDO Dhana Kumari Sunar and Thilagam Ramalingam (EVIDENCE) and NCDHR
- No references to caste in MF Recommendations

[Inaugural session of the Forum on Minority Issues on “Minorities and the right to education” 15 and 16 December 2008](#) 2008

- No presentations or statements from Dalit organisations
- Some references to caste in MF Recommendations in the Definition of Minorities and on equal access to quality education
  - **Definition of Minorities in footnote:** *The term “minorities” as used in the present recommendation should be understood as it is used in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (General Assembly resolution 47/135), the commentary of the Working Group on Minorities to the Declaration (E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.5/2005/2) and the first annual report of the independent expert on minority issues (E/CN.4/2006/74). It encompasses the persons and groups protected under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination from discrimination based on race, colour, descent (**caste**), national or ethnic origin, citizen or non-citizen (GA resolution 2106 (XX)).*
  - **IV. EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR MINORITIES 40.** *States should ensure equal access to education for women and girls from minority groups, upon whom poverty and family responsibilities may have a disproportionate impact, and who may be subject also to aggravated discrimination, including in extreme cases violence, on the basis of culture, gender or **caste**.*