

**1 November 2010**

**IDSN Message of Solidarity to Safai Karmachari Andolan (SKA) and the 'Samajik Parivartan Yatra' – the National Bus March for the Eradication of Manual Scavenging in India.**

The International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN) sends its message of solidarity and support for the work of SKA, the national movement for the eradication of manual scavenging, and the safai karmacharis in their struggle to end the demeaning and hazardous work of manual scavenging.

IDSN fully support the goals of the SKA campaign for the eradication of manual scavenging and the rehabilitation of safai karmacharis as set out at the launch of the march. We support your call for the strict implementation of the 1993 act abolishing manual scavenging, the punishing of violators of this act, the provision of relief for manual scavengers and education and job training.

Manual scavenging is a one of the most demeaning practices of caste discrimination, a practice that must be eradicated wherever it exists. The particular plight of the manual scavengers has also been noted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay. In her statement 'Tearing down the wall of caste', she reflects on this shameful practice following her meeting with a group of Dalits, who gave her a piece of brick from the wall of a torn-down latrine as a symbol of the global struggle against manual scavenging. The High Commissioner has repeatedly called upon the International Community to support Dalits in their fight against caste discrimination.

We sincerely hope that the 'Samajik Parivartan Yatra', which has reached out to an amazing number of people of affected communities and authorities in 20 Indian states, and culminates in a mass rally in New Delhi today, will lead to the eradication of manual scavenging.

We are convinced that the SKA campaign will inspire manual scavengers in neighbouring caste affected countries to challenge the repressive social system that imposes this work upon them and we support their struggle too.

On behalf of IDSN,

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