

The Kathmandu Declaration adopted by the ‘National Conference of Dalit Women for Democracy, Justice, Lasting Peace and Inclusive Constitution-2071’

To ensure an appropriate participation of Dalit women in the further development of this social democratic republic of the 21st century. Dalit women have been sidelined in this mainstream development due to suppression based on caste, gender and culture in the Nepali society;

To emancipate the Dalit women who have been made victims of gender and cultural exploitation and discrimination based on the worst forms of caste-based untouchability practices, class-based violations, economic backwardness and suppression .Relating the political changes in the country with social changes; recalling the constitution, legislation, national and international declarations and commitments made to end all forms of discrimination, and to fully ensure the rights of Dalit women by institutionalizing the rights of the entire Dalit community in the constitution, to be drafted from the Constituent Assembly that people have sought to achieve since 2007;

Calling for coordination between the government, civil society organizations,international organizations and others to bring about changes in the existing situation of Dalit women based on the experiences gained and lessons learnt during the 21-year history of the Feminist Dalit Organization;

We, participants, of the **‘National Conference of Dalit Women for Democracy, Justice, Lasting Peace and Inclusive Constitution-2071’** organized by the **Feminist Dalit Organization** in Lalitpur on 2-3 December, 2014, with the participation of Dalit women from across the country, have unanimously agreed to issue a 21-point **‘Kathmandu Declaration’** as the outcome of our intensive discussions.

1. We hereby announce our collective efforts for promoting national indivisibility, independence, sovereignty, institutional development of democratic values and regional, social, cultural, religious and gender tolerance.
2. Our common efforts shall be to establish political and social justice by increasing the participation and partnerships of Dalit women in all bodies of the state mechanisms.
3. Ending all kinds of discrimination against the Dalit community, Dalit women and women in general, we shall take initiatives to make the new constitution Dalit women-friendly to ensure our fundamental right to act as equal stakeholders in mainstream development.
4. As the existing electoral system does not ensure the participation of Dalit women, there is the necessary ensuring the representation of Dalit women within Dalit community in the governance structure. So, Feminist Dalit Organization will raise attention as well as put pressure on the bodies concerned.

5. Realizing the meaningful presence of Dalit women at the decision-making level of the constitutional, administrative and security bodies, the state should enact legislation for the same. Likewise, the state should be held to account for ensuring an equitable society and this by safeguarding the rights of the Dalit community and Dalit women through the constitution and the institutionalization and strengthening of federal and provincial structures. The state should ensure that the constitution, legislation and policies are in line with the spirit of positive discrimination for radical changes to happen in the almost zero-level participation of Dalit women in policy-making and implementation.
6. The caste-based and cultural discrimination against Dalit women and the negative impacts caused by these existing customs and tradition in the society should be brought to an end. Relevant acts should be implemented and amendments made to address shortcomings. the loopholes in legislation should be amended.
7. The state should take results-oriented steps to address our serious concerns and continue efforts in the campaigns for social rehabilitation, reintegration, dignity and improving the lives of Dalit women living in inhuman conditions due to social taboos connected to inter-caste marriage and issues such as dowry, forced and low-paid labor and witchery.
8. Inter-caste marriage should be encouraged and the couple should be provided with both social and economic honor (dignity of life) and protection of their life. Persons interfering negatively with such marriage should face economic and social repercussions and imprisonment.
9. To make the efforts of the Nepali government and other relevant bodies' results-oriented in terms of free health care services, free education at all levels and in terms of increasing Dalit women's access to employment; and special facilities for Dalit women, educational loans and the provision of meaningful reservation should be ensured.
10. Effective implementation of the political announcement for '**at least one member employed from a Dalit household**' should be carried out to end cases of marginalization caused by the existing economic backwardness of the Dalit community, landlessness, the status of being squatters and the lack of citizenship.
11. Existing exercises of inclusion and reservation should be further widened; proportional representation of Dalit women should be ensured in the quota reserved for women to make it Dalit women-responsive, results-oriented and socially justifiable. Twenty percent of the existing 33 percent reservation quota reserved for women should be allocated to Dalit women considering it in a particular reservation percent.
12. Constitutional provisions should be made to ensure proportional representation of Dalit women in all bodies of the state from the local to central levels.

13. For the protection and respect of the traditional skills of the Dalit community and Dalit women, the government should effectively implement the measures of skills' modernization, loan imbursement, tax waive off, and market management.
14. Determining untouchability-discrimination as a social crime. Those involved in such crimes should be given maximum punishment in accordance with the Caste Discrimination and Untouchability (Crime and Punishment) Act 2068. The existing provision of punishment ensured by the Act should be further widened.
15. A separate bench in the Supreme Court or a special court to hear the cases related to Dalits should be established. The National Dalit Commission should be given a constitutional status while the **Dalit Development Committee** should be made resourceful and develop a special and separate mechanism to oversee the cases of psychological and sexual violence against Dalit women to ensure their dignity.
16. The responsible state bodies should be held to account for ensuring the rights of those Dalit women who have face regional suppression(CBD prone areas) and has the lowest HDI, also there need to be. Equal and special land ownership for Dalit women should be ensured for the Dalit women
17. We pledge to form the entire social organization of the Dalit community based on equality by ending intra-Dalit discrimination.
18. We reaffirm that the Government of Nepal is obliged to effectively implement the section of the constitution related to caste-based and gender-based discrimination as well as all national legislation and international conventions, treaties, covenants and commitments.
19. Citizenship through the mother should be ensured and the problems related to family identities of Dalit women and children should be resolved.
20. We expect that the state will own up to our viewpoints and demands passed and declared at the National Conference of Dalit Women, 2014 and adopt policies accordingly. And, that the government will be responsible for encouraging state structures to effectively implement recommendations of the declarations.
21. We, the Feminist Dalit Organization, pledge to end the oppression and common problems facing Dalit women wherever we live in Nepal.

Proposed by

Name:

Signature:

Seconded by

Name:

Signature:

Declaration approved by

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Durga Sob

Chairperson

Feminist Dalit Organization

4 December, 2014