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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Prahar, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[22 August 2022]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous peoples have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and security as distinct peoples and shall not be subjected to any act of genocide or any other act of violence. My organization wants to bring council attention towards India where indigenous Dalits community continue to face discrimination and harassment. There is widespread socio-economic discrimination against Dalits, as well as restrictions of their social, cultural or linguistic rights, in total violation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on economic, social and cultural rights. Discrimination against Dalits in the educational system is a widespread problem in India. Alienation, social exclusion, and physical abuse transcend all levels of education, from primary education to university. Illiteracy and drop-out rates among Dalits are very high due to a number of social and physical factors. Legislation on discrimination in India is limited, and measures that have been taken are often inadequately implemented. The forms of structural discrimination and abuse that Dalit children face in schools are often so stigmatising that they are forced to drop out of school. One of the main issues is the discriminatory practices conducted by teachers, which may include corporal punishment, denial of access to school water supplies, segregation in class rooms, and forcing Dalit children to perform manual scavenging on and around school premises. In addition, Dalit children also face discriminatory attitudes from fellow students and the community as a whole, in particular from higher caste members who perceive education for Dalits as a threat to village hierarchies and power relations. Intolerance, prejudice and harassment towards Dalits are equally prevalent in institutions of higher education where discrimination is practiced by senior upper-caste students, teachers, faculties, and administrations. We urge this council to ask Indian government to stop violation against Indigenous peoples and solve the education problems of Dalits and other schedule caste.
