



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-fourth session

11 September–13 October 2023

Agenda item 9

**Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

## **Written statement\* submitted by Human Is Right, 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.

[23 August 2023]

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



## **Caste-based Discrimination and Atrocities on Dalits in India**

Caste discrimination is one of the worst human rights abuses in the world today. It is little understood and rarely acknowledged and affects more than 260 million people worldwide. Through a hierarchical system, the assignment of basic rights among various castes is highly unequal, with those at the top enjoying the most rights coupled with the least duties and those at the bottom performing the most duties coupled with no rights. The system is maintained through the rigid enforcement of social ostracism. Today my organization wants to bring council attention towards India where Dalits are facing huge discrimination, caste-related violence and atrocities in their lives from upper caste Hindus and Indian society. Dalit commonly known as the 'untouchables' in India are born into a lifetime of marginalisation, exclusion and human rights violations. They are strictly 'ranked' – based on their descent – and are thereby placed at the lowest echelon of society's classes. Inhuman and degrading treatment of over 165 million people in Indian society has been justified on the basis of caste. Caste discrimination in India dominate in housing, marriage, employment, and general social interaction-divisions that are reinforced through the practice and threat of social ostracism, economic boycotts, and physical violence. In India Dalits has not access to right to live, right to equality, right to education, right to development, right to speech, expression, right to choose profession, right to employment, right to pure water and right to live in healthy environment. They are not entitled to get basic civil amenities. Dalit women often are forced to serve as sexual servants to upper caste men. If Dalits attempted to defy the caste system, they received cruel punishments such as being forced to parade naked through village streets, and being beaten, raped, tortured, hanged, and burned. Atrocities are committed on the Untouchables Dalits in the villages and small towns and the incidents of such cases are showing an upward trend. On Jan 22, 2023, a 10-year-old Dalit boy was allegedly killed by a group of upper caste men over a property dispute in Budaun district of uttar pradesh. The class III student went missing on Sunday evening and his body was found hanging from a tree in the village farm. Incidents of crimes against Dalits are coming to the fore daily in different parts of the country, hate speech and discrimination against the Dalit minority is another issue of enormous concern. These crimes include physical violence, such as assault and murder, economic exploitation, discrimination in access to education, employment, and healthcare. Violence against Dalit women, including sexual assault and discrimination in access to justice, is seemingly normal. In such a situation, Indian government failed to control it. We request this council to ask Indian government to protect Dalits from caste discrimination and provide them with equal rights to live in Indian society.

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Human Is Right, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.