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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Integrated Youth Empowerment - Common Initiative Group (I.Y.E. – C.I.G.), 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]

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



Racism and Racial Discrimination in India

Racism is an ideology that either directly or indirectly asserts that one group is inherently superior to others. It can be openly displayed in racial jokes and slurs or hate crimes, but it can be more deeply rooted in attitudes, values and stereotypical beliefs. In some cases, these are unconsciously held and have become deeply embedded in systems and institutions that have evolved over time. Racism operates at several levels, in particular, individual, systemic and societal. My organisation wants to bring council attention towards North East Indian states Assam and Manipur where the people of these states are facing extreme racial discrimination and racism is visible. In India, the people of Assam and Manipur are misrecognised as foreigners from China, Japan, Myanmar, Nepal, or Thailand and they are considered 'lesser Indian' in Indian society. They often face derogatory racial remarks such as 'chinky' (one who belongs to China) and other comments for their mongoloid-like features. They are also subjected to discrimination and harassment for their culture, such as food habits, skin colour, language, and name. Their epicanthic eye folds, snub noses, and bearing phenotypic traits make them distinctive from the others. Racial othering and violence against them are often reported from different parts of the country. Delhi is most unsafe in this context, and one North Eastern person is targeted every alternate day. The empirical studies suggest that northeast people living in India's metropolitan cities often have bitter experiences of racism, racial attacks, and discrimination. Two girls hailing from Manipur have allegedly faced racist slurs in a residential complex in Assam's capital, Guwahati on April 30, 2023. North Easterners living in metropolitan cities of India are often subject to exclusion, racism, and violence. They are treated as 'others' in the mainland of the country. The people of these states are discriminated based on their racial characteristics but Indian government paid no attention in this regard. In a distressing incident that sheds light on the ongoing issue of racism in Indian society, a family from the North-Eastern region faced blatant discrimination on 23 July 2023 when they were subjected to derogatory remarks based on their appearance. The incident took place when the family, consisting of two sisters and a brother, was waiting for a traffic signal to turn green after visiting their brother's hostel. Out of nowhere, a group of men confronted the family, and one of them riding a scooter audaciously commented on their appearance, suggesting they were from China due to their facial features. Shocked and hurt, the siblings were left to grapple with the cruel reality of racism, an unfortunate experience that is all too common for many from the North-Eastern community. People from the Northeast Indian states are campaigning for an anti-racism legislation but the government is in denial. The Durban Declaration was a historic document which seeks to eradicate racism and discrimination against minorities. When the conference was held in 2009, India was a party to it. However, there is no national law to protect the citizens against specific racial discrimination and it is high time for India to give considerable attention to it.
