



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 June 2021

English only

Human Rights Council

Forty-seventh session

21 June–9 July 2021

Agenda item 3

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

Written statement* submitted by Association Mauritanienne pour la promotion du droit, 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.

[27 May 2021]

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



The plight of Dalit women in India that can be considered as a contemporary form of slavery

In the light of Vienna declaration and Program of Action, our organization would like to draw the Council's sincere attention towards the plight of Dalit women in India that can be considered as a contemporary form of slavery. Dalit caste is also known as the untouchables. Dalit, which means 'the oppressed', is an assertive term of self-identification, and refers to what in strict legal and constitutional terms are known as the 'scheduled castes'. These women are exploited socially, politically, economically and culturally. They are victims of triple oppression including gender, caste and class.

The exploitation of Dalit women by Indian upper caste men is the worst form of dehumanization in India. Thousands of girls and women are forced into prostitution every year as there is a direct link between forced prostitution and caste. In India, the Devadasi tradition is nowadays a form of religiously sanctioned sexual abuse and form of slavery. Even though this tradition is outlawed in India it is still found in some states including Karnataka and Maharashtra. In this practice, young girls are devoted to gods and when they reach puberty, they are supposed to fulfill the sexual desire of higher caste male members of the village in the name of god. This set of practices turned into a systematic abuse of young low caste girls serving as prostitutes. Caste based rape is a tool of domination that the upper class uses against disadvantaged women in India. Our Organization would like to highlight incident in which a 13-year-old Dalit girl was allegedly gang-raped at gunpoint by two men in Rampur district, Uttar Pradesh. The crime took place at a village under Swar police station on January 20, 2021. According to a complaint filed by the girl's family, the minor was taken to a farm by a local woman, on the pretext of some work where two other men, identified as Shahrukh and Bhura, sexually assaulted her. The girl's family said that two unidentified men grabbed her and dragged her to the nearby sugarcane field. They then took turns to rape her at gunpoint. The local woman assisted them by putting a cloth into her mouth.

According to the family, the minor claimed that the accused threatened to kill her if she disclosed the heinous crime to anyone. We request the Council's sincere attention to the plights of Dalit women in India. We hope that the Council will urge the Indian state to take stern action for protection and promotion of rights of Dalit women in India.

We look forward to a positive response from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Special Rapporteurs (SR) on the situation of human rights defenders and on violence against women, its causes and consequences.

LE CONSEIL UNIVERSEL DES DROIT DE L'HOMME – FRANCE, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.