



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-first session

12 September–7 October 2022

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 Mother of Hope Cameroon Common Initiative Group, 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.

[18 August 2022]

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



## **Privacy: A Human Rights Issue for Activists in India**

Facial Recognition is a technology that matches captured images with other facial images held, in databases or "watchlists". It is an extremely intrusive form of surveillance and can seriously undermine our Privacy, freedom and eventually our society as a whole. Data breaches involving facial recognition data increase the potential for identity theft, stalking, and harassment. Using Facial Recognition Technology to identify individuals without their knowledge or consent raises privacy concerns. My organization wants to bring Council attention on a privacy issue of a Human Right Activist and journalists in India. India is using the facial recognition systems in many cities to monitor them and interfere in their privacy. Few months ago, in the Indian city of Hyderabad when Human right activist S Q Masood was stopped on the street by police and asked him to remove his Covid face mask and then took his picture, giving no reason and ignoring his objections. Worried about how the photographs would be used, Masood sent a legal notice to the city's police chief. Misuse of face recognition technology is a concern when it comes to privacy. Indian Government is using Facial Recognition technology without introducing any relevant law. On 17 February 2022, the Indian Minister for IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said that India needs a new digital law as the current legislation, the IT Act, is 20 years-old. "We need a law for the IT. People of India are worried about the use of technology for mass surveillance. Further, they want to be sure they are not being exploited.

We urge this council to ask Indian government to immediately stop the misuse Facial Recognition technology as a tool to interfere in public privacy and introduce new digital law at the earliest.

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