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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 Community Human Rights and Advocacy Centre (CHRAC), 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]

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



Arbitrary Detention in India

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides in article 9 states that “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. Popular action is on the rise across the globe as people take to the streets to demand justice, equity and democratic rights. But this has been mirrored by an unprecedented use of excessive force and arbitrary detention to silence the legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of assembly. In India to demand justice, equity and democratic rights has also become a major crime. The Indian government is putting unjustified provisions of terrorism against those who demand justice, equity and democratic rights and arbitrary detained them in jails for a long time, which is an open violation of human rights. Indian authorities are wrongfully prosecuting activists and protest organizers under India’s anti-terrorism law two years after 53 people were killed in communal violence following peaceful protests against discriminatory citizenship policies. Last week of February 2020, Indian government arbitrary detained 18 students’ activists under charges of rioting, unlawful assembly and sedition for their speeches during anti CAA (Citizen Amendment Act) including Sharjeel Imam, Ishrat Jahan, Khalid Saifi, Tahir Hussain, Saleem Malik, Mohammad, Saleem Khan, Meeran Haider, Shadab Ahmed, Gulfisha Fatima, Tasleem Ahmed, Shifa Ur Rehman, Athar Khan, Umar Khalid, Safoora Zargar, Faizan Khan, Asif Iqbal Tanha, Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita. The additional charges under UAPA were also brought on them. Of the 18, 13 students are in jail for over two years as of February 2022. It is a crackdown against free expression. Their detention is unfounded and designed to punish them for defending human rights and engaging in peaceful protest against a discriminatory law. We urge this council to ask Indian government to immediately release all activists and stop excessive use of force, arbitrary detentions and punitive measures against protesters must end immediately.
