

# United Nations



## Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee

*Seeking Solutions for Human Rights Violations Derived from Ethnic Divides*

### *Position Paper*

**Country:** Republic of India

**Forum:** SOCHUM

**Delegate:** Ömer ATTARHONI

**Question of:** Seeking Solutions for Human Rights Violations Derived from Ethnic Divides

### ***Introduction***

*The Republic of India unequivocally condemns all forms of human rights violations stemming from ethnic divides. As one of the most ethnically diverse nations globally, India comprehends the profound implications of ethnic conflicts on social cohesion, human development, and peace. Guided by its Constitution and commitments to international treaties, India is dedicated to addressing these critical issues. This position paper delineates India's perspective on ethnic divides, the measures undertaken domestically, and proposed solutions for the international community.*

### ***Background***

*Ethnic divides frequently result in severe human rights violations, including discrimination, violence, displacement, and socio-economic marginalization. These divides often originate from historical grievances, socio-political inequalities, and cultural misunderstandings. The adverse effects of such divides are evident in numerous regions worldwide, where ethnic tensions have led to prolonged conflicts and humanitarian crises.*



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### ***India's Domestic Efforts***

*India, with its rich tapestry of ethnic groups, has implemented several measures to mitigate ethnic divides and promote social harmony. The Indian Constitution establishes a robust legal framework to protect the rights of all citizens, regardless of their ethnicity. Articles 14, 15, and 21 ensure equality before the law, prohibit discrimination, and safeguard life and personal liberty. These constitutional provisions are vital in maintaining a legal foundation that upholds human rights and ensures that every citizen is treated with dignity and respect.*

*In addition to constitutional safeguards, India has enacted affirmative action policies to uplift marginalized communities, including Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC). These measures aim to provide equal opportunities in education, employment, and political representation. The reservation system in educational institutions and government jobs has been instrumental in improving the socio-economic status of these communities. By ensuring representation in legislative bodies, these policies also enhance the political voice of marginalized groups, fostering inclusive governance.*

*The government actively supports the preservation and promotion of diverse cultural heritages through initiatives like the Ministry of Culture and various state-run cultural programs. These initiatives aim to celebrate India's cultural diversity and promote mutual respect and understanding among different ethnic groups. Programs such as the National Cultural Fund and the establishment of cultural centers across the country are examples of efforts to safeguard and promote the intangible cultural heritage of various communities.*

*Furthermore, community development programs such as the Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) and the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) focus on the socio-economic development of ethnic minority communities. These programs aim to enhance livelihood opportunities, improve access to education and healthcare, and promote sustainable development in tribal and rural areas. By addressing the specific needs of these communities, these initiatives contribute to reducing socio-economic disparities and fostering social inclusion.*



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### ***Proposed International Solutions***

*India posits that addressing ethnic divides necessitates a multi-faceted approach, combining legal, socio-economic, and cultural strategies. To enhance the implementation of existing international human rights laws and conventions, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the international community should ensure accountability and justice for human rights violations. Strengthening international legal frameworks and mechanisms for monitoring and enforcement is crucial in holding perpetrators accountable and providing redress to victims. This can be achieved through enhanced cooperation among states, international organizations, and civil society.*

*Nations are encouraged to adopt inclusive governance practices that ensure representation and participation of ethnic minorities in political processes and decision-making bodies. Inclusive governance not only fosters social cohesion but also ensures that the needs and aspirations of all communities are considered in policymaking. Implementing measures such as proportional representation, power-sharing arrangements, and decentralization can enhance political inclusion and reduce the risk of ethnic tensions.*

*Supporting economic empowerment programs that provide equal opportunities for education, employment, and entrepreneurship for marginalized ethnic groups is crucial. International financial institutions and development agencies can play a pivotal role in funding and supporting these initiatives. Programs that focus on skills development, access to finance, and market linkages can help marginalized communities improve their economic status and achieve self-sufficiency. By addressing economic disparities, these programs contribute to reducing the root causes of ethnic conflicts and promoting social stability.*

*Facilitating cultural exchange programs and educational initiatives that promote mutual understanding and respect among different ethnic groups is essential. UNESCO can spearhead such initiatives to foster global cultural harmony. Cultural exchange programs, including student exchanges, artistic collaborations, and heritage conservation projects, can enhance intercultural dialogue and promote a deeper appreciation of cultural diversity. Educational curricula should also include components that emphasize human rights, tolerance, and respect for diversity.*

*Establishing and strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms, including mediation and dialogue platforms, will help address ethnic tensions and prevent escalation into violence. These mechanisms can provide safe spaces for dialogue, facilitate reconciliation, and promote peaceful coexistence. International organizations such as the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) can support these efforts by providing technical assistance, capacity-building, and funding for local peacebuilding initiatives.*



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*Ensuring timely and adequate humanitarian assistance for victims of ethnic conflicts, including refugees and internally displaced persons, through coordinated efforts of international organizations like UNHCR and NGOs, is imperative. Humanitarian assistance should address immediate needs such as food, shelter, healthcare, and protection, while also supporting long-term recovery and rehabilitation. Comprehensive assistance programs should also focus on rebuilding livelihoods, restoring social services, and promoting social cohesion in conflict-affected communities.*

### ***Conclusion***

*India remains steadfast in our commitment to collaborating with the international community to seek sustainable solutions for human rights violations derived from ethnic divides. By adopting a holistic approach that encompasses legal, socio-economic, and cultural strategies, we can pave the way for a world where ethnic diversity is celebrated and human rights are universally upheld.*




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## References

*Constitution of the Republic of India Part III Fundamental Rights. Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India, 1971, p. 6.*

14. *The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.*

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21. *No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.*

*Constitution of the Republic of India Part III Fundamental Rights . Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India, 1951, p. 7.*

15. (1) *The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. (2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to— (a) access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment; or (b) the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of State funds or dedicated to the use of the general public.*

*“DAY-NRLM Aajeevika.” DAY-NRLM Aajeevika, <https://aajeevika.gov.in/content/mission>. Accessed 23 May 2024.*

*“Funds Released Under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission | Ministry of Rural Development | Government of India.” होम | ग्रामीण विकास मंत्रालय | भारत सरकार, <https://rural.gov.in/en/press-release/funds-released-under-deendayal-antyodaya-yojana-national-rural-livelihoods-mission>. Accessed 23 May 2024.*

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*“What We Do.” IFRC, <https://www.ifrc.org/our-work/disasters-climate-and-crises/migration-and-displacement#:~:text=What%20we%20do,for%20migrants%20and%20displaced%20people>. Accessed 23 May 2024.*

*“What We Do | UNHCR.” UNHCR, <https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do#:~:text=UNHCR%20works%20to%20protect%20refugees,education%2C%20work%20and%20health%20care>. Accessed 23 May 2024.*