



Global Partnership and Joint Action in Addressing, Discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability, Contemporary Forms of Slavery and Analogous Forms of Discrimination **DAKAR DECLARATION**

We parliamentarians, academics and representatives of human rights organizations from Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe have come together in Dakar, Senegal on 9 to 11 April 2019, at the Consultation titled “Global Partnership and Joint Action in Addressing Discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability, Contemporary Forms of Slavery and Analogous Forms of Discrimination” we are calling on States and the United Nations to adopt, measures toward ending discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability, socio-cultural beliefs, and Analogous Forms of Discrimination including Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

- **Recalling** the fundamental principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that “(a) all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” and are entitled to the rights and freedoms contained in the UDHR without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, social origin, birth or other status. Whereas discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability and other such Analogous Forms of Discrimination stand in violation of those fundamental principles;
- **Reiterating** that discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability and Analogous Forms of Discrimination including Contemporary Forms of Slavery are prohibited under international human rights law;
- **Recognising** the differential negative impact of discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability and Analogous Forms of Discrimination affect women disproportionately;

- **Acknowledging** efforts undertaken by some Governments through the adoption of legislations and policies to address discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability, Contemporary Forms of Slavery and Analogous Forms of Discrimination;
- **Recognising** the Draft Principles and Guidelines for Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Work and Descent and the comprehensive recommendations by UN human rights Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures Mechanisms, to address and eliminate these forms of discrimination;
- **Reaffirm** the demands and appeals made by several civil society organizations to the Human Rights Council on the persistence of widespread violations in countries affected by Work and Descent, Untouchability Contemporary Forms of Slavery and Analogous Forms of Discrimination;
- **Emphasizing** the usefulness of the “Guidance Tool on Descent Based Discrimination: Key Challenges and Strategic Approaches to Combat Caste Based and Analogous Forms of Discrimination” issued by the United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities;

We are committed to work toward the total elimination of discrimination based on work, descent, untouchability and analogous forms of discrimination including slavery, while engaging with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals also known as the 2030 Agenda.

A. We call on the United Nations and Member States:

1. To adopt the Draft Principles and Guidelines for the Effective Elimination of Discrimination Based on Work and Descent;
2. To declare a Decade devoted to combating discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability, Contemporary Forms of Slavery and Analogous Forms of Discrimination;
3. To establish a Special United Nations Fund to support effective participation of victims in programmes geared toward eliminating discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability, Contemporary Forms of Slavery and Analogous Forms of Discrimination

B. We call States where the practice of discrimination based on work, descent, untouchability and analogous forms of discrimination exist:

1. To officially recognise communities affected by these forms of discrimination and establish legal and policy frameworks to address them; through adoption of temporary special measures (affirmative action) legislative, executive, administrative and other regulatory instruments, policies and practices to accelerate the achievement of *de facto* or substantive equality;
2. To ensure that there is no direct or indirect discrimination against women in their laws and that women are protected against discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability, Contemporary Forms of Slavery and Analogous Forms of Discrimination

We resolve to work in solidarity with all stakeholders in the struggle toward elimination of discrimination based on Work and Descent, Untouchability, and Analogous Forms of Discrimination including Contemporary Forms of Slavery and the restoration of equality, dignity and rights for all.

Glossary

Discrimination based on Work and Descent

Discrimination based on work and descent is any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on inherited status such as caste. Caste includes present or ancestral occupation, family, community or social origin, name, birthplace, place of residence, dialect and accent that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life. This type of discrimination is typically associated with the notion of purity and pollution and practices of untouchability and is deeply rooted practices of discrimination in societies and cultures.¹

Untouchability

Untouchability means a person or people belonging to the lower caste groups are banned from touching people from upper caste groups. Even a shadow of lower caste people falling on to upper caste group is considered impure which also means the upper caste people upon such touch gets polluted. But it is not merely the inability to touch a human being of a certain caste or sub-caste but it is an attitude on the part of a whole group that relates to a deeper psychological process of thought and belief of purity and pollution, invisible to the naked eye, translated into various physical acts and behaviours, norms and practices; Untouchability is prompted by the spirit of social aggression and the belief in purity and pollution that characterises casteism.²

¹ Accessed from on March 2019 from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/discrimination/>

² Accessed on March 30, 2019 from <https://navsarjantrust.org/what-is-untouchability/>